

CRF | Canada Caribbean Resilience Facility



Photo: A.J. Watt

Countries in the Caribbean are looking for viable solutions to increase their ability to respond more quickly and resiliently to the COVID-19 crisis while simultaneously preparing for potential disasters in what is expected to be a highly-active hurricane season.

As they grapple with these challenges, the Canada-Caribbean Resilience Facility is supporting their efforts at response and recovery and stands ready to provide further support.

THE CHALLENGE

This year, Caribbean countries face the unprecedented situation of having to prepare for the hurricane season while still responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the activity of the upcoming hurricane season is expected to be above average, with a pre-season outlook of up to 19 named storms, of which as many as 10 could become hurricanes.

COVID-19 places many new stresses on disaster risk management in the region, including:

- Extremely limited time for integrating COVID-19 related recommendations in countries' hurricane response and relief protocols.
- Potential disruptions to the movement of critical personnel, equipment, and supplies for hurricane response as they run counter to mobility restrictions put in place to curb the spread of the virus.

- Reduced availability of national and regional disaster response personnel as many have been deployed to assist with the COVID-19 response or fallen ill with the virus.
- The need for special provisions to reduce the risk of viral infection during hurricane response and relief operations, such as adapting protocols for the evacuation and sheltering of displaced populations with social distancing.

THE CRF APPROACH

The CRF is supporting COVID-19 response in client countries by:

1. Supporting activation and implementation of Contingency Emergency Response Components (CERC)¹ in response to COVID-19 or potential events from natural hazards.
2. Providing hands-on-support for the implementation of emergency projects and preparation for the hurricane season in a context of COVID-19.
3. Accelerating support to countries to develop interim finance instructions and guidance to ministries, departments, and agencies on how to execute emergency budget, procurement, accounting, reporting and audit processes in response to COVID-19.

Supported activities will be aligned with the objectives of the Facility.

¹ Contingent Emergency Response Components (CERCs) are a World Bank financing instrument that allows for rapid reallocations of funds from Bank investment operations, giving governments access to Bank financing for immediate recovery needs in the case of a disaster or health emergency.

In CRF eligible countries, funds have been made available to support government response to the pandemic. This includes funds to cover the extension of ongoing consultancies and advisory services.



Photo:ASphotowed

CURRENT ACTIONS

The CRF team has initiated activities to support countries in their response to COVID-19 in coordination with World Bank teams working in the region and exploring collaboration with other thematic units within the Bank. As of May 2020:

- In all nine countries, funds have been made available to support government response to the pandemic. This includes funds to cover the extension of ongoing consultancies and advisory services.
- In Suriname, the CRF is supporting preparation of the CERC operational manual to be activated at the government's discretion.
- In Belize, the CRF is helping accelerate the activation of a CERC for social protection support.
- In Saint Lucia, a CERC has been triggered to enhance health sector capacity to respond to COVID-19, and the CRF is providing technical guidance for both the national COVID-19 response and related public financial management.
- In both Saint Lucia and Suriname, most ongoing activities pre-COVID-19 are also supporting the implementation of projects and the COVID-19 response.

- Public financial management work under Component 2 is directly supporting countries' ability to respond in disaster situations and has been accelerated to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEXT STEPS

The CRF is offering additional support to the nine countries in their efforts to address these exceptional circumstances, including immediate technical assistance and advice to strengthen their capacity to deliver the best hurricane response possible while preserving gains made in curbing COVID 19 infection rates. Technical assistance will be tailored to country-specific needs and requests, and delivered through the most effective means available, such as remote support and online meetings. Technical assistance will be coordinated with the EU financed activities in the region. The CRF would favor pragmatic approaches to expedite preparation for the hurricane season in the context of COVID-19 by identifying gaps in response capacity caused by the COVID-19 response and updating their response plans and protocols to include COVID-19 safety and health provisions. Support to regional organizations is also possible upon request.

The Canada Caribbean Resilience Facility was established to achieve more effective and coordinated gender-informed climate-resilient preparedness, recovery, and public financial management practices in nine Caribbean countries. The Facility supports countries by deploying technical experts in the region to provide close partnership, collaboration, and just-in-time support to accelerate the implementation of recovery projects and overall resilience-building efforts across the Caribbean. The CRF works in Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.

Countries interested in this support should contact

For Approach 1 and 2

Mirtha Escobar mescobar2@worldbank.org

Suranga Kahandawa skahandawa@worldbank.org

Sara Gey Feria sgeyferia@worldbank.org

For Approach 3

Leah April lapril@worldbank.org

For other inquiries about the Facility

Naraya Carrasco ncarrasco@worldbank.org

For more information, visit gfdr.org/crf