A more structured and timeline driven Regional Disaster Response Plan will soon be implemented by Red Cross Societies of the Caribbean in collaboration with government national response agencies.

This approach to Disaster Management was the result of a 3-day meeting in Barbados involving Directors General and Disaster Management staff of regional and partner Red Cross National Societies, international donors, partner agencies, Disaster Management stakeholders and government officials.

The Regional Response Plan will focus on the core areas of:

- Activation protocols
- Regional response tools
- Mutual support mechanisms
- Prepositioning of stocks, mobilisation of human, material and financial resources and;
- Information and Communication

In the coming months, National Societies will work towards developing national disaster plans that coincide with a regional implementation strategy; documenting and sharing details about available emergency resources across the Caribbean network and making greater use of regional and global Resource Centres and tools. (continued on pg. 2)
Additionally, a decision was made to deepen the links between the Red Cross societies and regional entities such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the University of the West Indies and CARICOM. This was felt to be critical in making the overall response system more efficient and effective in serving Caribbean during a crisis.

Commitments were made to meet the timelines and implement the plans agreed, in order to ensure a truly strengthened regional response system dedicated to saving lives and building community resilience.

Dear Dara,

Today I received the first edition of the new quarterly Caribbean E-Newsletter “The Red Cross Caribbean Connection.” It is with great interest and curiosity that I have read the 14 pages and I can only congratulate you on this excellent communication work which I am sure will help to increase “the connection” between Red Cross people. Thank you very much for sharing it with us, it is very inspiring. I wish you much success in the coming issues.

Warm regards,

Gustavo Ramírez
Regional Representative
Southern Cone and Brazil Regional Representation

Well done. Lovely newsletter!
Xavier Castellanos
Director, Americas Zone

Great newsletter! Thanks for sharing Dara.
Best wishes,
Sally
Sally Moore, American Red Cross Regional Health Delegate, Caribbean

Dear Dara:
Thanks for our new newsletter, Congratulations for a job well done. I love the new format, the colours and photos are fantastic.
Terry,
Terry Gaillard, Director General, Saint Lucia Red Cross

Congratulations everybody, these are just some of the compliments received on the first online newsletter. Enjoy :-)
A Red Cross Life Saving Experience

**Jermaine Santos, Volunteer, Belize Red Cross**

Jermaine is 20 years old and became a volunteer through the National Society’s Detachment 6 (First Aid Volunteers) 5 years ago on March 30th, 2007 and has been very active providing First Aid services at almost all public events the BRC was called for. Jermaine’s skills have continued developing and currently he is the Chair and Table Rental Service Coordinator, Assistant to the Warehouse Manager and Receptionist at the HQ.

“On Monday, April 2nd, I missed work and was home sick. All of a sudden I heard my neighbor scream for help! I rushed over to check what the matter was and saw her 1-year old baby in her arms apparently not breathing. I immediately took the baby from her arms, placed the child lying on a flat surface and did an evaluation. I did my LLF (Look, Listen and Feel) procedure and noted that there was no sign of breathing and no pulse. I immediately ordered someone to call an ambulance and proceeded to give the baby two initial infant puffs of breath. After the initial rescue breaths, I did my second LLF and there was still no response. I then started CPR on the baby.

The ambulance was called a total of three times but did not arrive. In the meantime, I continued administering CPR until I detected a weak pulse, but nevertheless, I felt a pulse! The baby was saved! I continued rescue breaths until the baby started normal breathing on her own. After this, a very grateful mother took the baby and they both got into a vehicle and headed for the hospital. Finally, after the ordeal, the ambulance arrived. This is a very good example of why EVERYONE needs to learn First Aid.”

What May 8th meant to me

**Mikey Irish, St. Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross**

“I volunteered with the St. Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross Society in some of their activities to commemorate May 8th World Red Cross Day. With the focus this year being on youth volunteers, I was happy for this opportunity to share what this day meant to me and the impact it made on my future with this international humanitarian movement.

Often mistaking the welfare services offered by the St. Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross (SVGRCS) as an extension of the Salvation Army, or confusing its first aid activities as hospital emergency care, Vincentian youths hold a misconstrued view of the activities and functions of their local branch of the Red Cross.

Seven months ago I became a volunteer with the SVGRCS and all my flakey prejudices about this fine organization were swiftly replaced. During this short space of time, I have been given the opportunity to develop life skills and gain my first set of work experiences. I have been given the opportunity to work along with a committed team of volunteers to plan a months’ worth of activities for World Red Cross Day 2012.”

(continued on pg. 4)
Volunteer Faces

‘Dear Volunteers’ - The Saint Lucia Red Cross says Thank You!

Terry Gaillard, DG, Saint Lucia Red Cross

We take this opportunity to thank the volunteers who turned out on Sunday April 15th for the NCF Fun Walk & Run and the monthly feeding of the Homeless at the RC Boys Primary School.

We fed over 100 persons. It looks like the numbers are increasing and we must do all in our powers to continue this worthwhile project. I am appealing to you, our volunteers, to solicit a prepared dish or bread from friends, families, co-workers and neighbours to meet the monthly demand.

Fundraising activities for the Regional Youth Camp

Saint Lucia is hosting this year’s Regional Youth Camp from July 29th to August 5th, 2012.

The following fundraising activities have already taken place:

⇒ Second cake sale at the Gable Woods Mall from 8.00 AM. Cakes & pastries are welcome.
⇒ A beach BBQ at Vigie Beach, Saturday, May 26 from 10.00 AM to 6.00 PM.

Thank you to all our volunteers who participated in one way or another at the above activities, so continue to bring your contributions or volunteer your time. Bring friends and family and help in making this camp a success. For more information please contact the office at 452-5582.

Looking forward to hearing from you and seeing you at our fundraising activities.

Check out our Youth Camp Poster on p. 13!

Best Wishes,
Terry Gaillard

Kudos for Red Cross Caribbean Connection

Congratulations CRRO team.....good job.
Regards,
Nelson Castaño
Disaster Risk Management Coordinator

Congratulations everyone! It is wonderful.
Jorge
Jorge Asprilla
Zone Finance Unit Manager

Volunteer Faces

What May 8th meant to me

Mikey Irish, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Red Cross (continued from pg.3)

Activities began with a church service on May 6th, and then there were the radio programs that featured our President, Director General, and Communications Officer. On the big day, the National Society hosted two exhibitions, one in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the other exhibiting the various works of the Red Cross. Myself and several other volunteers went to the streets of our capital Kingstown with our donation cans and our free Red Cross pins; to my surprise the response from the general public was overwhelmingly good. But the highlight for me, a faceless volunteer, was the coverage by the media, the support of the general public, and the visits by the school children at the exhibitions. It was my pleasure to see that my contribution, in part, was well received and that the SVGRCs, once again, was given the opportunity to advocate the cause for humanity.

This month made me think of commitment... commitment to a Movement to which I am now obliged.
News from the Caribbean Regional Representation Office

Strengthening Red Cross Societies of the Caribbean through service and partnership

Who we are

The Red Cross Societies of the Caribbean are served by the Caribbean Regional Representation Office (CRRO) based in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago and by the Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Resource Center in Barbados. In collaboration with our Disaster, Health and Youth networks, we support the twelve English-speaking and one Dutch-speaking Red Cross National Societies of the Caribbean to act before, during and after disasters and in health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people throughout the region. We do this based on our fundamental principles: with impartiality to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.

What we do

The people who work here

Our Regional Office has a dedicated staff of professionals who apply their skills and experience to support the needs of the National Societies in the Caribbean and to build capacities in Disaster Risk Reduction. Our current staff comprises:

Howard Arfin - Head of Office & Regional Representative
Dawn Byng - Health Officer
Jill De Bourg - Human Resources Officer/Administrator
Melanie Cameron - Administrative/Finance Officer, Red Cross Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Resource Centre (part-time)/Barbados Red Cross
Marylee Ellis - Disaster Risk Management Programme Manager
Marcel Goyeneche - Disaster Risk Reduction Delegate
Dara E. Healy - Communications Officer
Kurt Hendricks - Senior Finance Officer
Petra James - Accountant
Arshad Mandol - Accounting Assistant
Reynette Royer - Coordinator, Red Cross Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Resource Centre

We are fortunate to share our office with other Red Cross specialists. Matt Marek, Representative for the American Red Cross, is based in our Port of Spain office supported locally by Jill Marie St. John, Disaster Management Officer, and also recently joined by Sally Moore, American Red Cross Regional Health Delegate.

Also in our Picton Street office is Desislava Ruseva, a volunteer from the Bulgarian Red Cross who is developing a ‘Regional Volunteer Management in Emergencies Toolkit’, and Bo Hurkmans is an intern based at the Barbados Resource Center to develop a ‘Caribbean Regional and Contingency Planning Guide.’

We commit to providing needed support to the National Societies of the Caribbean through traditional, modern and innovative methods. We will continue to ensure the implementation of programmes in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction, Community Health, Organisational Development, Youth, Volunteerism and Humanitarian Principles & Values.

Our regional website www.caribbeanredcross.org is evolving as an important asset for National Societies for use as a portal for training, information access and as a source of Regional Red Cross news and resource materials. Additionally, our new online newsletter Red Cross Caribbean Connection is an important vehicle for highlighting Red Cross contributions to our regional community, since it is shared with staff, volunteers, young people and partners in our region and around the world.

In the coming months we will launch our social media thrust to further expand our ability to share information and impact the lives of the people who make our Movement an important part of Caribbean society.

And of course, our offices are here as a place for research, internships and as a regional presence serving the needs of our Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The CRRO works in support of the National Societies of the Caribbean to develop strategic partnerships with sister National Societies from outside the region, with regional and global Disaster Management organisations, nongovernmental organisations, the Diplomatic Community and related regional and international UN and other agencies. These partnerships enable us to generate financial and other support for the programmes for vulnerable people that are implemented by the staff and volunteers of the Red Cross National Societies in the Caribbean.
Celebrating World Red Cross Red Crescent Day
the Caribbean Way!

Highlighting some of the activities from around the region

St. Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross

Volunteer at an exhibition giving a preview of the new uniform for youth

Youngsters visiting the health exhibition booth on May 8th

Activities to celebrate Youth on the Move were conducted to provide an opportunity for the youth members to showcase their work, and to formally welcome those who had demonstrated an interest in belonging to the largest humanitarian network in the world. Youth members hosted school assemblies and mini-exhibitions for their school population. In addition, youth members of the St. Joseph Convent Secondary School Red Cross hosted an enrolment ceremony to mark the beginning of the formal journey of the humanitarian spirit of the youth members.

The observance of World Red Cross Day came to a climax on Sunday 27th May 2012 with the Annual Saint Lucia Red Cross Rally. Volunteers, members and well-wishers gathered in the small southern village of Laborie under the auspices of the Governor General, Dame Pearlette Louisy, Patron of the Saint Lucia Red Cross. The rally began with a church service, followed by a march past through the village, presentation of certificates to CDRTs and an afternoon of workshops.

In addressing the rally, the longest serving member of the Saint Lucia Red Cross, Kenneth Monplaisir, emphasized the contribution of the youth to the work of the Red Cross. According to Mr. Monplaisir, “words alone cannot underscore or create a clear picture of the work of the youth. Rather, the pictures tells the words.” Likewise, Terencia Gaillard, Director General of the Saint Lucia Red Cross, believes that “the work of the youth must never go unnoticed, as they form the majority membership, and are the very ones who will manage the organisation in the future.”

Meanwhile, CDRTs from around the island turned out in large numbers to participate in the celebration as team members from the community of Millet received their certificates from Dame Pearlette Louisy.

Presentations on back health by Dr Charles Isidore, as well as on First Aid, HIV Prevention Education and Red Cross knowledge by Red Cross volunteers, were the core activities for the afternoon.
Celebrating World Red Cross Red Crescent Day the Caribbean Way!
Highlighting some of the activities from around the region

Belize Red Cross welcomes the community to its offices on WRCRC Day

In celebration of World Red Cross Day 2012 and to commemorate the presence of the Red Cross in Belize, the National Society was represented on the most popular television and radio stations in the country, Channel 5 and Love FM (also has TV coverage), by the Director General, Lily Bowman, and the Disaster Focal Point, Fred Hunter Jr.

Topics discussed were services and programs of the BRC, especially activities involving youth.

The Director General urged the general public to reach out and listen to the youth by engaging them more in their programs in order to develop leadership among them. Later, from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM, the HQ staff and volunteers hosted an Open Day at the Belize Red Cross (BRC) Headquarters. The four departments prepared their assigned space within the building, which included decorating with posters, pamphlets, banners and other materials which would be needed for the presentation of their work. With the aid of visual and virtual materials and through the implementation of interactive games, the communication between the facilitators and the school children proved to be an effective and fun way of strengthening awareness of our work and clarifying doubts.

Seven Primary Schools (St. Mary’s Anglican, Queen Street Baptist, Wesley Upper, Salvation Army, Ebenezer, St. Ignatius, Bethel) were invited and scheduled for 50 minute sessions throughout the day. All seven schools attended. The total number of beneficiaries reached was 150: 74 boys and 61 girls; adults reached, which includes the teachers accompanying school children and walk-in visitors was: 3 males and 12 females.

The event’s success was the direct result of team work and participation of BRC’s staff and the 10 youth volunteers, emphasizing this year’s theme, “Youth on the Move.”

Suriname Red Cross creates a forum for young adults with disabilities

On the 8th of May, World Red Cross Red Crescent Day, there was a workshop and a mini-concert for young adults with disabilities, who are a special target group for the Suriname Red Cross because there is not enough awareness and knowledge of the challenges that this group is facing.

During the workshop, special attention was paid to the challenges that the differently-abled have to confront in daily life. There were discussions with organizations involved in the well-being of this group, where three different themes were identified. The three themes covered were:
1) How do these young adults deal with sexuality; 2) How do parents cope when confronted with a child with a disability, and; 3) Challenges of independent living conditions.

Experts were consulted in these live discussions in order to make recommendations. The discussions resulted in many proposals for actions to be taken.

The young adults pointed out that little is being done with reports that already exist. The Director General, Elviera Sandie, stressed that the Suriname Red Cross would follow up on this successful initiative. “We will keep track of this,” she promised.
‘Improving Climate Change Resilience of Caribbean Countries’ is the focus of the regional project supported by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID). The countries benefitting from this partnership with the Red Cross are Jamaica, Suriname and Antigua and Barbuda.

The programme is designed to reduce the vulnerability of communities through greater knowledge, skill, preparedness, and CC adaptation applications. This is being done by improving local knowledge on safer building practices, implementation of community risk reduction projects and readiness initiatives and increased knowledge of hygiene and epidemic prevention practices.

Roger Bellers was part of a Donors Panel at the recent Red Cross Hurricane Season Preparedness meeting in Barbados. Mr. Bellers spoke of the vision of his organisation for sustainable action within the Caribbean region, DFID’s reasons for wanting to be involved in building country capacity and the significance of the connection with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Following are some of his comments:

“The United Kingdom is one of the first countries in the world to attempt to meet the AID quota as established by the government. DFID wants AID to be effective, it is important therefore that we are able to show the impact from the programmes that we support.”

Why the Caribbean?

“Our work with the Caribbean is important because the UK and the region have a long-standing relationship. Our programmes are geared towards ensuring development gains for those economies most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. A humanitarian response is also important. DFID helps people when disasters happen, we will continue to encourage leadership in the region. and to strengthen the resilience programmes of the countries that we interact with.”

“Our vision is that every country should have a resilience programme by 2015 With this in mind we are pleased to work with the National Societies of the Red Cross.”

Why work with the Red Cross?

“The Red Cross is a key partner in the process of building capacity in the Caribbean. This is invaluable for establishing meaningful links between the support provided by DFID and the people who need it the most. Our collaboration was important for instance in getting aid to the communities in Haiti in a timely manner.”

How can DFID support the regional disaster response system of the Caribbean?

“We provide financial support as well as materials and supplies through our network of warehouses around the region. We also have military assets including a ship available for the hurricane season. Our prime aim with this ship is to support the British Overseas Territories, but of course we will be there for everyone as was the case with Grenada following Hurricane Ivan in 2004.”

How can DFID and the Red Cross National Societies of the Caribbean work better?

“We would like to see greater communication and collaboration amongst all stakeholders, as well as with the key actors on the ground after a disaster. We look forward to playing our part in deepening the relationship that we share with the Caribbean and providing all the support that we can.”

Representatives of ECHO and CIDA were also part of the panel. ECHO has invested over a decade in Red Cross work and is currently funding Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago through their DIPECHO 8 Project. CIDA, through the Canadian Red Cross, is currently supporting Jamaica and Guyana in a 3-year project to build Caribbean Community Resilience to Disaster Risk.
The Management Committee of the CDEMA Council, on the recommendation of the Executive Director, Mr. Jeremy Collymore, has appointed Ms. Elizabeth Riley as Deputy Executive Director of the Agency with effect from 1st April, 2012. Since joining the Agency in 2001 as a Project Officer, Ms. Riley has served in various capacities including that of Programme Manager, where she had direct responsibility for the design, implementation and monitoring of the agency’s work programme.

Since 2009, she has been acting as Deputy Executive Director where her responsibilities included providing strategic leadership in the core business area of the Agency’s work programme and especially in advancing the implementation of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Framework and Strategy.

She has championed the introduction and consolidation of the results-based management approach in the CDEMA system.

Her qualifications include M.A. Economics and Social Sciences (Environment and Development) from the University of Manchester and B.Sc.(Hons.) in Geography from the University of the West Indies Mona Campus, as well as certification in Geographic/Land Information Systems Management.

As Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Riley will be Head of the new Disaster Management Division and will also be responsible for the strategic and technical leadership of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programme of CDEMA. She will also be a key player in the agency’s Partnership Management Programme.

The American Red Cross and the Caribbean:
A long history of cooperation

The American Red Cross (ARC) has a long history of supporting Caribbean National Societies with Disaster Response, Disaster Risk Reduction and Health Programs. After years of fruitful partnership, ARC remains committed to supporting Caribbean NS to increase their reach and impact in their countries by building stronger, healthier and more resilient communities. Additionally, we are looking at ways to work more closely and in greater alignment with the IFRC’s CRRO to complement our strengths and synchronize our approach to support Caribbean NS. This is why the American Red Cross has taken the decision to open a regional office for the Caribbean, based in the CRRO under an Integration Agreement with the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent.

The American Red Cross currently has project agreements with the Belize, the Bahamas, Jamaican, Guyana and Saint Lucia Red Cross National Societies working together in either Disaster Risk Reduction (Saving Lives in the Caribbean through Preparedness) or Health sectors (Caribbean HIV/AIDS Program — CHAP) and in some cases both. As ARC prepares to build up its delegation team in Port of Spain, Trinidad, it will be lead by Matthew Marek, ARC Representative for the Caribbean. Matt comes to the CRRO after working in the ARC Haiti Delegation for almost 5 years. Sally Moore will be heading the health programs in the region.

Sally was previously based in the Bahamas, where she successfully implemented CHAP for two years. Sally joined the team in Port of Spain in June. As well, Jill Marie St. John, present in the CRRO since January, continues as the ARC Disaster Management Officer. Jill Marie brings years of disaster management and Red Cross experience, as she has worked with the IFRC, DFID, and with overseas branches in the past. The ARC delegation expects to be at full capacity by August. As you can see, Matthew, Sally, and Jill all have significant experience in the Red Cross global network, in particular in the Caribbean region. They are excited to be here working to help the most vulnerable populations.

For more information: Matthew Marek, American Red Cross Representative for the Caribbean, matthew.marek@redcross.org
Supporting our National Societies in Human Resource Development

Strategy 2020, through Enabling Action 1, focuses on the capacity building of our National Societies. This provides an ideal opportunity for HR to work alongside our NS in strengthening their Human Resources capacity. Our HR team in the Americas Zone will position itself to be part of the driving force in realizing the developmental goals of our National Societies, while enhancing their ability to build strong HR Units. This will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results while finding the equilibrium between being a strategic partner and the operational day-to-day reality. Our goal is to develop a framework that will support NS towards a holistic approach in strategically managing their employees who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organization.

By end of 2012, the Americas Zone HR Team aims to have in place:

⇒ An established HR network of IFRC and NS professionals within the regions to interact more effectively.
⇒ Expanded access to learning opportunities by NS staff and volunteers through IFRC’s Learning Platform.
⇒ Peer-to-peer mentoring and support, and encouraging collaboration and joint initiatives among NS in maximizing HR support towards strengthening NS HR Development.
⇒ Documented global knowledge sharing, best practices and models, as well as lessons learned.
⇒ Better use of communication and information tools such as FedNet for HR associates.

Reduce our Risk, Build our Resilience: innovative tools, training and support from the Red Cross Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Resource Centre

In July, Reynette temporarily leaves us to go off on maternity leave. We wish her and her husband a peaceful and safe delivery and look forward to seeing her lovely smile when she returns. Blessings Reynette from all of us!

Internships important for tool development

Bo Hurkmans: Since May 2012, Bo’s main area of work has been on the completion of the ‘Response and Contingency Planning Guide for Caribbean Red Cross National Societies’ which started in mid-2011 with substantive technical support from Tamara Lovell of the Barbados Red Cross who, at that time, was interning with the Centre. Immediately prior to this internship, Bo was interning with the Disaster and Crisis Management Department at the IFRC Secretariat in Geneva, where he assisted the Programme Support Team in a number of areas including, but not limited to, developing tools, establishment of a community of practice and case study development. In fact, Bo was instrumental in supporting the development of the 2012 version of the IFRC Contingency Planning Guide, so his experience is particularly relevant as the Centre seeks to finalise a complementary tool that is relevant, contextual and in keeping with IFRC guidelines. This internship and the finalisation of this tool are key activities in the Centre’s work plan and are funded with the kind support of CIDA and the Canadian Red Cross through the Caribbean Community Resilience to Disaster Risk (CCRDR) Project. From July to October 2012, Bo will transition from Intern to Acting Coordinator while Reynette is on maternity leave. The Centre thanks all in advance for the support provided to Bo as he aims to ensure that the Centre’s deliverables are kept on track.

Melissa Allemant: As the focal point for the www.desaprender.org knowledge management platform and as a communications specialist, Melissa and the Resource Centre Coordinator, Reynette, have developed a close and strategic relationship for the last 1.5 years. Melissa will be providing specific support to the Resource Centre and to its Acting Coordinator in July and August on: 1) tool adaptation (support to the finalisation of the Response and Contingency Planning Guide and adaptation of a Simulations Guide for NS; 2) strengthened knowledge management, and; 3) deepening the relationship between Latin America and the Caribbean in line with the public awareness and public education strategy.

Omar-Joel Overman (Suriname Red Cross): Congratulations to Omar of the Suriname Red Cross! Omar submitted an innovative proposed logo for the Resource Centre and acronym (CADRIM). Omar will be interning at the Centre for one week at some point between July and December 2012. The Resource Centre will work with a graphic artist to further build on this creative logo and it will be launched later in 2012.
Jamaica has the honour of having one of its nationals serving as a Vice President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He is Dr. Jaslin Salmon, Vice President for the Americas, which embraces the 35 countries of North and South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and he holds this position until 2013. He also chairs the High Level Focus Group on Haiti, appointed by the governing body of the Red Cross Red Crescent Federation, to monitor the implementation of policies and ensure their effectiveness.

He was born in Jamaica, however Dr. Salmon spent most of his adult life in North America. By the late 1990s, equipped with a PhD in sociology from the University of Illinois (Chicago), he had risen to prominence as a university professor, organizational consultant, author and civil rights leader. However he had a strong desire to serve his country, and in 1997, as he explained in a recent interview, “I walked away from an offer to head the institution where I had been Professor of Sociology and came home.”

He took on the tough job of Advisor responsible for Poverty Eradication in the Office of the Prime Minister. While there, he was introduced to the Jamaica Red Cross by a colleague. He took to the JRC like a duck to water. First, he became a member of the JRC’s HIV/AIDS Committee, then Chairman of the Committee, then Chairman of the Care Council, then Vice President and finally, in 2006, President.

Speaking of the role of the JRC in Jamaica, Dr. Salmon explained that around the globe, the National Societies of the International Federation have a unique relationship with governments, in that each National Society serves as auxiliary to the government. During his presidency, the biggest natural disaster for Jamaica was Hurricane Dean which made heavy demands on the JRC services. The JRC also responded to the devastating earthquake in Haiti, raising over $27 million USD.

There was also the State of Emergency, which began at the end of May 2010 and confined residents of Tivoli Gardens and other areas of West Kingston to their communities. “I had just returned from Geneva,” remembers Dr. Salmon. “In the morning, I got a call from the Prime Minister inviting me to join a group that would go into Tivoli. I had never gone into a war zone before … had never seen so many dead bodies. But we had a job to do and we did it. We were able to verify that a great deal of what we had been hearing was rumour. But people were confined to their homes and it was a traumatic experience. We went in and provided medication, food and psycho-social support.”

Dr. Salmon is passionately committed to the JRC and as he says, “When I am involved in anything, I throw my whole being into it.” He is proud of the work of the organization: “We have the biggest HIV/AIDS programme outside of government. Our ‘Together We Can’ programme was adopted by the International Federation and has been translated into other languages. The JRC does tremendous work to impact poverty. The organization works with school drop outs, provides meals for the destitute and gives assistance with health care.”

While expressing appreciation for the worldwide support that the JRC enjoys, he cautioned, “... if we want our friends abroad to continue supporting us, we have to make our contribution here at home.” His advice to everyone who will listen is, “Join the Red Cross. Become a member.”

Dr. Salmon ended his term of office with words of gratitude. ‘I want to thank the Jamaica Red Cross for giving me the opportunity to serve the Red Cross and my country,” he said. “I thank everyone for supporting me at the international level and I commit myself to serving the organization for as long as I can do so.”
Red Health Caribbean

**Saving Lives in the Caribbean through Preparedness**

Phase III of the OFDA Disaster Risk Reduction initiative was launched in the Bahamas earlier this year under the name “Saving Lives in the Caribbean through Preparedness.”

We were very pleased to host the workshop here in the Bahamas. Ms. Caroline Turnquest, Director General, welcomed the delegates after which she invited Captain Stephen Russell, Head of our National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to give remarks. Captain Russell was very enthusiastic about the successful relationship that we have with them. The workshop was quite an immersion experience for the new Project staff. The delegates learned of each other’s challenges, which they found were very similar. Despite diversities, they realized that the steps taken to resolve them were much the same.

After three days of hard work, NEMA provided transportation for an island tour. During the tour, participants drove through the community of Gambier, where work was done in a previous phase of the Project. Later that evening, the BRC Field Officer showed a more relaxed side of the Bahamas at the local “Fish Fry” where one can sample the best in Bahamian cuisine! It was then on to Paradise Island to see the lost city of Atlantis. This wrapped up the meeting, and by the end of the week, everyone had left to their respective countries to start or continue the “Saving Lives in the Caribbean through Preparedness” Project.

Keep checking Red Cross Caribbean Connection and caribbeanredcross.org for more updates and photos from our ‘Saving Lives’ project!

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**Hurricane Season is here again. Are you prepared for the health challenges that may come?**

**Dawn Byng provides some practical advice**

The Hurricane Season is here again! Should a severe storm strike, will you be prepared for the myriad of challenges to be faced in assuring the health of your community? First, there are the immediate medical needs of persons who were injured, or whose care for chronic non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes and hypertension) had lapsed when they were cut off from services. The short and long-term mental health needs of victims and responders must be addressed as well as providing access to fresh water and restoring safe sewage systems. Additional challenges include keeping community health workers and volunteers safe, preventing communicable diseases from spreading in shelters and communities, assuring the safety of food supplies, and controlling vectors.

It should be noted that the major cause of deaths in emergency situations are disease outbreaks. During the hurricane season, the highest incidences are water-borne and include diarrheal diseases, malaria and dengue haemorrhagic fever.

Emergency preparedness and resilience practices must be in place so that these challenges are recognized and addressed promptly. This was reinforced by the joint statement made by the IFRC, the Global Health Workforce Alliance, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO in October of 2011. The Statement highlights the vital role of community health workers, including volunteers, in building local resilience to disasters, and calls for governments and all partners to invest in strengthening their capacities.

The Red Cross is contributing to capacity strengthening by providing opportunities to orientate community personnel to the concept of epidemic control. Regional training in Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV) and Water Sanitation/HP household preparedness (Kit2) took place last November. This training will now be complemented by the Caribbean regional rollout of the Community Base Health and First Aid (CBHFA) which began in June of 2012.

Linking the two methodologies is an opportunity for National Societies to develop more coherent and integrated health interventions, particularly as relates to hurricane preparedness.
The Region benefits from training in Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA)

The second Caribbean Regional CBHFA Facilitators Workshop took place between the 18th to the 23rd of June, 2012 in Antigua & Barbuda. This workshop was the last of four for this cycle in the Americas region.

Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) is the Red Cross Red Crescent’s approach to empowering communities and their volunteers to take charge of their health. This is achieved by mobilizing communities to address their priority health needs by using simple tools adapted to local contexts. The CBHFA approach seeks to create healthy, resilient communities worldwide, thus playing a vital part in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ Strategy 2020, in the Strategic Operational Framework (SOF) for Health 2015, and contributes to Millennium Development Goals 4, 5, 6 and 7.

The CBHFA training is being made possible through the support of the American and Finnish Red Cross. Keep checking our Red Cross Caribbean Connection and the website caribbeanredcross.org for more updates and photos on this important activity.

Did you Know?

Fun Facts about the Dominica Red Cross

⇒ In 1993 the Dominica Red Cross advocated for mandatory First Aid certification of all tour guides certified by the Ministry of Tourism, and remains the sole training provider for tour guides.
⇒ DRC successfully ran a Relief Distribution Programme which benefitted more than half (38,000 persons) of the island population over a 4-month period following Hurricanes Marilyn and Luis in 1995.
⇒ DRC was the first English-speaking Caribbean National Society to ‘move into technology’ by carrying out the 1st email exchange with the Regional Delegation Office when it was based in Jamaica.
⇒ The DRC Club 25 Youth Group recruitment activities since 2010 accounts for a 15% increase in the blood donor database at the Blood Lab, Princess Margaret Hospital.
⇒ Since 1998, a total of 41 communities island-wide have benefitted from DRC facilitated CBDM Programmes.
On a good note ...

Memories of a successful Hurricane Season Preparedness Meeting
Barbados, 23rd - 25th May 2012

Red Cross Caribbean Connection

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We in the Caribbean are looking forward to having closer ties between desaprender.org and caribbeanredcross.org to benefit from the resources that we each have.

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