

**Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded Project: Building Community Resilience.**

The toll of natural and man-made disasters on communities over the past twenty-five years has been quite significant economically, socially and environmentally, resulting in significant losses. The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), recognizes that local communities are critical partners in the development and risk reduction process. Through the establishment of community-based disaster management programmes, ODPEM has been able to transform vulnerable communities into more resilient ones.

The aim of this project is to have sustainable partnerships in disaster mitigation/emergency response at community, parish and national levels. A related goal is to train selected vulnerable communities in disaster mitigation/emergency response, with community developed emergency response/mitigation plans and teams in operation. The project will embark on a three year programme that will engage all stakeholders in the process of building community resilience to manage and reduce the impact of disasters, and to make Jamaica a disaster resilient country.

ODPEM and its main partners will work together to establish/consolidate zones island wide, and through its community-based partners, will participate in the design of emergency mitigation and response plans and the training and development of multi-stakeholder teams in each of the selected communities. The overall goal of the project is to see that “every community in Jamaica is resilient to natural disasters, working with local and central government levels in a networked system to take sustainable long term hazard prevention measures and after every natural or man-made disaster, every community is able to assess damage and analyse needs, ensuring that no vulnerable person is left without the assistance they require.”

The expected results of this project are the establishment of sustainable partnerships in disaster mitigation and emergency response at community, parish and national levels, and the creation of a project secretariat.