

Trip Report – Jamaica REA Workshop and Discussions
18-21 September 2005

To: CARE Atlanta
USAID Jamaica
Cc: OFDA (Pratt), Interworks (Thompson), BHRC (Twigg)
From: C. Kelly, Lead Researcher, REA Project

23 September 2005

Purpose

This report covers a three day visit to Kingston Jamaica at the request of the Office of the Environment, USAID Jamaica to:

1. Discuss the status of inclusion of environmental issues into disaster management efforts in Jamaica,
2. Conduct a short workshop on different post-disaster environmental impact assessment tools for key stakeholders in Jamaica, and,
3. Discuss next steps in terms of improving disaster management-environment linkages.

USAID Jamaica provided funding for travel and per diem in Jamaica. The REA Project covered compensation costs under the training coordination and post disaster assessment tools workshop costs areas. The initiative for the TDY came from Karen McDonald-Gayle of the Office of the Environment, who had attended the REA training course.

Results

There was general agreement among the parties contacted that there needs to be a stronger and more effective inclusion of environmental issues in disaster preparedness and response in Jamaica. Specifically, there was:

1. Agreement among various governmental and private sector partners that post disaster assessment of environmental issues can be improved by:
 - a. Increasing the number of environment-focused assessment tools used in Jamaica, and,
 - b. Adapting assessment tools currently available to conditions in Jamaica.
2. Agreement on the need for a longer facilitated workshop for more in depth discussions about:
 - a. Post and pre disaster impact assessment tools which can be or have been used in Jamaica, and,
 - b. How to modify these tools for conditions in Jamaica.
3. An opportunity to work with OFDA assistance to the Jamaican Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) on community level assessment capacity building.
4. An opportunity for cooperation with UNEP's Regional Office on post Ivan environmental impact assessment and Caribbean-wide development of improved post and pre disaster environmental impact assessment procedures.

Activities

Consultations

A series of meetings was held with key stakeholders before and after the workshop (see attached schedule).

ODPEM

Discussions centered on the role of ODPEM before and following disasters and the need to improve the incorporation of environmental issues into the pre-disaster and post disaster assessment process. Opportunities for the use of the REA in the post-disaster period were covered as were the use of the ECLAC tool (several ODPEM staff participated in the use of this tool in Jamaica in the past.)

On-going OFDA supported efforts to improve needs assessment and increase Parish/community level capacities were discussed. The potential use of parts of the REA in these efforts were noted, particularly given that many disaster events in Jamaica have close linkages to environmental conditions.

Present at the meeting were: Ronald Jackson (Deputy Director), Cecil Baily, Michelle Edwards (both of Hazard Mitigation Unit) and Karyll Johnston (USAID).

Ministry of Land and Environment (MinLE)

Initial discussions centered on the disaster management process and policy concerns. The Ministry has developed a natural hazards mitigation policy which is currently in Cabinet review. Discussions evolved into how the REA and related tools could be used in the implementation of the policy once approved.

It was noted that the GoJ did ECLAC-based assessments following Hurricanes Gilbert and Ivan and hurricanes earlier this year. Discussion focused on the utility of these assessments, particularly the extent they influenced relief and recovery activities. An agreement was made to hold a follow-up conversation after the workshop.

Present at the meeting were: Ms. Barnaby and Mr. Brown of the Ministry and Karyll Johnston, USAID/Jamaica.

A phone conversation was held with Mr. Brown after the workshop. The discussion focused on the need for a more comprehensive approach to disaster-related environmental assessment in Jamaica to support the natural hazard reduction policy (in review). Assessment tools and procedures need to be useful, appropriate to Jamaica and provide appropriate feed-in to the implementation of disaster reduction policies as well as post disaster relief.

Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)

Discussions focused on the use and limitations face with the ECLAC tool. (PIOJ leads the ECLAC assessment process in Jamaica.) In particular, completing some of the economic modeling and converting narrative information on environment damage (and social impact) into economic results were noted as recurrent challenges.

In addition, it was not always clear what impact the ECLAC-based reports were having in relief, recovery or mitigation. At the same time, there appears to be an expectation that an ECLAC-based report was a prerequisite for international financial institute funding following a major disaster.

In the case of mitigation, it was noted that the impact of the ECLAC results may occur over many years. It was suggested that the ECLAC results had had an impact in moving forward the natural hazard mitigation policy under consideration by the Cabinet.

Present at the meeting were Hopeton Peterson and Charmaine Selvyn of PIOJ.

USAID Deputy Director and USAID Staff

Discussions took place on the day following the workshop. After a general review of activities to date the idea of holding a larger more detailed workshop was presented by Ms. Johnston and discussed by those present. Support for the idea was positive and direction was given to include such an effort in the planning for new environment-related activities being funded through the Mission.

Linkages between the REA and OFDA-funded training activities were also discussed. The possibility of holding an REA-based training, possibly focused on Parish/community disaster management personnel, was broached and will be pursued with the OFDA-funded assistance to ODPEM.

Present at the meeting were Kevin Rushing (Deputy Director), a USAID consultant and Karyll Johnston.

UNEP Regional Office

A phone conversation was held with the UNEP Regional Coordination Office on the REA, consultations and workshop in Jamaica. UNEP is funding a review of the environmental impacts of Hurricane Ivan. There was interest in the IUCN tool to assist in this assessment. The idea of creating a more evolved but Jamaica-appropriate set of pre and post disaster environmental impact tools was discussed.

Finally, the REA project plan to hold a workshop consultation on various disaster related environmental impact assessment tools was discussed and the possibility of UNEP support was raised. The workshop would showcase disaster related environmental assessment tools and experiences in the Caribbean as leaders for similar tool development elsewhere in the world. A Jamaica-level workshop would feed into the international workshop.

Franklyn Mc Donald

Mr. Mc Donald is a former head of ODPEM's predecessor and the National Environmental Protection Agency as well as a consultant to UNEP. Discussions focused on the evolution of environmental and disaster management policy in Jamaica, opportunities and background for an expanded workshop on assessment tools and regional involvement in the workshop consultation on various disaster related environmental impact assessment tools.

Workshop and Presentation

Environmental Impact and Disaster Response: An Overview of Assessment Methods and Issues

The workshop objectives were to:

- Provide an overview of different approaches and issues related to assessment of environmental issues during disaster relief and immediate recovery operations.
- Provide an opportunity to use one part of the REA related to identifying the environmental impact of relief assistance.

A schedule and list of attendees is provided below.

Verbal participant feedback indicated that the workshop objectives had been achieved. An informal agreement was made between JIEP, NEPA, ODPEM and MinLE

participants to hold further discussions on creating a Jamaica-specific set of environmental impact assessment tools for use before and after disasters.

Workshop Schedule¹

Timing	Topic
0930 - 1000	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop schedule and objectives • Introductions by presenter and participants • Housekeeping matters.
1000 – 1030	Review of Disaster Management Fundamentals
1030 – 1145	Disasters and the Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of linkages and issues • Introduction of REA, UNHCR, ECLAC and IUCN assessment tools • Key actors in post-disaster environmental assessment.
1145 - 1200	Break
1200 – 1230	The IUCN Approach: An Overview
1230 – 1300	The ECLAC Approach: An Overview. Part of this session was presented by Hopeton Peterson, PIOJ) and covered issues related to the use of the ECLAC approach in Jamaica.
1300 – 1330	The REA Approach (Working Lunch)
1330 – 1420	Group Exercise: REA Unmet Needs and Relief Assistance Impact Checklists. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to exercise • Group completion of the checklists • Discussion of results
1420 - 1445	Improving Environment-Disaster Assessment Linkages in Jamaica <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of next steps.
1445	Closing

Participants received a CD which includes the REA, UNHCR, ECLAC and IUCN tools, as well as additional information useful in post-disaster environmental impact assessment.

Name	Organization	Email
Yolanda Hill	USAID	yhill@usaid.gov
Alan Ross	USAID/OFDA	aross@kasnet.com
Sasha Parke	USAID	sparke@usaid.gov
Hopeton Peterson	Planning Institute of Jamaica	hopeton_peterson@pioj.gov.jm
Charmaine Selvyn	Planning Institute of Jamaica	cselvyn@pioj.gov.jm
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Michelle Edwards	Office of Disaster Preparedness	medwards@odpem.org.jm
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Marvette Brown	National Environment & Planning Agency	mbrown@nepa.gov.jm
Cowell Lyn	National Environment & Planning Agency	clyn@nepa.gov.jm
Rohan Richards	Ministry of Land & Environment	r-richards@anbell.net
Jerome Smith	National Environment & Planning Agency	jsmith@nepa.gov.jm

¹ The original schedule was originally scheduled from 0900 to 1600 but was shortened due to external factors.

Trevor Ramikie	National Environment & Planning Agency	tramikie@nepa.gov.jm
Charles Kelly	Facilitator, OFDA/Consultant (REA)	72734.2412@compuserve.com

Jamaica Institute of Environmental Professionals (JIEP)

A one hour presentation was made on Rapid Assessment of Environmental Impacts during Disasters at the invitation of JIEP on the evening of 20 September. Approximately 50 persons attended.

The presentation covered:

- o A Review of the REA,
- o A Summary of other IUCN and ECLAC tools and,
- o An discussion of possible roles of environmental professionals in improving disaster related environmental assessments in Jamaica.

The presentation led into further discussion about disaster-related environmental impact assessment gaps and needs in Jamaica. Specific points raised included:

- o Progress and linkages between the draft Natural Hazard Mitigation Policy and improved incorporation of environmental issues into the hazard reduction process.
- o The state of disaster-environment assessment efforts in Jamaica in relation to other parts of the world. (Jamaica may be a relative leader in this area.)
- o Who will pay for doing more details post disaster environmental assessments.
- o The role of risk assessment in defining environmental impacts and consequences.
- o The need for longer term reviews of environmental impacts of disasters in Jamaica.
- o The lack of standards for assessing damage making it hard to evaluate environmental and other damage.

Discussions following the presentation focused on the need for concerns parties in Jamaica to sit down and work out a complete set of disaster focused environmental assessment tools appropriate for Jamaica.

Schedule

18 September

0800 – 1330 Travel to Kingston

19 September

0800 – 0930 Intro meeting at USAID

1000 – 1130 ODPEM

1230 – 1330 Ministry of Land and Environment

1530 – 1645 Planning Institute of Jamaica

20 September

0930 – 1430 Workshop on Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters

1730 – 1930 Presentation at Jamaican Institute of Environmental Professionals

21 September

0800 – 0900 Meeting with USAID Deputy Director

1000 – 1230 Phone calls with Ministry of Land and Environment, UNDP Regional Program

1430 – 2230 Travel to Washington

Workshop Outline and Participants
 Environmental Impact and Disaster Response:
 An Overview of Assessment Methods and Issues

Moderated by:
 Charles Kelly, Lead Researcher,
 Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters Project
 Benfield Hazard Research Centre
 University College London

Objectives

Provide an overview of different approaches and issues related to assessment of environmental issues during disaster relief and immediate recovery operations.

Provide an opportunity to use one part of the REA related to identifying the environmental impact of relief assistance.

Workshop Outline

Timing	Topic
0900-0915	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop schedule and objectives • Introductions by presenter and participants • Housekeeping matters.
0915 – 0945	Review of Disaster Management Fundamentals
0945 – 1030	Disasters and the Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of linkages and issues • Introduction of REA, UNHCR, ECLAC and IUCN assessment tools • Key actors in post-disaster environmental assessment.
1030 – 1045	Break
1130 – 1210	The IUCN Approach: An Overview
1310 – 1345	The ECLAC Approach: An Overview
1345 – 1410	The REA Approach (Working Lunch)
1410 – 1510	Group Exercise: REA Unmet Needs and Relief Assistance Impact Checklists. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to exercise • Group completion of the checklists • Presentation of results • Discussion Time includes coffee/tea break.
1510 – 1545	Improving Environment-Disaster Assessment Linkages in Jamaica <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group brainstorming • Presentation of action “plans” • Discussion
1545 – 1600	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of objectives and workshop activities. • Additional sources of information • Comments and questions from participants

Participants received a CD which includes the REA, UNHCR, ECLAC and IUCN tools, as well as additional information useful in post-disaster environmental impact assessment.

Name	Organization	Email
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Yolanda Hill	USAID	yhill@usaid.gov
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