



IUR - SIDS INTEGRATED URBAN RESILIENCE IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES AND COASTAL CITIES

NATIONAL AND CITY 'STATE OF PLAY'
ROSEAU, DOMINICA



ABOUT IUR - SIDS

The Integrated Urban Resilience in Small Island Developing States and Coastal Cities (IUR-SIDS) is a Joint global Programme by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) processed through a Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for urban risk reduction and resilience building action. The Joint global Programme will unfold during a 2023-2025 first phase reaching 10 countries/cities, which will lay the foundation for potential scaling-up and scaling-out of the approach to support more cities and countries in a second phase from 2026 to 2030. The overall goal of the IUR-SIDS programme is that, by 2030, at least 100 small and medium-sized cities are supported to develop risk-informed urban development plans and implement urban resilience building interventions addressing all resilience dimensions viz. physical, environmental and socio-economic -- while strengthening urban governance informed by a systems' thinking to secure resilient development outcomes. Through delivering as One, the two UN agencies will maximize synergies of action, opens opportunities and provide coherent results in SIDS and coastal cities.

About UNDP

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat supports national and local governments, academia, civil society and the private sector, with the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and SDG11, which aims for sustainable cities and communities. We support processes of institutional capacity-building regarding sustainable urbanization and knowledge-transfer between regional counterparts, in particular through key initiatives like National Urban Policies, the City Prosperity Initiatives, Urban Integrated Solutions and others.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTEXT FOR RISK-IN- FORMED URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE-BUILDING	04
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT	10
ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES IN DRR, CC-CCA, RESILIENCE	12
ADDITIONAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER FOR ENGAGEMENT	13
REFERENCES	14

01.

CONTEXT FOR RISK-INFORMED URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE-BUILDING

I. National / City policies and strategies – Priorities for action (sustainable development, climate action, urban/town planning, DRR, NAPs, etc.)

The National Resilience Development Strategy (NRDS) – Dominica 2030 is a national multi-sectoral policy document by the Government of Dominica for 2018-2030. It outlines the country's priorities for sustainable economic growth in front of global challenges, in particular climate change. It is a comprehensive strategic framework built around three major axes: 1) the Sustainable Development Goals, 2) the vision for “Building the First Climate Resilient Country in the World”, and 3) people-centered development.

The Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan (CRRP) of Dominica is a national policy, developed under the requirements of the Climate Resilience Act – a legal instrument passed in 2018 – serving as a resilient roadmap for the operationalization of the NRDS for 2020-2030. The CRRP reflects three pillars of resilience, as defined in the NRDS: 1) climate resilient systems, 2) prudent disaster risk management systems, and 3) effective disaster response and recovery. It elaborates the objectives and strategies in the NRDS into specific initiatives and activities that will guide the preparation of sector strategies and plans, involving implementing and donor agencies, stakeholders in the public and private sectors, and the population at large. Operating as a statutory government agency, the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) leads and coordinates strategic initiatives across sectors in Dominica in accordance with the CRRP, with the goal of making the country the world's first climate resilient nation.

The Roseau Development Plan, Strategy and Action Plan 2020 (RDPSAP) provides a roadmap to assist the Government of Dominica in its macro-economic diversification efforts in the capital, by providing guidance for the management of socio-economic and physical development. The plan is intended to enhance economic opportunities by strengthening the tourism assets of Roseau, as well as to guide the city's physical development over the next fifteen years, ensuring a progressive regulated development of the city and proposing measures to strengthen the Planning Authority under



UN Photo/ Rick Bajornas - Scene from Roseau in October 2017

the Physical Planning Act. The plan was developed through a participatory process that involved input from stakeholders, including inhabitants, businesses, and government agencies.

The Disaster Risk Finance Strategy 2022 – 2030 (DRFS) is a comprehensive national strategy to strengthen the ability of the Government of Dominica to assess, reduce and manage fiscal risk associated with disasters, as well as improve Dominica’s response capacity. The DRFS has three overarching resilience goals that will enable Dominica to manage the fiscal impact of disasters and to build resilience. It may be considered as the CRRP’s financing strategy and aligns with the Disaster Resilience Strategy (DRS), a comprehensive plan formulated by the Government with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2021, that includes policies, costs, and financing to build resilience against disasters, in consultation and collaboration with other development partners.

II. Administrative / Political structure, electoral cycle and next elections (National government; city nodal authority)

Dominica is a democratic republic with two levels of government: national and local. At national level, Dominica has a unicameral parliament known as the House of Assembly constitutionally elected every five years, with 30 members plus the Speaker and Attorney-General. There are 21 directly elected members, known as representatives, and nine senators appointed by the President, on the advice of the Prime Minister (also appointed by the President) and the leader of the opposition. The President is nominated by the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition and elected by the House of Assembly. The President acts as the head of State while the Prime Minister as the head of Government. The next national election should be held in December 2027.

Dominica has a centralized system of government, with local governments having mostly administrative functions. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) is charged with providing affordable housing to citizens, facilitating urban development and fostering responsible land use, while the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Community Development is responsible for overseeing all local governments through its Department of Local Government and Community Development. The key functions of the Department include providing oversight and supervision to all Local Authorities, including the Roseau City Council. It provides resources to Local Authorities as well as technical, administrative, planning and organizational support. The Department is also in charge of disaster management.

The city of Roseau is governed locally by the Roseau City Council, which reports to the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Community Development. The Roseau City Council comprises thirteen persons, eight of whom are elected and five appointed by the Minister, following its main governing law the Roseau City Council Act. Local elections are held every three years, with the most recent held in February 2023.



Flickr/ reivax - Roseau, Dominica

III. Local competencies and jurisdictions (relevant to interventions; key sectors and stakeholders)

The Roseau City Council is empowered to regulate the activities in Roseau, by making by-laws and enforcing them within the municipal area. It receives transfers from the national government and has powers to raise revenue from property and land taxes. It is also authorized to purchase lands or buildings for public use, establishes and regulates the markets, maintains the water works, parks, gardens and any place of recreation.

In recent years, even though the municipality expanded, the function of the Council has been affected by the establishment of specialized national agencies for water, sewer and health services. As a result, many of the services once provided by the Council are now distributed among those agencies.

Regarding key stakeholders, as the capital of Dominica, Roseau is the main hub for government agencies and public institutions, business and commerce, medical and healthcare facilities, infrastructure and service providers, and education and information services, among others. The city hosts various local offices of international organizations and NGOs.

IV. Revenue and financing streams – national budgeting for city level planning, development and implementation, etc.

Since Dominica has a centralized system of government, budgeting for city level planning, development and implementation in Roseau is included globally in each Ministry's mandate. As examples, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Climate Resilience and Social Security is overseeing physical planning island-wide, leading the physical components outlined in the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) is facilitating development in key sectors such as tourism, infrastructure (road, bridges, ports, etc.), housing, recreation/sports, water supply, or social services.

Regarding local authority's administrative functions, the central government of Dominica provides annual grants to each local authority, as the funds raised from local property and land taxes are inadequate to meet local needs.

V. Regional and international partners' engagement and investments – development investments by IFIs, regional or other entities, etc.

The Government of Dominica is one of the borrowing members of the Caribbean Development Bank (CBD) and the World Bank. Both institutions have been supporting a multitude of projects island wide. The Caribbean Development Bank's engagement is set out through the Country Engagement Strategy (CES) for the period 2020-2024. Recently CBD approved the Water Sector Strategic Project to improve the performance, operational capacity and resilience of water-related infrastructure and stakeholders. Last year, the World Bank approved two loans for Dominica to accelerate the recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, protect the lives and livelihoods of citizens, accelerate policy reforms and increase Dominica's resilience to future shocks.

The Canada-Caribbean Resilience Facility (CRF) is a single-donor World Bank-executed trust fund, managed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). The trust fund is

financed by the Government of Canada and is valued at Canadian dollar (CAD) 20 million (estimated US\$15.5 million). The Facility was established to achieve more effective and coordinated gender-informed climate-resilient preparedness, recovery, and public financial management practices over a five-year period (2019-2023) in nine Caribbean countries, including Belize, Dominica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. In fiscal year 2022, the CRF disbursed US\$277,655 in Dominica.

In 2017, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established a project office to assist the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica with immediate response, recovery and reconstruction. Since the launch of the project office, the UNDP portfolio has scaled up significantly and currently includes a focus on recovery, resilience, livelihood strengthening and social protection, among other projects. Under the projects Improving Recovery Planning & Capacities for Resilience in the Caribbean and Development of Climate Resilience & Recovery Plan, UNDP along with the Dominican Office of Disaster Management advanced the creation of the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan (CRRP). UNDP also provides implementation support to the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) and in partnership with the UK Government, monitors the progress of CREAD in delivering on the CRRP. Current UNDP activities in the Commonwealth of Dominica are guided by the Multi-Country Programme Document for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean for 2022–2026, which includes 10 Eastern Caribbean countries and territories.

After Hurricane Maria and the announcement of the vision for the world's first climate resilient nation, a variety of projects has been developed, implemented or funded to support this objective by many international organizations, institutions and development partners such as the Green Climate Fund, GFDRR, Agence Française de Développement, Government of China, Climate Investment Funds, Government of Canada, International Monetary Fund, Government of Japan, Global Green Growth Institute, among others.



UNDP/ RBLAC Domnica Recovery Project

VI. Development challenges and gaps

Dominica is a small island developing state facing a multitude of challenges: economic, social, and environmental. The island is particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change like sea level rise. Its position within the Atlantic hurricane belt combined with its climate makes it vulnerable to hydrometeorological hazards such as tropical storms, storm surges, extreme weather events (flood, drought and heatwaves), and unfamiliar rainfall patterns. In 2017, the passage of Hurricane Maria resulted in the destruction of over 90% of the island's infrastructure and homes, as well as over 85% loss of forest cover. Other significant natural occurrences threatening the island are geophysical: volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

In recent years, the island has been under severe economic stress as a result of inadequate fiscal management leading to unsustainable debt levels. With a lack of diversity in an economy driven largely by tourism and agriculture, its vulnerability was further aggravated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic also exacerbated other socio-economic issues such as high poverty rate, unemployment, limited access to basic services, lack of social cohesion, limited human resources and capacity, and increasing inequality. Infrastructure throughout the island is also of concern, being either inadequate or insufficient, as well as the natural environment and natural resources, suffering from mismanagement.

Adding to these and its own local development challenges, the city of Roseau, capital of Dominica, has several important socio-economic issues, such as poor housing conditions, unemployment, and poverty. Housing conditions in central Roseau have been deteriorating, with derelict and dilapidated buildings, vacant lots, and limited access to sanitation, resulting in a dramatic decline in population, depleted housing stock, poor housing condition, and decay of the city's landscape. Unemployment is one of the main causes of poverty in the city, and represents around 23% of the inhabitants. Failure to adequately address these issues could retard the overall development of the city, and negatively impact development initiatives in the main economic sector, the tourism industry.



UNDP/ Dominica - Reconstruction efforts

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT 02.

I. Global policy frameworks and positioning

On September 23rd, 2017, five days after Hurricane Maria decimated Dominica, its Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skerrit, addressed the general debate of the 72nd session of the UNGA, where he declared Dominica an “international humanitarian emergency” and announced his aim to rebuild Dominica as the first climate resilient nation in the world.

On September 21st, 2022, the president of Dominica, H.E. Mr. Charles Angelo Savarin, addressed the 77th session of the UNGA where he championed the call for collective global action on building the resilience of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and on protecting the progress achieved over the past two decades. Warning of the eventual disappearance of some small island States and the destruction of others, he reiterated the call for the disbursement of climate financing to those States at the upcoming COP27.



UN Photo/ Cia Pak - Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit at UNGA

II. Agenda 2030

VNR: Dominica Voluntary National Review 2022.

NDC: Intended Nationally Determined Contribution released in 2015; Updated Nationally Determined Contribution released in 2022.

NAP: under development, funded by the Green Climate Fund, with support from the Department of Environment of the Ministry of Health and Environment of Antigua and Barbuda.

NUA national report: Not available

III. National / local engagement (networks, MCR2030, inter-regional forums, etc.)

Dominica is a founding member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and a member State of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), among other international and regional memberships. Dominica is also a Participating State of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), a regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management in the CARICOM, and a founding member of the Caribbean Development Bank (CBD).

The mayor of Roseau through the Dominica Association of Local Government Community Authorities (DALCA) is an ICLEI member since 2022.

During the 7th Summit for Subnational Governments and Cities at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) in December 2022, Roseau was welcomed to the CitiesWithNature global partnership initiative founded by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC).



UNDP/ Dominica - Kalinago Forest Day

03. ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES IN DRR, CC-CCA, RESILIENCE

The **Disaster risk reduction country profile: Dominica, 2014** is a report prepared by the Office of Disaster Management of the Government of Dominica with support from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - Regional office for the Americas and financial assistance of the European Union. It seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of Dominica's status in relation to Disaster Risk Reduction and serve as a reference guide for policy design, strategic planning and decision making. The document can be useful to all stakeholders involved in multiple aspects of Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Management and vulnerability reduction in Dominica, as well as the overall sustainable development of the country.

The **Health and climate change: country profile 2020: Dominica** was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Services of the Government of Dominica, together with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Profile provides a summary of available evidence on climate hazards, health vulnerabilities, health impacts and progress to date in health sector efforts to realize a climate-resilient health system. It monitors the health impacts of climate change and progress in building climate resilient health systems and provides a snapshot on a range of national health and climate change indicators.

At the local level, **'Plant It up Roseau' Green Cities Initiatives Project** is a collaboration between the Forestry Division, the Ministry of Environment and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which is geared at improving the urban environment, strengthening urban-rural linkages, and building the resilience of urban areas.



FlickrR/ Jean & Nathalie - Roseau

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER FOR ENGAGEMENT

04.

The Dominica Association of Local Community Authorities (DALCA) represents local governments in Dominica.

The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) provides training for the Region's weather observers and technicians, weather forecasters, specialists in hydrology, agrometeorology and other related disciplines. A key service provided by CIMH is to collect, analyze, and publish meteorological and hydrological data for use by all countries in the region.

The Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) promotes renewable energy, energy security and energy efficiency investments, markets and industries in the Caribbean.



UNDP/ Dominica - Kalinago smoke ceremony

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