

ABSTRACT

A DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

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Over the past centuries, the loss to disasters in the region has been rather disquieting. As far as historical records tell, natural disasters in the Caribbean region have killed hundreds of thousands of people, disrupted the lives of millions and caused untold economic damage. To this extent, it's fair to say that the risks posed by disasters have become a part of everyday life.

The University of the West Indies is the region's premier educational institution. As such, it serves to develop the region by producing graduates and research of distinguished quality. The need to protect its increasingly rapid growing student population, staff, visitors and expensive infrastructure from disasters makes it recognizable that a Disaster Preparedness Plan is vital.

Despite measures put in place to date, the St. Augustine Campus still has a long way to go to implementing a Disaster Preparedness Plan. Nevertheless, the work done thus far is a good first step towards dealing with the inevitable risks that the Campus may face. Certainly, as long as hazards continue to plague the region, a good understanding of the risks to the Campus is required.

In an attempt to come to grips with the issue of vulnerabilities facing the Campus, this study seeks to develop a manual that can be used as a guide by the

University's management when faced with a disaster. Its focus is on the actions to undertake before, during and after disasters to save lives, minimize injury and mitigate the effects to Campus facilities. The hazard and risk assessment conducted show that Tropical Cyclones, Earthquakes, Fires, Tornados and Floods are candidates for immediate focus because their risk levels are high and unacceptable.

Keywords: St. Augustine Campus; Disaster Preparedness Plan; Vulnerability; Risk Assessment.