UNITED NATIONS
ECLAC

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

Distr. LIMITED
LC/CAR/L.223
6 November 2009
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT ON TRAINING WORKSHOP ON THE USE OF THE ECLAC DAMAGE AND LOSS ASSESSMENT (DALA) METHODOLOGY FOR THE EVALUATION OF NATURAL DISASTERS

This document has been reproduced without formal editing.

1 Chancery Lane, P. O. Box 1113, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Tel: 868 623-5595; Fax: 868 623-8485; e-mail: registry-pos@eclac.org • www.eclacpos.org

Table of Contents

List of Figures

BACKGROUND

Natural disasters remain an area of concern in Latin America and the Caribbean, and, more so, in the small island States of the Caribbean where the impact of a single disaster could wipe out years of progress and threaten the sustainable livelihoods of large segments of their populations. It was for this reason that the understanding of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Damage and Loss Assessment Methodology (DALA) forms part of meeting the ECLAC objective of strengthening the capacity of its member States to evaluate and assess the impact of natural disasters in their countries.

Under this mandate, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean conducted a three-day basic level training course for selected government officials from Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. The opportunity was also taken to introduce the DALA methodology to staff members of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, as well as of other Port of Spain-based United Nations agencies.

The training was conducted in collaboration with the Santiago-based ECLAC Disaster Evaluation Unit. Training was coordinated by the Regional Adviser of the ECLAC Port of Spain office, who also made presentations on the sustainable livelihood approach and on the social sectors. Presentations were also made by staff members from ECLAC Headquarters, Santiago, on the macroeconomic impact and selected productive sectors; general overview, setting the context and implications of disasters and climate change. Additional trainers included experts in the areas of vulnerabilities; infrastructure and coastal management; tourism and environment; and agriculture. In addition, presentations were made by the representative of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) (now know as Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)) on the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) framework and by a representative of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean on its ongoing project on the economics of climate change in the Caribbean.

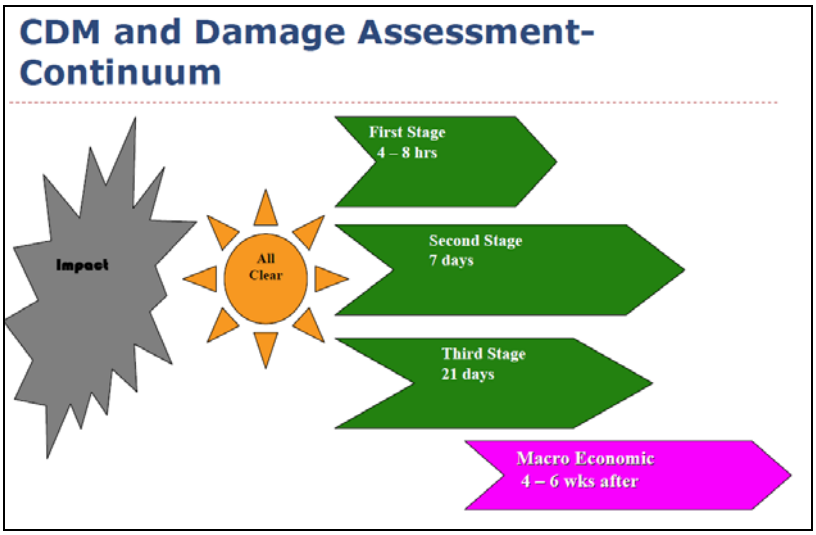
A. Training programme and presentations

The three-day workshop was opened by the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and continued as per the programme (see Annex I). The workshop itself was divided into three sections: first “setting the context”; then “the DALA methodology and its applications”; and, finally, a “case study”.

1. Setting the context

The representative of CDEMA presented an overview of the CDM framework and the link between CDM and the disaster assessment methodology. Figure 1 shows that the various stages from the initial rapid assessment to the final DALA assessment were linked and that the DALA assessment depended on the data and surveys that were collected during the previous three stages.

Figure 1: Stages of the disaster assessment procedure



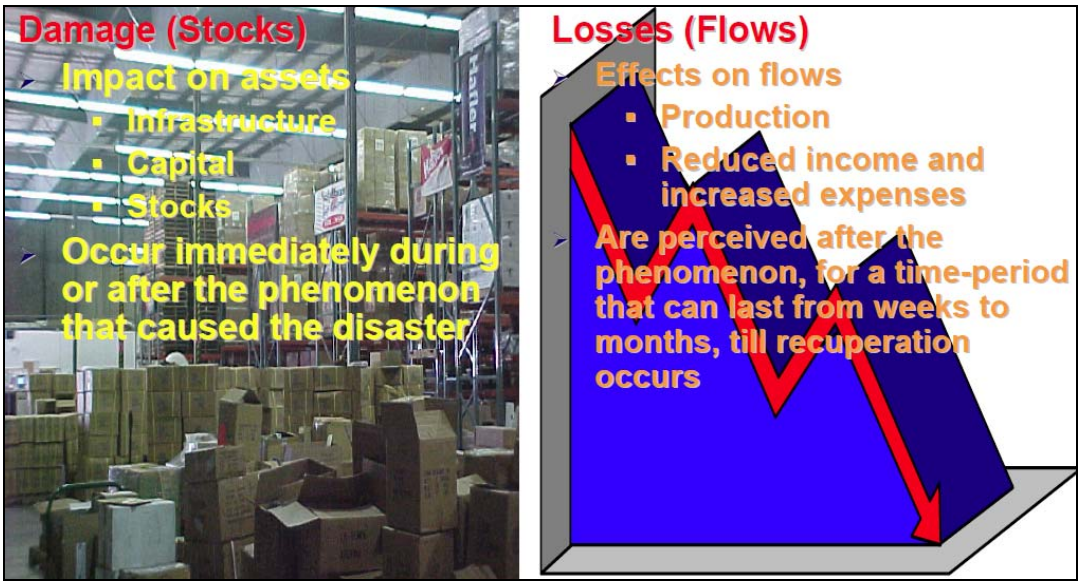
The presentation on climate change offered an overview of the ECLAC project on the Economics of Climate Change and the progress achieved to date. The impacts of climate change differed from the typical DALA impact in that damages could occur over a long period of time while those of a disaster following a tropical cyclone, earthquake or flash flood tended to be instantaneous. However, climate change formed an element of the vulnerability matrix of the Caribbean subregion and assessment of its impacts could be incorporated in the DALA methodology.

The representative from Smith Warner International Limited highlighted the vulnerabilities of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This presentation familiarized participants with the various meteorological and hydrological risks, hazards and vulnerabilities to which the Caribbean subregion, in general, was exposed; provided some indication of the consequences of these hazards, their frequencies of occurrence and historic patterns of impact; and set the stage for the necessary reconstruction mechanisms and for mitigation of future damage.

2. The DALA methodology and its applications

The representative of ECLAC, Santiago, focused on an introduction to the DALA methodology for disaster assessment. He showed the conceptual framework for the analysis of the impact of disasters and illustrated the co-relatedness of the cost of extreme events to the cost of the impacts of climate change. He also introduced ongoing case studies and provided some preliminary results. The presentation illustrated, as shown in figure 2, the main concepts of damages and losses and of stocks and flows, and placed the DALA within the framework of the development, poverty and disaster nexus.

Figure 2: The concepts of damage and losses and of stocks and flows



The representative of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean made a presentation on the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) embedded in the DALA methodology and focused on vulnerability, affected population and gender issues within the context of a livelihood analysis for policy formulation (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Sustainable Livelihood Approach

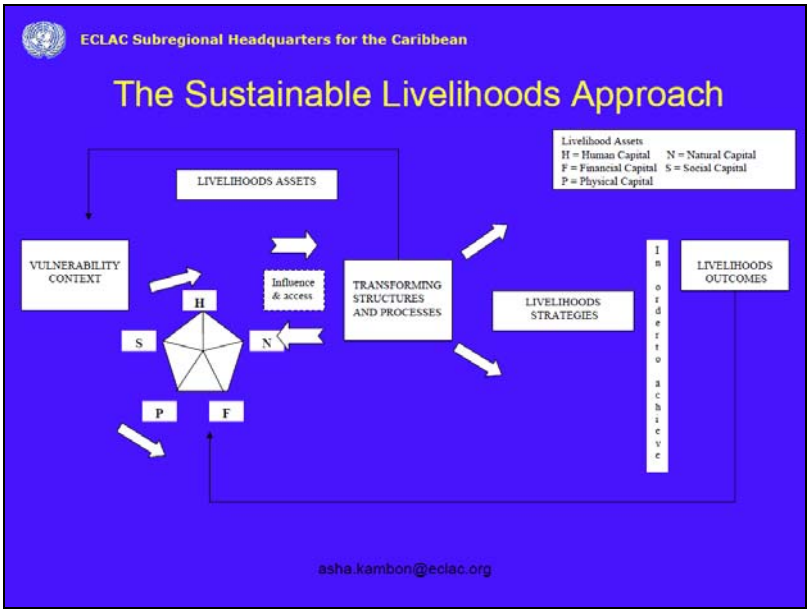
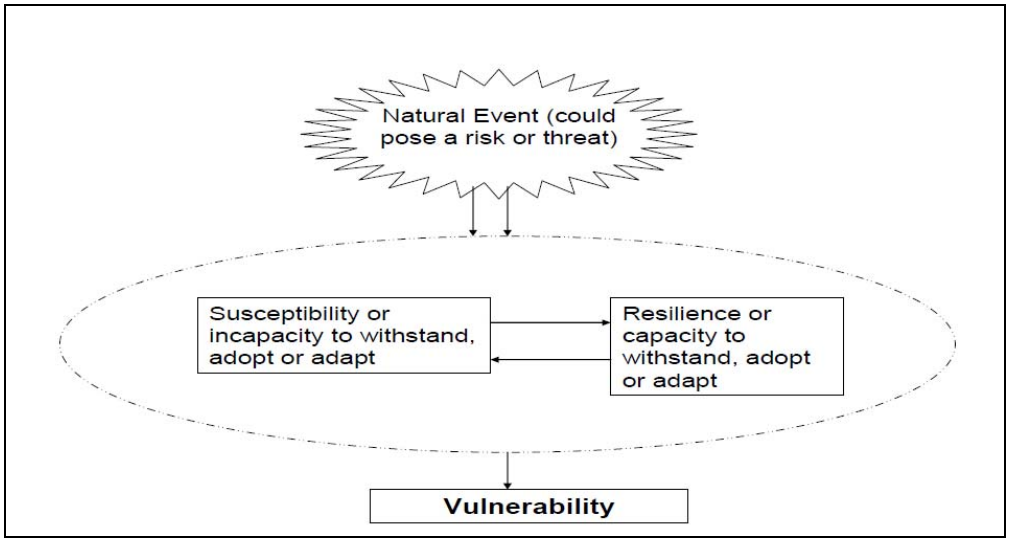


Figure 4: Susceptibility and Resilience



Within the context of an SLA, the concepts of vulnerability, susceptibility and resilience related to the analysis of the affected population, as shown in figure 5. The evaluation concentrated on the household and on the assets that a household might have at its disposal to ensure sustainable livelihoods and on how such assets were affected by a disaster. She also focused on gender differences before, during and after a disaster and highlighted how gender differences in risk tolerance resulted in different priorities, actions and responses. Figure 5 summarized the integration of the SLA with the DALA methodology.

Figure 5: The integration of the DALA and SLA concepts