Hurricane Preparedness Support Mechanism

Country Office: Jamaica Multi-country Office

Project Title: Building Resilience: Strengthening MSMEs and Gender-Inclusive Recovery in Jamaica

Proposed Budget: *USD 40,000*

Target locations for implementation: Jamaica, Bahamas, Bermuda & Turks & Caicos

Focal person: Stacy-Ann Tomlinson-Knox , Programme Specialist | Officer-in-Charge

Context

The Caribbean is highly vulnerable to hydrometeorological events, with projections indicating escalating storm intensities that threaten lives, livelihoods, and critical infrastructure. In 2024, Hurricane Beryl caused unprecedented devastation across the region, with Jamaica being one of the hardest-hit countries. The storm resulted in an estimated $32 billion in damages, equivalent to 1.1% of the country's GDP, crippling key sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, mining, and tourism. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a critical role within these sensitive sectors, comprising more than 80% of businesses in Jamaica and close to 90% across the wider Caribbean. Despite their importance, many MSMEs operate informally, leaving them particularly susceptible to the shocks of climate-induced disasters. With limited access to resources, financial safeguards, and recovery mechanisms, these enterprises often face significant challenges in the aftermath of disasters. Women, who own 40% of enterprises in the Caribbean, are disproportionately affected during such events. Their businesses tend to be smaller and more resource-constrained, making recovery especially difficult. Factors such as caregiving responsibilities, societal gender dynamics, restricted mobility, and limited access to finance further hinder their ability to restore operations, recover income, and sustain livelihoods. Strengthening the resilience of these MSMEs, particularly those owned by women, youth, and other vulnerable groups is critical to mitigating the cascading impacts of climate events on livelihoods and national economies.

Strengthening and scaling up initiatives

Upscaling MSME Resilience in Jamaica: The MCO is currently collaborating with private-sector partners across key areas, including capacity building for social entrepreneurship, sustainable finance, and impact measurement. This project proposes complementary capacity-strengthening activities with a particular focus on women- and youth-owned MSMEs. Key interventions include the establishment of resilience-focused incubators designed to enhance Business Continuity Planning capabilities, the provision of tangible disaster-resilient tools, and technical training to sustain operations during and after hurricanes. The curriculum will be tailored to address the specific needs of women, including but not limited to caregiving responsibilities during crises. Beneficiaries will also receive "Resilience-in-a-box" toolkits to further aid their preparedness. Additionally, the project will facilitate a high-level policy dialogue and produce a report on MSME insurance access for women and youth. This initiative aims to increase access to tailored insurance solutions for these groups.

These activities will be implemented in partnership with business development organizations previously trained under the 2024 hurricane preparedness mechanism, ensuring continuity and institutionalizing critical knowledge within these entities. This approach seeks to create an enabling environment that enhances MSME resilience, promotes inclusivity, empowers women- and youth-led enterprises, and reduces barriers to financing and market access.

The project is designed to deliver immediate, measurable results while also strengthening the MCO's capacity to attract additional funding for scaling these efforts. The demonstrated success of this model will serve as a foundation for mobilizing further resources, enabling the expansion of resilience-building initiatives for MSMEs across the countries and territories within the MCO's mandate.

South-South Cooperation (SSC) Related to MSME Hurricane Preparedness & Resilience (co-financed by MCO) : The Resilience Series, conceptualized in 2021 as part of the UNDP MCO's Partnerships, Communications, and Advocacy Plan, serves as a strategic platform for knowledge exchange on disaster risk resilience and recovery across vulnerable Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the western Caribbean. Through this project, the third installment of the Resilience Series will be convened in June to coincide with the start of the hurricane season. Resilient Series #3 specifically focuses on strengthening the resilience of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), acknowledging their heightened vulnerability to climate change impacts compared to larger

entities. It will highlight best practices and gender-responsive disaster risk resilience (DRR) measures to bolster MSME hurricane preparedness and recovery. The main benefits of this intervention include:

1. **Enhancement of MSME Resilience:** By showcasing actionable strategies and success stories, the series promotes resilience-building for MSMEs, with particular emphasis on tailored, gender-responsive initiatives.

2. **Loss & Damage Mitigation:** Sharing how effective MSME DRR interventions contributes to reducing economic and social losses caused by hurricanes and other disasters in vulnerable SIDS. It also provides an opportunity to highlight UNDP's role in the recently established Loss & Damage Fund.

3. **Positioning UNDP:** The series positions UNDP as a thought leader, solutions provider, and partner of choice in MSME disaster risk resilience. It will feature impactful initiatives such as the Hurricane Beryl Livelihood Recovery project in Jamaica and similar work in the Bahamas and Turks & Caicos.

As an advocacy and communications tool, the Resilience Series also supports resource mobilization and partnerships, targeting donors to fund climate-resilient interventions in SIDS. Additionally, the themes will be reinforced through an MSME DRR-focused Op-Ed, emphasizing the importance of disaster resilience support for this vulnerable group.

Multi-Country Office Internal Capacity Building for Hurricane Preparedness: Building on the foundation of the previous Hurricane Preparedness Mechanism, this component focuses on enhancing the internal capacity of the Multi-Country Office (MCO) to respond effectively to crises especially hurricanes. The main activities to be supported include introductory training in the RAPIDA Methodology, data collection exercises, and MCO capacity-building (CB) training sessions on the various elements of UNDP's recovery package. Additionally, the project will address the urgent need for robust communication infrastructure during extreme weather events by providing Satellite Internet service, specifically Starlink, to ensure uninterrupted connectivity in critical situations. *(***Consideration for additional financial and technical support as the aforementioned programmatic activities will exhaust the 40k as seen in budget below)***

Objective, expected results and activities

The objective of the project is to enhance the disaster resilience and preparedness of women and youth-owned MSMEs in Jamaica. This will be delivered through the implementation of the following output:

Output 1: Women & youth owned MSMEs hurricane preparedness and recovery capacities are strengthened

- Activity 1.1 Conduct Resilience-In-a box & Gender-Responsive Business Continuity Planning (BCP) incubator in Jamaica for women & youth-owned MSMEs
- Activity 1.2 Procure and disseminate Resilience-in-a-box kits to training participants.
- Activity 1.3 Convene high-level policy dialogue and generate report on MSME insurance access for women & youth
- Activity 1.4 Convene one Resilience Series on MSME hurricane preparedness

Gender equality and social inclusion approach

The project will ensure that gender equality and social inclusion are systematically integrated across all stages of ideation and implementation. Interventions will be tailored to address the unique needs of women-owned businesses, targeting critical factors that reduce their vulnerabilities to the impacts of hurricanes. Recognizing the challenges faced by youth and persons with disabilities in sustaining their enterprises, these groups will also be prioritized in the proposed interventions. Capacity-building sessions will promote gender equality by: (1) ensuring diverse representation among trainers and speakers, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, (2) developing training materials that actively advance gender equality and social inclusion while providing practical, actionable and sustainable, (3) incorporating provisions such as accessible facilities, flexible scheduling, and support for women with caregiving responsibilities to ensure equitable participation and (4) aligning the project with ongoing programmes of the national gender machinery to ensure beneficiaries are supported beyond the project. Through these measures, coupled with improved access to financial tools and targeted resilience support, the intervention equips those most affected by disaster with the resources, skills, and opportunities to protect their livelihoods.

Communications

The project will capture impact stories emanating from the proposed interventions through two key approaches:

1. Results stories including human impact will be documented and disseminated through the various national media channels and the UNDP platforms which are linked here:

    - *https://undpjamaica.exposure.co/*
    - *https://www.undp.org/jamaica/stories*
    - *https://x.com/undpjamaica?lang=en*

2. An Op-Ed will also be written and disseminated through various media channels.

3. Additionally, the results will be packaged and disseminated through the ongoing hybrid Resilience Series which is recorded and livestreamed on the MCO's social media pages, linked here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csSzxobpZ_I

Results and Resources Framework

Output	Indicators	Activity	Timeframe						Budget Items	Amount (USD)
			Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov		
Output 1. Women & youth owned MSMEs in Jamaica have hurricane preparedness and recovery capacities are strengthened (GEN 2)	*Indicator 1.1.1 – Number of participants of the training disaggregated by gender* *Baseline: 0* *Target: 25* *Indicator 1.1.2 - % knowledge increase in business continuity planning principles* *Baseline: 0* *Target: 60%* *Indicator 1.1.3 - % beneficiaries who feel empowered to utilise BCP & Resilience in a box tools post training* *Baseline: 0* *Target: 60%* *MOV – Pre & Post Training Assessments and post-training evaluation*	Activity 1.1. Deliver a 3-day Resilience-In-a Box Incubator & BCP training for women- and youth-led MSMEs	X	X	X				Travel (local) - 71600 Training, Workshop & Confer- 75700	2,000 10,000
	Indicator 1.2.1 – Number of resilience kits procured and disseminated *Baseline: 0* *Target: 25*	Activity 1.2. Disseminate Resilience-in-a-box kits to training participants *Items to include power banks, water-proof document holders, emergency lighting, etc*	X	x	x				Training, Workshop & Confer - 75700	4,500
	Indicator 1.3.1: Number of reports generated on MSME	Activity 1.3 Convene high-level policy dialogue and generate report on		X	X	X	X		Training, Workshop & Confer - 75700	14,000

	insurance access for women and youth *Baseline: 0* *Target: 1*	MSME insurance access for women & youth								
	Indicator 1.3.2: Number of persons participating in Resilience Series *Baseline: 0* *Target: 200*	Activity 1.4 Convene Hurricane Resilience Series	X						Audiovisual Productions – 74200 Training, Workshop & Confer - 75700	4,000 2,500
		Project Coordination Support	X	X	X	X	X	X	Miscellaneous - 74597	3,000
		Total								**40,000**