

## How to measure progress in disaster risk reduction: example of Guadeloupe (French West Indies)

By Dr. LUBINO-BISSAINTE Myriam

Our island is concerned by most of the natural events and also technological events. Furthermore, as an overseas French department it is very important for us to implement locally disaster management strategies.

In France we have a very special system of laws which are the link between disaster management and social, environmental, economic and political programs. In fact since 1987 several laws are obliging: the municipalities, the companies directors, and more generally people who are receiving other people, to assure the security of the citizens. Actually, the notion of Disaster Risk Reduction (shortened into DRR) is integrated in our socio-economical system of life. Unfortunately, very often these laws are not largely applied and this is why some disasters occur.

In our case of small island concerned by several natural events (such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis...) and technological too, we cannot delimit the field of DRR. We must live with our risks and be prepared every day to better manage the crisis. Since several years I am working with some Municipalities (the Political sector), some Associations, Schools (the Social Sector) and some Private Companies (Economic sector) in the very special field of information and education. My main first objective is to help all of these people in understanding our environmental situation. The second objective is to show how anticipate in DRR and respect the laws can provide a better future after a disaster.

So I could measure some progress since November 2004 after an earthquake M6.3 had hit our island. The people who received my information about "what is an earthquake and how to react" had the very best behaviour than the others. Knowing the physical process of an earthquake or an hurricane can really help people in their behaviour and thus avoid a disaster.

The identification and description of the indicators of achievements, programme activities and process can be achieve in our country because some of the several French laws oblige the political, social and economic sectors in making special written reports related to the security and present them to the authorities of the government. In these documents the concerned people must point out how the security is achieved and what lessons are learnt after the simulation drills. They are named for the Municipalities: CIDMR (Communal Informative Document on Main Risks or DICRIM in French); for the Schools: SSP (Special Security Plan or PPMS in French) and for the Private companies: UD (Unique Document) and IOP (Internal Organizational Plan or POI in French). These obligatory reports or documents can then be a convincing and positive argument to obtain a reduction in the insurance charges.