



**DISASTERS -
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS ⇒
MACRO PRACTICE ROLES**

Peta-Anne Baker, PhD

*North American & Caribbean Assn of Schools of Social
Work (NACASSW)*

&

University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica

**Seminar on “Disaster Planning, Management &
Relief: New Responsibilities for SWE”**

RISK & VULNERABILITY, CAPACITY & RESILIENCE IN SIDS

- SIDS: size, “insularity”, remoteness, disaster prone (Briguglio, 1995)
- “***Vulnerability*** results from people’s *exposure* to hazard and their *susceptibility* to hazard impacts. It reflects social, economic, political, psychological and environmental variables shaped by dynamic pressures (such as urbanisation) that are deeply rooted and linked to the national and international political economy. The converse of vulnerability is ***capacity*** to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from hazard impacts.” (DIFID, 2004, p.2).

VULNERABILITIES & CAPACITIES

- **Vulnerabilities and capacities exist in three dimensions:**
 - **physical/material (natural resources, savings, productive/economic);**
 - **social/organizational (forms of organisation, structures and processes of leadership), and**
 - **motivational/attitudinal (self-esteem and beliefs about personal & collective efficacy) (Anderson & Woodrow, 1989)**

[RESILIENCE]

- ***“Resilience refers to the ability to absorb and recover from hazard impacts.” (DIFID, 2004, p. 16)***
- **Resilience integral to the concept of vulnerability, which speaks to the capacity of the individual, household or community to recover from a hazardous event**



ESTABLISHING THE LINK BETWEEN STRUCTURE & DISASTER

- **Economic losses attributed to natural disasters at global level have increased almost ten times in last 30 years:**
 - **US\$75.5 billion in 1960s**
 - **US\$659.9 billion in 1990s 1.5 million killed in natural disasters between 1980 and 2000**
- **184 people die daily from natural disasters**
- **11% of those exposed to natural hazards live in poor countries but 53% recorded deaths occur in these countries**

[THE LINK...]

- **Economic loss in Latin America & the Caribbean estimated at US\$50 billion**
- **30% of Latin American & the Caribbean's population affected by disasters**
- **1989: Hurricane Hugo caused losses valued at 200% of GDP in Montserrat**
- **1988: Hurricane Gilbert in Jamaica – 65% of GDP**

THE LINK...

- In 2004 Hurricane Ivan destroyed 90% of infrastructure valued at US\$800m in Grenada & hurricanes & floods killed over 5000 people in Haiti – the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere

FAQ

**INEQUALITY IS MORE SEVERE
IN LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN
THAN IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

Hypothesis

Poverty & inequality
not natural disasters kill people



SIDS & VULNERABILITY

(Briguglio, 1995 p. 1620)

Table 3. *Index of disaster damage as a percentage of GNP*

Average for country categories*

All countries with disaster incidence

Island developing countries

SIDS

Non-island developing countries

Developing countries

Developed countries

SIDS & VULNERABILITY

(Briguglio, 1995 p. 1622)

Table 5. *Vulnerability Index and indices of material welfare for different groups of countries*

Averages for country categories	Vulnerability Index	GDP per capita US\$	Human Dev. Index
All countries	.447	4468	.588
Island dev. countries	.598	3165	.670
SIDS	.635	3384	.698
Non-island developing countries	.418	2890	.565
All developing countries	.475	2191	.535
Developed countries	.328	16740	.962

Source: GDP per capita taken from UNCTAD (1991), Table 6.1 and Human Development Index from UNDP (1991).

POVERTY & INEQUALITY IN THE CARIBBEAN

	% below poverty line	% below indigence line	GINI*	HDI (2004)
Barbados	13.9	n.a.	.39	31
Grenada	32.1	12.9	.45	85
Jamaica	16.8	n.a.	.38	104
St Vincent & the Grenadines	37.5	25.7	.56	88

The GINI Coefficient: 0= perfect equality; 1= perfect inequality
 Poverty & inequality data from Thomas & Wint, 2002
 HDI data from UNDP Human Development Report

Poverty & inequality in the Caribbean

	Poorest 20% [Q1]	Richest 20% [Q5]
Barbados	5.8	44.0
Guyana	4.1	55.1
Jamaica	6.5	45.2
St Lucia	7.11	41.63
T&T	4.7	52.7

MACRO PRACTICE ROLES & TASKS: CO

- “Classic”: grass-roots organising to address social problems & promote social solidarity
- CED: promote sustainable economic development (livelihoods & habitats)



MACRO PRACTICE ROLES & TASKS: OD

- Community: facilitating the formation and/or strengthening of “community” organisations
- Organisational esp. in the NGO sector: management, financing
- Programme evaluation

MACRO PRACTICE ROLES & TASKS: SOCIAL PLANNING & POLICY

- Local authorities – a neglected arena for SW practice
- National disaster mitigation machinery – espec. in facilitating community-based approaches & community participation in policy making

[MACRO PRACTICE ROLES & TASKS: ADVOCACY]

- Local level: ensure delivery of services to at risk groups
- National level: promote & facilitate representation of socially excluded
- Regional level: promote coordinated policy intervention
- International level: strategic participation in global movements (environment, social development)