

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR STRATEGIC, CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS AND MASS EVACUATION PLANNING FOR THE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY IN THE BAHAMAS

1. BACKGROUND

1.01 The Bahamas, a Small Island Developing State in the wider Caribbean Region, faces significant vulnerability to multiple hazards, especially hurricanes, due to its geographic location, physical environment, and other socio-economic factors. Since 2015, the country has endured the impacts of four major hurricanes: Joaquin (2015), Matthew (2016), Irma (2017), and Dorian (2019). These events have resulted in losses exceeding USD4.2 billion, with Hurricane Dorian alone accounting for USD3.2 billion in damages across sectors like housing, education, health, physical infrastructure, tourism, and fisheries. Such financial losses seriously challenge The Bahamas' efforts to achieve various Sustainable Development Goals. Acknowledging the effects of these disasters on The Bahamas, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has allocated grant funding to provide technical assistance (TA) for the implementation of disaster risk management (DRM) policy and improving DRM practices and strategies in The Bahamas through a Disaster Resilience Improvement Project (DRIP).

1.02 Priority 3 of the CDB's Climate Resilient Strategy 2019-2024 recognises the importance of strengthening Borrowing Member Countries' (BMC) capabilities for mainstreaming and implementing climate risk management via capacity-building initiatives, strengthening administrative and legislative frameworks, and public education and awareness. The DRIP for The Bahamas funded by CDB aims to bolster the institutional capacities and disaster emergency response strategies of the DRM Authority while enhancing resilience and livelihoods by assessing preparedness and vulnerability across the country. Further, this TA intervention will ensure that components consider knowledge transfer mechanisms to local practitioners and technocrats.

1.03 Furthermore, CDB, through its Disaster Management Strategy and Operational Guidelines and Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy, recognises that disaster risk management policies must be socially inclusive and gender-responsive to effectively address the diverse needs of affected populations. Social inclusivity ensures that marginalised groups—such as women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities—are actively involved in the planning and implementation of disaster risk management interventions. This participation helps identify vulnerabilities and resilience strategies that might be overlooked. Additionally, a gender-responsive and socially inclusive approach acknowledges the differential impacts of disasters and that different communities have unique cultural practices, communication styles, and coping mechanisms. Ultimately, such an integrated approach not only improves the efficacy of disaster management functions but also strengthens social cohesion and resilience in the face of future crises. Therefore, this consultancy must ensure gender mainstreaming and social inclusivity during all stages of the project cycle.

1.04 Following Hurricane Dorian, the disaster management framework in The Bahamas underwent significant changes. The Government of The Bahamas established the Disaster Reconstruction Authority (DRA) and the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness, Management, and Reconstruction in response to this catastrophic event. In 2022, the passage of the Disaster Risk Management Act prompted an expansion and reorganisation of the nation's disaster risk management program, leading to the establishment of the DRM Authority in 2024 through the merger of the National Emergency Management Agency and the DRA, repealing their respective legislation to prioritize the mandates of the DRM Act (2022). While the DRM Authority is making considerable progress in implementing the Instruments of the National Disaster Risk Management Policy, the Authority still requires further support in change management, implementing the Policy Instruments, and fortifying its national disaster operations procedures through a strategic

institutional agenda and disaster emergency contingency planning.

1.05 This consultancy will support the DRIP by undertaking strategic planning for the DRM Authority, Continuity of Operations (COO) planning for the DRM Authority and identified Public Bodies, and Mass Evacuation Planning for New Providence and the Family Islands in The Bahamas.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.01 The objective of this consultancy is to provide the following consultancy services:

- (a) To support the development and implementation of a clear institutional strategic plan for the DRM Authority that considers creating equal opportunities for women and young people in disaster management, through a participatory approach.
- (b) To create a Continuity of Operations (COO) Plan for the DRM Authority to ensure that essential services and functions can continue or be quickly restored during and after a disaster emergency; and to prepare a COO planning manual with templates; knowledge transfer and capacity building for the DRM Authority to support two (2) identified Public Bodies to develop their own COO plans through planned training and workshops.
- (c) To develop a framework and plan that ensures the safe, timely, and efficient relocation of at-risk communities and populations in New Providence and identified Family Islands during disaster emergencies with considerations on gender and social vulnerability, and with drill design and simulation exercises.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

3.01 The primary activities include (a) the consultation for and development of an institutional strategic plan and COO Plan for the DRM Authority; (b) the development of a manual and templates for continuity of operations planning that can be used by other public and private sector entities; (c) capacity-building training and workshops with respect to COO planning for identified public bodies in The Bahamas; (d) coaching and guidance of the DRM Authority to support COO plan development of two additional entities with completed drafts; and (e) the development of a New Providence and Family Islands mass evacuation plans and design of simulation and drill exercises for the plan.

3.02 The tasks will include, but are **not** limited to:

Activity 1: Work Plan

Develop a Work Plan in consultation with the CDB, the DRM Authority, and Project Coordinator (PC).

- (a) The Work Plan shall include a:
 - (i) Description of the methodology for each activity (data collection and data/information analysis).
 - (ii) Identification/description of national policies or laws that are applicable to the outputs of this consultancy.
 - (iii) The Work Plan shall consider the DRM Act, 2022, the National Humanitarian Assistance Standards, the National Instructions for Emergencies and Disasters for

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, and other documents identified by the DRM Authority.

- (iv) Implementation schedule, including estimated delivery date and workshops/meetings to validate and disseminate all the processes and results of this consultancy.

Strategic Plan

Activity 2: Development of a Strategic Plan for the DRM Authority

Develop an Organisational Strategic Plan for the DRM Authority covering a three-to-five-year period that supports a culture of innovation, equal opportunity, operational efficiency, and strong partnerships with domestic and international external stakeholders. This Strategic Plan should be developed collaboratively with the DRM Authority leadership and staff. Among other matters, this Strategic Plan should (1) identify challenges, trends and issues related to areas like performance, operational management, funding and inequality; (2) understand the key beneficiaries or clients of the DRM Authority and its work, and their needs; (3) determine the most effective and efficient way to drive focus, accountability, transparency, and results; and (4) provide a framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the instruments, goals and performance targets in the final strategic plan.

To develop this Strategic Plan, the Firm shall:

- (a) Conduct a desktop review of (i) applicable local and regional legislation, plans, and policies, (ii) all studies conducted by external stakeholders on capacity building and institutional reform, and (iii) strategies of other disaster risk management entities. The synthesis of these findings, and its applicability to the Strategic Plan shall be presented to the DRM Authority. This Report shall be referred to as a Synthesis Report for Strategic Planning.
- (b) Host several gender-balanced focus groups and interviews with personnel of the DRM Authority to understand organisational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, potential risks, challenges and threats. Attention should also be given issues related to gender, social inclusivity, technical capacity, and human resources.
- (c) Interview key constituents (e.g., Family Island Administrators, local government practitioners, non-governmental organizations, and other public bodies,) to understand their expectations of the DRM Authority.
- (d) Collaborate with the DRM Authority to develop or refine the organisation's mission, vision, values, and objectives.
- (e) Develop performance targets, a budget with associated investment costs and a logical framework to support proposed objectives.
- (f) Host a workshop to validate the draft Strategic Plan.
- (g) Deliver a final draft of the organisational Strategic Plan for the DRM Authority.

Continuity of Operations Planning

Activity 3: Development of a COO Plan for the DRM Authority

Develop a COO Plan for the DRM Authority that will identify and assess (a) the possible risks, threats and impacts that the DRM Authority could face whether due to natural or man-made hazards or risk, (b) the critical business and operational functions within the DRM Authority, (c) key personnel and responsibilities, facilities, and channels of communication, and (d) any other relevant factors for continuity of operations. The COO Plan should and provide comprehensive strategies, procedures, and processes that adhere to international best practices and ensure the organisation can continue to perform critical and essential functions during a crisis or disaster emergency. The COO Plan should target providing strategies and processes that would restore critical functions and operations either before, during or after a disaster emergency within the identified maximum acceptable downtime of possibly five (5) days (subject to change based on advice of best practice). The COO plan should also detail the activities the DRM Authority should undertake to test the COO Plan on a regular basis.

Activity 4: Development of a Continuity of Operations Plan Manual with Templates, and Facilitate a Training Workshop for COO Plan Development for Identified Public Bodies

Develop a COO Plan Development Manual that organisations in the public and private sector can use to develop their own COO Plans to ensure critical and essential functions can be performed before, during and after a disaster emergency. This Manual should be comprehensive, easy-to-follow, adhere to international best practice, and applicable to the Bahamian governance and operational landscape to provide step-by-step processes and procedures to develop a COO Plan. The Manual should identify and describe critical operational continuity functions, including but not limited to (i) Essential and Critical Operational Functions, (ii) Leadership and Succession, (iii) Alternate Operating Facilities, (iv) Vital Records and Databases, (v) Interoperable Communications, (vi) Human Resources and Capital. The COO Templates shall be annexed in the Manual.

To carry out this activity, the Firm shall:

- (a) Interview several public bodies to understand operational challenges before, during, and after a disaster. The proposed questions shall be submitted to the DRM Authority for approval.
- (b) Review the literature with respect to COO or business continuity to identify critical functions, with particular focus on Public Bodies, to be considered in the COO Manual and Templates. The synthesis of these findings, and its applicability to this consultancy shall be presented to the DRM Authority in a report.
- (c) Interview stakeholders from the private sector (e.g., chamber of commerce, business associations, and SMEs in The Bahamas) for their input on COO planning in both the public and private sectors.
- (d) Develop the Manual and associated templates.

The Firm will then carry out a knowledge transfer and capacity building exercise by facilitating a capacity building workshop that will equip personnel from the DRM Authority with the knowledge and skills needed to support the development of COO Plans for other public bodies or private sector organisations in The Bahamas. This workshop will use the Manual created within this consultancy to guide the future trained personnel on what is needed to establish a full, comprehensive COO Plan for other organisations.

To carry out this activity, the Firm shall:

- (a) Organise and conduct an in-person capacity building workshop for DRM Authority personnel,

using the Manual developed in Activity 3. This workshop should provide the knowledge and skills necessary for the DRM Authority to establish other COO Plans and guide other public body and private sector actors to develop their own robust COO Plans that are in line with best practices and can be tested regularly.

- (b) Evaluate the degree of learning and reaction to the training workshop. Consideration should be given to using the Kirkpatrick model to evaluate and report these results.

Activity 5: Coaching and Overseeing DRM Authority's COO Planning Workshop and Review of COO Plans of Two Additional Entities

To ensure knowledge transfer and capacity-building, the Firm shall support the DRM Authority in carrying out its own COO Planning workshop for identified public bodies to develop their own COO Plans. The Firm shall provide coaching, guidance and support by overseeing the DRM Authority's workshop, ensuring that the trained DRM Authority personnel are guiding public bodies and private sector actors correctly on creating their own COO Plans. The output of this activity is that the trained DRM Authority personnel will work closely with 2 (two) entities after the DRM Authority's workshop to develop their own COO Plans, in which the firm will provide guidance and support for these plans, and review and approve the final submitted plans.

To carry out this activity:

- (a) The Firm will work closely with the DRM Authority to plan the technical details of the COO planning workshop. The Firm should make recommendations to include at least ten public bodies and ten small to medium-sized enterprises, including women-owned businesses in the COO planning workshop.
- (b) The Firm should conduct the evaluation of the degree of learning and reaction to the DRM Authority's training workshop and provide recommendations for improvement for future training and planning workshops. Consideration should be given to using the Kirkpatrick model to evaluate and report these results.
- (c) Support the DRM Authority in selecting two (2) entities and provide coaching and guidance to the DRM Authority as they work with the two (2) selected entities to prepare their own COO plans.

Mass Evacuation Plan

Activity 6: Development of a New Providence and Family Island Mass Evacuation Plan

To develop the New Providence and Family Island Mass Evacuation Plan, the Firm shall:

- (a) Conduct a desktop review of existing policies, plans and procedures in other countries, including multi-island states (e.g., other evacuation plans/best practices from national governments [e.g. Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Turks & Caicos, Cayman Islands, St. Kitts & Nevis, Philippines, Singapore, and/or other island states] with considerations of the National Humanitarian Assistance Standards. Further to this, the Firm shall identify potential hazards, both natural and man-made (hurricanes, flooding, oil spill, etc.) and their influences on mass evacuation scenarios in The Bahamas. These findings shall be presented to the DRM Authority in an Inception Report.

- (b) Engage the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), local government agencies, emergency services, community leaders, and residents via meetings (encouraging gender-balance) to understand their perspectives on mass evacuation in The Bahamas for planning and logistical considerations.
- (c) Develop a complete and detailed Mass Evacuation Plan for New Providence and the Family Islands that is decentralised, recognising the geographical context of The Bahamas and associated logistical challenges, and which provides planning considerations for inter- and intra- island evacuations (ie., evacuation within an island, and evacuations across subregions or quadrants of the Bahamian archipelago). This decentralised Plan shall:
 - (i) Provide planning considerations and procedures for Intra-island evacuation events (ie. From one part of an island to another part of the same island) and Inter-island evacuation events (ie. From one island to another island within the same subregion of the archipelago, and or one Family Island to New Providence).
 - (ii) establish clear procedures for disseminating information related to mass evacuation;
 - (iii) consider ways and means to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations and integrate findings of concurrent work pertaining to individual and household disaster preparedness and vulnerability assessments;
 - (iv) leverage geographic information system (GIS) to produce geospatial maps of primary and secondary evacuation routes in New Providence and the Family Islands;
 - (v) identify evacuation shelters across the country that are to be used in the event of a mass evacuation scenario;
 - (vi) advocate for the development of partnerships with local organisations to provide food, medical care, and mental health and psychosocial support ,and social and gender-based violence (SGBV) services at shelters;
 - (vii) advocate for the development of partnerships with the private sector to support mass evacuation events;
 - (viii) enhance the regular training for emergency responders, community leaders, and volunteers on mass evacuation protocols and procedures;
 - (viii) consider necessary resources, including food, water, medical supplies, and communication tools;
 - (ix) Establish the standard operating procedures for managing logistics during an evacuation; and
 - (x) Establish a framework to monitor the effectiveness of the evacuation plan.

This Plan shall also include a draft/template of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the DRM Authority and other local and international, public and private partners for mass evacuation. Additionally, the Firm shall facilitate workshops and meetings to gather input and establish stakeholder consensus on the Plan.

Activity 7: Tabletop exercises and simulations related to mass evacuation

Design, prepare and execute national tabletop exercises and local drills and simulations related to mass evacuation that is gender-responsive and socially-inclusive.

The Firm shall:

- (a) Design, develop and execute tabletop exercises related to mass evacuation of people within New Providence with appropriate considerations for sheltering, feeding, and transportation;
- (b) Design, develop and execute a national tabletop exercise related to the mass evacuation of people from the Family Islands to New Providence with appropriate considerations for sheltering, feeding, and transportation; and
- (c) Design, develop and execute at least two tabletop exercises that consider movement inter-regionally (e.g. from Family Island to Family Island) with appropriate sheltering, feeding, and transportation considerations.

At least 2 (two) of these exercises should be conducted on a Family Island.

Activity 8: Mass Evacuation Drill Designs

The Firm shall design and develop a drill that considers movement inter-regionally (e.g., from Family Island to Family Island) with appropriate sheltering, feeding, and transportation considerations. This design shall be detailed with a clear description of costs, required resources, and stakeholders. The Firm is not required to execute the drill.

4. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

4.01 The consulting team should comprise of a minimum of the following experts.

Key Expert 1: Disaster Risk Management Specialist

- (a) Education: An advanced university degree in disaster management, environmental management, sustainability, engineering or a related field.
- (b) Experience: At least seven years' experience in supporting disaster management entities with proactively responding to, recovering from and preparing for disasters. Preference will be given to experience with mass evacuation planning.

Key Expert 2: Business or Risk Management Professional

- (a) Education: An advanced university degree in business administration, risk management or a related field.
- (b) Certifications in business continuity planning or risk management are preferred.
- (c) Experience: At least seven years' experience in business continuity planning and risk management.

Key Expert 3: Strategic Planning Specialist

- (a) Education: An advanced university degree in business administration, finance, economics, organisational leadership or related field.
- (b) Experience: At least seven years' experience with strategic planning and implementation and organisational development, along with monitoring and evaluation. Previous experience working with a disaster risk management entity or state enterprises will be an asset.

Key Expert 4: Social and Gender Specialist

- (a) Education: An advanced university degree in sociology, gender studies, international development or any related field.
- (b) Experience: 7-10 years' experience in gender-related work, community engagement and working with vulnerable populations.

Key Expert 5: GIS Specialist

- (a) Education: A university degree in geography, spatial analysis, GIS or related field.
- (b) Certifications in GIS are preferred
- (c) Experience: At least seven years' experience working with GIS applications. Preference will be given to experience in disaster risk management and/or climate change.

Key Expert 6: Engineer

- (a) Education: A university degree in civil engineering or related field.
- (b) Experience: At least seven years' engineering experience and experience working in the realm of DRM.

5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

- 5.01 The Consultant will be required to deliver the following in a timely manner, and payment will be based on approval and acceptance of the deliverables:
- (a) Work Plan (two weeks after kick-off).
 - (b) Synthesis Report for Strategic Planning (one month after kick-off).
 - (c) Logical Framework for Strategic Plan (two months after kick-off).
 - (d) Desktop Review Report for Evacuation Planning (two months after kick-off).
 - (e) Final Strategic Plan (four months after kick-off).
 - (f) Draft Evacuation Plan (five months after kick-off).
 - (g) Designed Drill (six months after kick-off).

- (h) COO Manual and Template (seven months after kick-off).
- (i) COO Plan for the DRM Authority (seven months after kick-off).
- (j) Capacity Building on COO Planning Workshop (eight months after kick-off)
- (k) Capacity Building on COO Planning Workshop Report (nine months after kick-off).
- (l) COO Planning for public bodies and private sector Workshop Report (ten months after kick-off).
- (m) Synopsis Report on tabletop exercises and simulations for evacuation planning (eleven months after kick-off).
- (n) Draft 2 (two) COO Plans for Public Bodies (twelve months after kick-off)
- (o) DRM Authority COO Planning Work for Public Bodies completed (thirteen months after kick-off)

5.02 The DRM Authority will assign a Project Coordinator (PC), and the Consultant Firm will report to the PC and the Project Lead of the DRM Authority. The Firm may also be required to present to the Project Steering Committee and the DRM Authority Management Team.

6. DURATION

6.01 The Firm or Joint Venture Team will be contracted to deliver these services over an 18-month period. This timeframe should avoid major deliverables and work requiring consultation with the DRM Authority in the peaks of the Atlantic Hurricane Season.