

# Index of Governance and Public Policy in Disaster Risk Management (iGOPP)

National Report For The Bahamas

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The origins of today's disaster preparedness institutional framework in the Bahamas can be traced back to the 1970s, with the establishment of a "national emergency coordinator". Nevertheless, it was in August 1992, following the passage of Hurricane Andrew, that the government became aware that the response mechanisms were not adequate, and a permanent disaster relief arm of the government was established. In 1999, after the passage of Hurricane Floyd the Recovery Sub-Committee was formed. The role of the hurricane committee was later expanded to include preparedness for all forms of disaster, and the committee was renamed as the Disaster Management Committee (DMC), the embryonic form of what is currently the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The enactment of Chapter 34A Disaster Preparedness and Response Act in 2008 set the basis for the current normative framework for disaster management in The Bahamas, consolidating NEMA as the national agency responsible for disaster relief management in the country.

In terms of the general framework for disaster risk management, it is important to underscore that The Bahamas currently lacks a legal framework for comprehensive disaster risk management that explicitly addresses all risk management processes related to prospective, corrective and reactive management. As mentioned before, the main disaster risk-related legal framework is the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008, that establishes clear responsibilities for preparedness and relief, and its main policy tool is the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan. An updated policy framework is needed to promote a more holistic approach to Disaster Risk Management (DRM), and the gradual identification and establishment of sectorial and territorial responsibilities for all DRM processes.

With regards to Risk Identification and knowledge, the iGOPP shows that the current DRM-related normative framework does not address important conditions required to adequately implement this component, such as the identification of an institutional stakeholder with the responsibility to provide technical guidelines to territorial and sectorial levels for disaster risk analysis or methodologies for climate change studies, or the definition of the buildings that are essential, indispensable or critical infrastructures of the country. In the same vein, the regulatory frameworks for the sectors and for the utilities companies do not identify the responsibility to carry out disaster risk analysis, and there is a lack of regulations for continuing development and maintenance of observation and monitoring networks. The establishment of the Bahamas National Geographical Information Systems (BNGIS) and the current process of developing the BNGIS's action plan may provide opportunities to address some of the gaps revealed by the iGOPP for this component.

In terms of the Risk Reduction component, the iGOPP demonstrates that a few normative and institutional conditions required for this process are currently met in The Bahamas, while major gaps prevail in sectorial, territorial and overall policy implementation and policy evaluation for risk reduction. One important condition that is considered in the Planning and Subdivision Act of Bahamas (approved in 2010) is the establishment of the risk sensitive zoning as a determinant

factor in the definition of use and occupation of the land. There is also a very relevant, but not yet approved, policy for the housing sector with regards to the avoidance of rebuilding in vulnerable areas, as well as raising the height of land for new housing projects, which would have positive impact in the iGOPP results should they become formal regulations. It is also important to underscore that The Bahamas lacks an integrated, institutional framework for investment management, as well as related regulations for quality control of public investments, which hinders the possibility of introducing disaster risk criteria into the investment planning processes.

The Disaster Preparedness component is the most developed in The Bahamas according to the iGOPP results, with key conditions related to the central policy coordination and articulation addressed in the provisions of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008, which designates the National Emergency Management Agency – NEMA as the governmental agency charged with the responsibility for the process of preparedness and response in the Bahamas. Nevertheless, some important gaps remain, such as the lack of mandates for the establishment of emergency or contingency plans in the different sectors or ministries, which is also reflected in the analysis of the sectorial normative frameworks, which do not identify the responsibility to carry out preparedness for disaster response activities within the scope of their sectorial powers. It is important to highlight that a key policy instrument mandated by the Preparedness Act, which has been formulated by NEMA but not yet formally adopted and published as a binding instrument, is the National Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations. The Disaster Preparedness and Response Act requires that this Plan must be developed annually by the Director of NEMA, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and be approved by the Prime Minister for its publication. The current version 2016-2018 has not been published and it is not available in digital format, even though it contains important planning information for disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

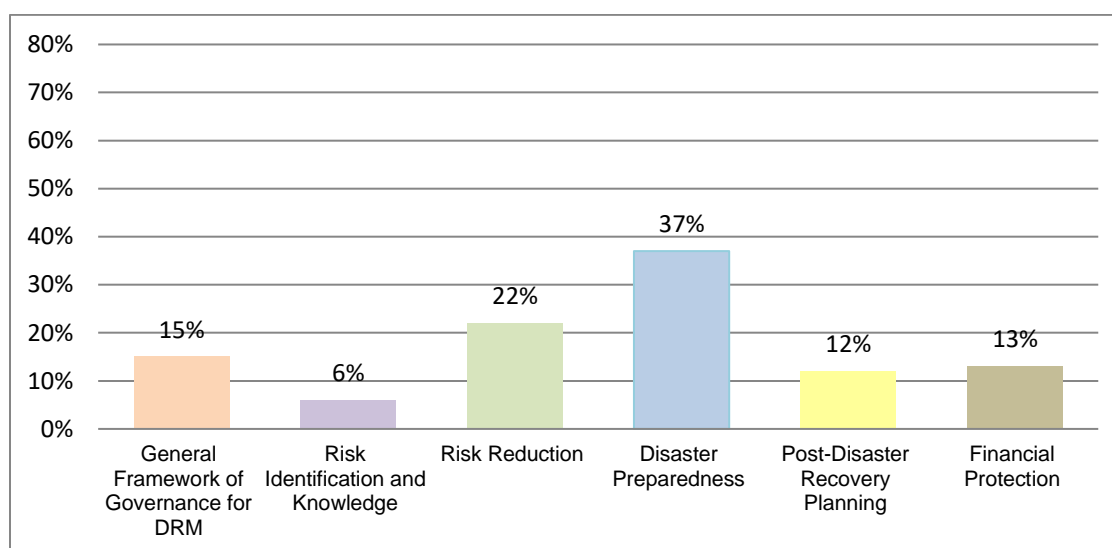
In terms of the Recovery Planning component, very limited progress is seen in The Bahamas in normative and institutional frameworks, also mirroring the results of the iGOPP in the rest of the countries of the region assessed so far. One important building block for this component is included in the Disaster Preparedness Act which establishes the responsibility of NEMA's Director for coordinating and implementing the general policy of the Government of The Bahamas for post-disaster recovery. Other relevant elements and quality attributes for this process are included in the contents of the National Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018, but as mentioned above, this plan still needs to be formally adopted.

Regarding Financial Protection component, the iGOPP evidenced a low advance (13%). The country has risk retention (Regional Fund of CDEMA) and risk transfer (insurance policies for different events through the CCRIF) instruments available to the country from binding agreements with regional instruments. In this context The Bahamas may evaluate additional financial risk retention and transfer instruments for reducing its fiscal vulnerability against the occurrence of disasters, such as a local fund for supporting financing emergency expenses in disaster situations, and for financing or co-financing risk management activities and the establishment of insurance of critical public infrastructure, as mandatory.

It is important to mention that The Bahamas has a working draft of the National Development Plan 2016 currently out for public consultation, which includes among its objectives *“Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction in Development Policies”*. It also includes as an output *“Disaster risk considerations mainstreamed into planning procedures for major infrastructure projects with considerations given to social, economic and environmental impact assessments”*. Once this National Development Plan is approved, it can spur a more integrative approach to DRM in the country. Also, the National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change, issued by the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission in March 2005, emphasizes the vulnerability of the country as a small island developing state, and addresses climate related DRM objectives.

The results of the iGOPP application in The Bahamas (2017) show a general progress level of 17.44%, which places the country in “low” range of advance. The analysis of the results by component of DRM public policy (Graph 1) reveals that “Disaster Preparedness” is the most advanced component, reaching a 37% of compliance, considered as an “incipient” progress, according to the iGOPP’s classification. In the same level of progress is placed the “Risk reduction” component, with a 22% of compliance. In a range considered as “low progress” fall the rest of the components, with “General Framework of Governance for DRM” reaching a 15%, followed by “Financial Protection” and “Post-Disaster Recovery Planning” components, with a 13% and 12% compliance respectively. The lowest progress belongs to the indicators associated to “Risk Identification and knowledge” component, with just a 6% of compliance.

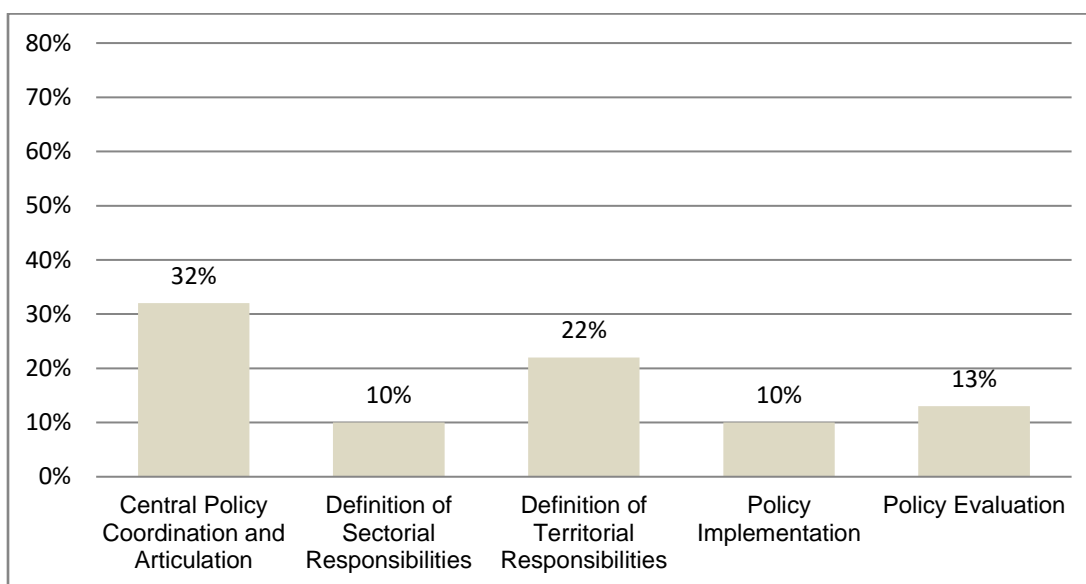
**Graph No. 1** – Component of DRM Public Policy Reform – The Bahamas (2017)



At the same time, the analysis of the iGOPP’s results from a public policy phases perspective (Graph 2), reveals that “Central Policy Coordination and Articulation”, as well as the “Definition of Sectorial Responsibilities”, show an “incipient level” of progress, with 32% and 22% of compliance respectively. The indicators related to “Policy Evaluation”, with 13% of compliance, as well as the conditions related to “Policy Implementation” and “Definition of Sectorial Responsibilities” (both with 10% compliance), fall within the “low level” progress range of the iGOPP.



**Graph 2:** Public policy phases according to iGOPP –The Bahamas 2017



Based on the iGOPP findings the following recommendations are proposed:

#### *Short Term*

- Based on the policy mandates to integrate disaster risk reduction into the development planning of the National Development Plan (once it is approved), it is recommended the initiation of a consultation process towards updating the contents of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, setting the normative and institutional basis for an integrative DRM policy in the country, harmonized with the vision and goals of the National Adaptation Strategy, and addressing the main normative gaps identified in the iGOPP for the different DRM processes.
- It is recommended to seize the opportunity of the on-going regulatory reform in the water and sanitation sector to introduce DRM and ACC related goals as part of the integrated water resources management policies in the country.
- It is recommended that a budgetary instrument be designed and implemented for identifying the budgetary allocations related with ex ante DRM programs and climate change adaptation activities.
- It is recommended that a budgetary instrument be designed and implemented for identifying the budgetary allocations related with ex ante DRM programs and climate change adaptation activities.
- It is recommended that the Ministry of Finance develops a financial strategy or policy to guide the financial management of disaster risk in the country, informed by the experiences of similar undertakings by other ministries of finance (MoFs) in the region.
- It is recommended to include in the design of the Green Fund, under development by the Ministry of Environment, provisions for financing or co-financing ex ante Climate Change adaptation (CCA) and related DRM activities.
- As suggested for the DRM component, the establishment of a new policy framework focused on integral DRM is recommended. Such a policy reform should include provisions for adequately implementing the risk identification and knowledge process, such as the identification of an institutional stakeholder with the responsibility to provide technical guidelines to territorial and sectorial levels for disaster risk analysis or methodologies for

climate change studies, as well as the definition of the buildings that are essential, indispensable or critical infrastructures of the country.

- It is recommended that the Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems Centre (BNGISC) considers, in the on-going planning process, the inclusion of roles and responsibilities for the creation and maintenance of Information Systems for Disaster Risk Management (including a database on the effects of disasters), in close coordination with NEMA.
- It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to disaster risk identification activities that can be identified through budgetary instruments.
- At the same time, it is suggested that NEMA promotes the implementation of sections 15 and 16 of the National Preparedness and Response Act, which gives the Prime Minister the power to declare “especially vulnerable areas”.
- It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to disaster risk reduction activities that can be specifically identified through budgetary instruments.
- It is highly recommended that NEMA formalizes, publishes and widely disseminates the National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018, upon the approval of the Policy Review by the Prime Minister, following the mandates of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act.
- It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to response preparedness activities that can be specifically identified through budgetary instruments and that they develop sectoral contingency plans in the event of disasters.
- It is suggested that in the next update of the National Chemical Emergency Response Plan its scope is enlarged to cover safety regulations related to transport and handling of hazardous materials.
- It is suggested that NEMA adopts quality standards in humanitarian assistance at least in relation to the water, sanitation, nutrition and temporary shelter in the elaboration of the future Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan.
- Promote new regulation that envisage the evaluation, reviewing and/or updating existing development and land use plans in the aftermath of disasters, in the territorial units affected.
- It is recommended that a financial protection structure for the agricultural sector be designed and implemented.

#### *Medium Term*

- It is recommended to develop a normative framework to shape the scope and competencies of the Bahamas Environment, Science & Technology Commission (BEST Commission), which considers its role with regards to the implementation of the National Policy for ACC and specific responsibilities regarding the methodologies to prepare climate change studies.
- The establishment of regulations for the continued development and maintenance of observation and monitoring networks of at least two natural hazards in the country is recommended. This could be part of an updated normative framework for DRM, as suggested in other components, or the development of specific regulations for the Meteorological Department.
- It is recommended that as part of the implementation of the National Policy on ACC, the Ministry of Education considers the inclusion of ACC and related DRM aspects in the curricula.

- Promote the inclusion in the sectorial normative framework as well as the regulatory frameworks of utilities companies having the responsibility to carry out disaster risk analysis within the scope of their powers. The Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) could have a catalytic role in this initiative, and the Bahamas Power and Light Company BPL a first target, seeing that this Company is the process of developing a corporate governance risk analysis unit.
- In the same vein, it is suggested that the Government continue to strengthen the Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems (BNGIS) through the Geomatics Capacity Enhancement for DRM project, which includes the acquisition of high resolution imagery, topographic maps and digital terrain modeling for several islands.
- It is suggested that the Building Code be updated, with inclusion of standards to withstand the impacts of climate change that will be developed as part of the implementation of the National Policy on Climate Change.
- It is recommended that regulations that define examples of acceptable risk for at least 2 threats in the country be established. The experience of the Ministry of Housing with the minimum height land required for new housing projects to reduce flood risk could be an initial input.
- It is recommended that methodological guidelines, as part of the development of a regulatory framework for public investments, be developed, which include the mandatory inclusion of disaster risk analysis in all phases of the public investment process.
- It is recommended that legislation that mandates the inclusion of climate change studies as requirements for the approval of public investments be passed.
- It is recommended that in future updates of Planning and Subdivision Act 2010, the Zoning By-Law provisions include the obligation of hazard zoning in the definition of land use.
- Promote the development of distinct sector regulations that define the responsibility to carry out preparedness for disaster response activities in the scope of their powers, based on the roles and responsibilities already identified in the Emergency Support Functions that are established as part of the National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations.
- It is recommended that URCA develop regulations to promote the formulation and implementation of plans for business continuity or disaster operations by the utilities companies in the country.
- It is recommended that regulations regarding the development and implementation of emergency or contingency plans in the event of fuel spill or oil pollution, which take into account the existence of relevant initiatives in the country be established, such as the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, but which are supported by and required by legislation.
- Based on the broad mandates included in the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, as well as the specific section incorporated in the National Preparedness & Response Plan, with regards to the recovery process, it is recommended to strengthen this process by: i) including the mandate to develop ex ante post-disaster recovery plans; ii) establishing explicit objectives for reducing the pre-existing levels of vulnerability in the recovery plans; and (iii) defining the time for the different phases of the recovery process, such as the re-establishment of the livelihoods or restoration/reconstruction of affected houses.
- In the same vein, it is suggested that NEMA develops a national planning framework of ex ante post-recovery process in the Bahamas, which delineates roles and responsibilities for this process.

- Promote new regulation that envisage the evaluation, reviewing and/or updating existing development and land use plans in the aftermath of disasters, in the territorial units affected.
- It is recommended that the establishment of insurance of critical public infrastructure, as mandatory, be implemented.

#### *Long Term*

- Promote the development of sectorial regulations that mandate the formulation of ex ante post-disaster recovery plans.

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The Index of Governance and Public Policy in Disaster Risk Management (iGOPP) has been designed to evaluate the formal, and therefore provable, existence of a series of legal, institutional and budgetary conditions that are considered fundamental in order for the processes of DRM to be implemented in a particular country.

The iGOPP does not replace or substitute other indicators related to the subject, but rather complements the different methodologies that exist for the comprehensive evaluation of risk and disaster risk management.

The practical use of the iGOPP lies in the identification of the gaps in the legal, institutional and budgetary framework that may exist in a particular country. It helps to focus a country's efforts (and the IDB's support, when applicable) on relevant aspects of governance aimed at strengthening the DRM public policy options in the countries of LAC.

The iGOPP is a composite or synthetic indicator that allows for verifying whether a particular country possesses the appropriate governance conditions (in legal, institutional and budgetary terms) for implementing a public policy for comprehensive DRM. The Index makes it possible to quantify to what extent the actions, policies and reforms of the government and its institutions are consistent with the objectives, results and processes of DRM.

The iGOPP prioritizes the explicit, rather than "perceived," compliance of the indicators. The iGOPP methodology determines compliance with the indicators when there are clear and explicit verifiable documents on the condition being measured. On the other hand, according to this methodology, those indicators that are sustained by verifiable documents in which compliance is "perceived" are considered non-compliant. That is to say, the iGOPP prioritizes explicit compliance, and not one that is merely "perceived."

The design of the iGOPP is based on two conceptual pillars:

- The Disaster Risk Management conceptual framework and its main processes
- The Governance conceptual framework and public policy phases

**Disaster Risk Management (DRM)** refers to all the processes to design, apply and evaluate strategies, policies and measures aimed at improving the understanding of disaster risk, to foment the reduction and financial protection of disaster risk, and to promote the continuous improvement of preparedness, response and recovery practices for disaster cases, with the explicit objective of increasing human safety, well-being, quality of life, resilience and sustainable development. It includes prospective, corrective and reactive risk management. DRM constitutes an indispensable development policy for ensuring sustainability and territorial security and collective rights and interests, and therefore is intrinsically associated with the planning of safe development and sustainable territorial environmental management in all levels of government.

Within the conceptual framework of the iGOPP, DRM is approached as a set of processes aimed at adopting and implementing policies, strategies and practices to reduce risk and its potential effects, and is analyzed on the basis of six (6) components that are necessary in order for DRM to be effectively implemented. The selection of these components is based on the experience of the political reform processes supported by the Bank:

1. General Framework of Governance for DRM (GF): This refers to the regulatory foundation suitable for the organization and coordination of DRM in each country. This includes both the specific regulations in DRM and the enabling territorial and sectorial regulations that guarantee their viability. In addition, it includes the availability of resources to implement the DRM processes, and the establishment of adequate data and citizen participation mechanisms, as well as mechanisms for the monitoring, evaluation and follow-up of said processes.
2. Risk Identification and Knowledge (RI): This is the process of DRM focused on the knowledge of the origins, causes, scope, frequency and possible evolution, among other aspects, of the potentially dangerous phenomena, as well as of the location, causes, evolution and resistance and recovery capacity of the exposed socioeconomic elements. This process includes the preliminary analysis of the consequences and contains both objective and scientific interpretation as well as social and individual perception interpretations. The conceptual framework of the iGOPP references the existence of a regulatory, institutional and budgetary framework that facilitates the continuous development of risk analysis, a tool that makes it possible to identify risk factors and causes and evaluate the probable damages and losses to be caused by natural events.
3. Risk Reduction (RR): This is the DRM process focused on minimizing vulnerabilities and risks in a society, to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation) the adverse impact of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development. This process includes the prospective and corrective interventions of DRM, and in order for it to be appropriately implemented it is necessary to have a good foundation of data on the risk conditions. The conceptual framework of the iGOPP references the existence of a regulatory, institutional and budgetary framework that enables the timely and appropriate intervention in the causes that generate the conditions of vulnerability.
4. Disaster Preparedness (DP): This is the DRM process whose objective is to plan, organize and test the society's response procedures and protocols in the event of a disaster, guaranteeing appropriate and timely assistance to affected persons, facilitating the normalization of the essential activities in the zone affected by the disaster. Preparedness is carried out through the monitoring of events and the definition of risk scenarios, the planning, organization, training, resources and simulation for actions of alert, evacuation, search, rescue, aid, and humanitarian assistance that must be made in case of an emergency. The conceptual framework of the iGOPP references the existence of a regulatory, institutional and budgetary framework that enables the implementation of mechanisms for a quick and appropriate response to an event or imminent event of an emergency situation.
5. Post-Disaster Recovery Planning (RC): Ex-ante process focused on preparation for a Quick and appropriate reestablishment of acceptable and sustainable life conditions through the rehabilitation, repair or reconstruction of infrastructure, goods and services that was destroyed, interrupted or deteriorated in the affected area, and the reactivation or impulse of the economic and social development of the community under conditions of lower risk than that which existed before the disaster. The conceptual framework of the iGOPP refers to the existence of a regulatory, institutional and budgetary framework that enables the implementation of mechanisms to reestablish means to life, basic services and infrastructure in such a way that reduces the improvisation, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the post-disaster recovery processes.

6. Financial Protection (FP): This is the DRM process that seeks the optimal combination of financial mechanisms or instruments for the retention and transfer of risk in order to have ex-post access to timely economic resources, which improves the response capacity to disasters (smaller and recurrent events and large infrequent disasters) and protects the fiscal balance of the State (Ghesquiere and Mahul, 2010). The conceptual framework of the iGOPP refers to the existence of a regulatory, institutional and budgetary framework that enables the design and implementation of a suitable structure for the retention and transfer of disaster risk.

On the other hand, **Governance** (Ballart, 2013) refers to the capacity to govern a public problem. This capacity manifests itself in the ongoing and stable management on behalf of the governments and administrations but also of the sectorial and private stakeholders of a country. As the capacity to govern a public problem increases, there should be an observable increase in the effectiveness of the adopted decisions and implemented policies, thus helping to prevent a greater number of negative consequences that result in the event of a disaster.

Within the conceptual framework of the iGOPP, governance is approached from the perspective of the three phases of the policy reform process, which include the following:

- A. Inclusion on the Governmental Agenda and Policy-Making  
Being included on the agenda of Government demonstrates the level of recognition and acceptance of the public problem and the commitment to finding a solution at the level of the political and social pressure that institutions receive. In order for the political leadership and social and economic pressure to give rise to substantive action it may be necessary for the political realm to make significant progress toward defining the responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in the analysis process. The iGOPP analyzes the inclusion on Government's agenda by verifying the existence of appropriate legal frameworks for DRM, or the inclusion of the subject in sectorial and territorial regulations. The iGOPP analyzes the inclusion on the agenda and formulation of public policy at three levels: (i) Central Policy Coordination and Articulation; (ii) Definition of Sectorial Responsibilities; and (iii) Definition of Territorial Responsibilities.
- B. Policy Implementation  
The iGOPP analyzes evidence of implementation by verifying the actions taken or the availability of resources allocated to the parties responsible for implementing the DRM policy, in its different components and governmental levels.
- C. Policy Evaluation  
The iGOPP analyzes the public policy evaluation from the perspective of the existence of monitoring and accountability mechanisms, as well as data and citizen participation mechanisms.

Both dimensions (DRM and Governance/Public Policy) are shown on the iGOPP matrix structure, in five (5) columns that analyze the public policy phases, and on six (6) rows that analyze the components characterizing the reform processes of a suitable public policy for DRM.

This matrix structure is expressed in 30 cells that make up a variable number of binary indicators.

The index scoring ranges from 0 to 100 and uses the following classification system:

**iGOPP Classification System**

<b>%</b>	<b>Level of Favorable Governance Conditions for the DRM</b>
91 - 100%	Outstanding
71 - 90%	Very good
41 - 70%	Good
21 - 40%	Incipient
0 - 20%	Low



**Figure 1: CLASIFICACION AND CODIFICATION OF THE IGOPP**

Public policy phases Components of public policy reform in DRM	1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation			2. Policy Implementation	3. Policy Evaluation:
	Central policy coordination and articulation	Definition of Sectorial Responsibilities	Definition of Territorial Responsibilities	Evidence of Progress in Implementation	Monitoring, Accountability and Participation
General Framework of Governance for DRM (GF)	GF-1A	GF-1B	GF-1C	GF-2	GF-3
Risk Identification and Knowledge (RI)	RI-1A	RI-1B	RI-1C	RI-2	RI-3
Risk Reduction (RR)	RR-1A	RR-1B	RR-1C	RR-2	RR-3
Disaster Preparedness (DP)	DP-1A	DP-1B	DP-1C	DP-2	DP-3
Post-Disaster Recovery Planning (RC)	RC-1A	RC-1B	RC-1C	RC-2	RC-3
Financial Protection (FP)	FP-1A	FP-1B	FP-1C	FP-2	FP-3

## **II. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK:**

The origins of today's disaster preparedness institutional framework go back to the 1970s, with the existence of "national emergency coordinator". The Government also maintained the National Emergency Relief Account at the Royal Bank of Canada, funds from which were used as early as 1965 in the Hurricane Betsy relief effort. But it was in August 1992, following the passage of Hurricane Andrew, that the government became aware that the response mechanisms were not adequate, so a permanent disaster relief arm of the government was established, under the name of "Hurricane Committee". After the passage of Hurricane Floyd, a Recovery Sub-Committee was formed on 24th September 1999, and the overall role of the Hurricane Committee was expanded to include preparedness for all forms of disaster. This was the beginning of the Disaster Management Committee (DMC) in its current form, with the Recovery Sub-Committee adopting the name of Disaster Management Unit (DMU). The DMC used to meet the last Friday of each month, and the Committee members were drawn from government ministries and agencies.

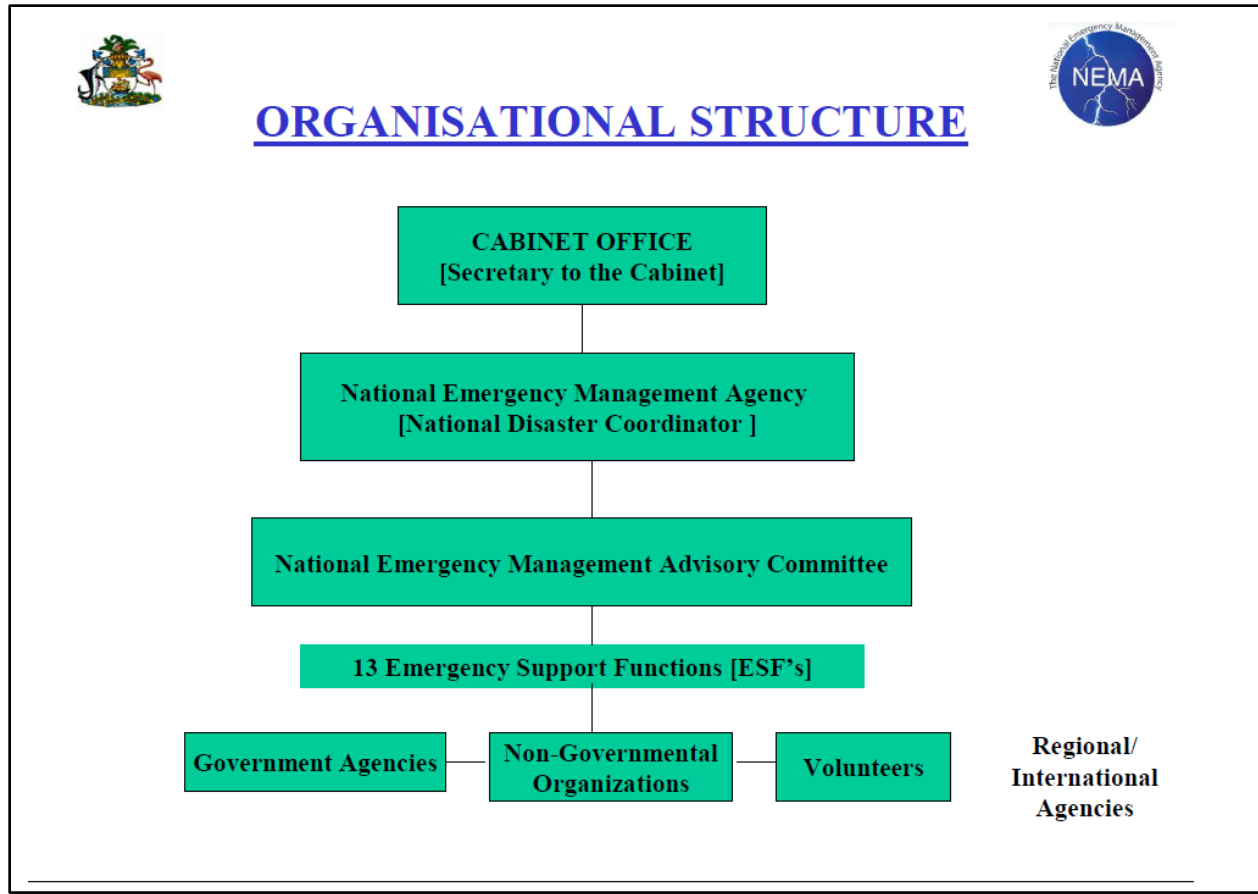
Later, the focus of the DMC was expanded to include the concept of comprehensive disaster management. To reflect this, the name was changed to National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which was later consolidated as the national agency responsible for disaster relief management in the Bahamas with the enactment of the Chapter 32 Chapter 34A Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008.

The Disaster Preparedness Act establishes that an office or post of NEMA located on a Family Island, and the respective Administrator of the Island, shall be responsible for the carrying out of the functions of NEMA in the Island. Additionally, the Administrator on a respective Family Island shall appoint a disaster Consultative Committee consisting of not less than five residents of each settlement or town area or district a Consultative Committee who shall assist the Director of NEMA in formulating disaster preparedness measures in the family islands. The Act also establishes an Advisory Committee of NEMA (see Figure 2), comprising such members as may be appointed by the Prime Minister representing: i) the Office of the Prime Minister; ii) the Office of the Cabinet, (iii) the Royal Bahamas Police Force, (iv) the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, (v) the Fire Service, (vi) the Ministry responsible for public health, (vii) the Ministry responsible for the environment, (viii) the Ministry responsible for public works, (ix) the Ministry responsible for local government, (x) the Public Hospitals Authority, (xi) the public utilities undertakings, (xii) the Department of Meteorology, (xiii) the Department of Aviation, (xiv) The Bahamas Broadcasting Corporation, (xv) such other Ministries, Departments of Government and public bodies as the Prime Minister thinks fit, and (xvi) such other persons or organizations as the Prime Minister thinks fit who volunteer or having regard to their respective role in the economic or commercial sphere of The Bahamas or are required by law to perform functions related to the mitigation of and response to emergencies and disasters in The Bahamas.

The Act authorizes the Director of NEMA, upon consultation with the Advisory Committee, to establish any sub-committees to deal with responses to emergencies and disasters. The National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018 includes an Annex on the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) with the description of the mission, policies, concept of

operations and responsibilities of the primary and support agencies involved in the operations of key response functions that supplement the Family Islands activities. There are 13 ESFs: Transportation, Communications, Public Works and Engineering, International Assistance, Planning and Information, Shelters Services, Relief Plans and Distributions, Health and Medical Services; Urban Search and Rescue; Marine Search and Rescue; Hazardous Materials (marine and land), Food, Tourism Industry and Volunteers.

**Figure No. 2:** Organizational Structure of NEMA



**Source:** NEMA official website:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=NEMA+Bahamas&aq=chrome.69i57j0l2j69i60j0l2.3375j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

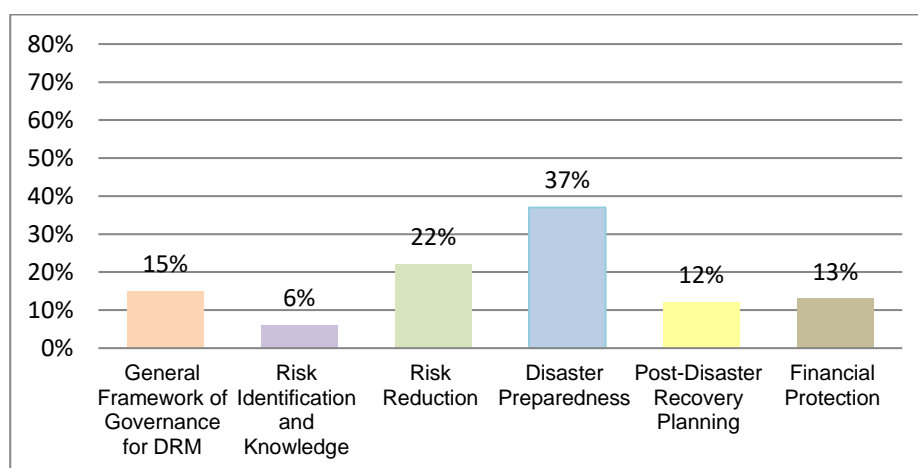
### III. APPLICATION BY COMPONENT:

The following tables and graphs show the overall levels of compliance with the iGOPP indicators according to: i) the six DRM components of public policy reform. (Table 1, Graph 3) and, ii) the public policy phases (Table 2, Graph 4)

**Table No. 1:** iGOPP sub-index scores by DRM component of public policy reform (2017)

1	General Framework of Governance for DRM	15%
2	Risk Identification and Knowledge	6%
3	Risk Reduction	22%
4	Disaster Preparedness	37%
5	Post-disaster Recovery Planning	12%
6	Financial Protection	13%

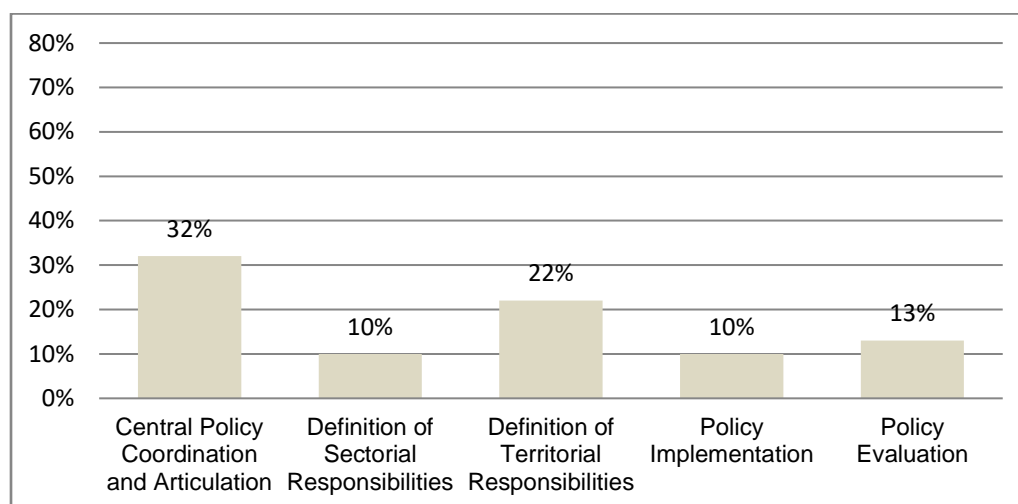
**Graph No. 3** – iGOPP sub-index scores by DRM component of public policy reform (2017)



**Table No. 2:** iGOPP sub-index scores by public policy phase (2017)

1	Central Policy Coordination and Articulation	32%
2	Definition of sectorial responsibilities	10%
3	Definition of territorial responsibilities	22%
4	Policy Implementation	10%
5	Policy Evaluation	13%

**Graph No. 4:** iGOPP sub-index scores by public policy phase (2017)



A qualitative analysis for every DRM component is presented below, according to the different public policy phases: 1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: 1.1. Central policy coordination and articulation; 1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities; 1.3 Definition of territorial responsibilities; 2. Policy implementation: 2.1 Evidence of progress in implementation, and 3. Policy Evaluation: 3.1. Monitoring, accountability and participation.

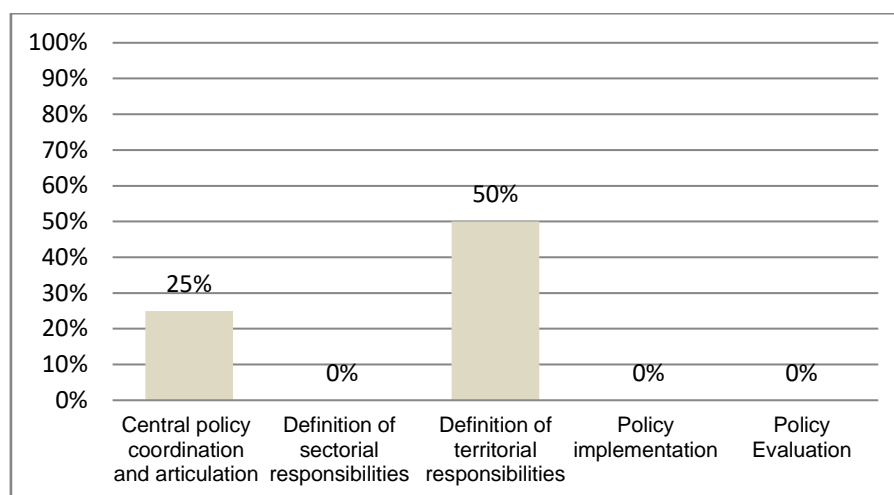
**a. General Framework of Governance for Disaster Risk Management (GF):**

*The DRM component “General Framework of Governance for DRM” shows an “incipient” level of progress, with a 15% of compliance of the related indicators. The analysis by policy phases in this component reveals that those aspects related to “definition of territorial responsibilities” reach a “good” level of progress, with a 50% of compliance of the related indicators. The indicators related to “central policy coordination and articulation” fall in a range of “incipient” level of progress, with 25% of compliance. According to iGOPP results, no progress (0% compliance) was found in relation to “policy implementation”, “policy evaluation” and aspects related to “definition of sectorial responsibilities” (See Table 3, Graph 5).*

**Table No. 3** – General Framework of Governance for Disaster Risk Management component by public policy phases (2017).

1	Central policy coordination and articulation	25%
2	Definition of sectorial responsibilities	0%
3	Definition of territorial responsibilities	50%
4	Policy implementation	0%
5	Policy evaluation	0%

**Graph No. 5** - General Framework of Governance for Disaster Risk Management component by public policy phases (2017).



The main findings resulting from the iGOPP analysis according to the three main public policy phases for this component are presented: 1) Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation; 2) Policy Implementation; and 3) Policy Evaluation; according to the three different levels included in the iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: The normative framework for DRM in the country is limited to the contents of the Disaster Preparedness Act, enacted in 2008, that establishes responsibilities for preparedness and relief. Next, the three dimensions of this policy phase are analyzed in greater detail:

1.1. *Central policy coordination and articulation (GF-1A)*: The Bahamas currently lacks a legal framework for comprehensive disaster risk management that explicitly addresses all processes all risk management processes related to prospective, corrective and reactive management<sup>1</sup>. The main disaster risk-related legal framework is the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008, that establishes clear responsibilities for preparedness and relief, and its main policy tool is the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan. On the other hand, there is a National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change, issued by the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission in March 2005, which emphasizes the vulnerability of the country as a small island developing state, and addresses climate related DRM objectives<sup>2</sup>. It is also important to underscore that the Bahamas has a working draft of the National Development Plan 2016 (for public consultation), which includes among its objectives “*Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction in Development Policies*”<sup>3</sup>. Once this National Development Plan is approved, it will provide an important impetus to the DRM agenda in the country.

<sup>1</sup> See indicator GF-1A-1.

<sup>2</sup> See indicator GF-1A-7

<sup>3</sup> See indicators GF-1A-5 and GF-1A-6

*1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities (GF-1B):* according to the iGOPP results, currently the Bahamas does not comply with any of the three indicators related with sectorial responsibilities within the GF component. The regulations for integrated water resources management do not establish disaster risk management or adaptation to climate change as a purpose, aim or result; neither do the regulations for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) integrate disaster risk analysis<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to mention that the water and sanitation sector is in the midst of regulatory reform, with the regulatory role being transferred to the Ministry of the Environment and Housing to regulate ground water resources, and climate change has been raised as a consideration to be included in the revised regulatory role<sup>5</sup>.

*1.3. Definition of territorial responsibilities (GF-1C):* The Local Government Act, enacted in 1996, establishes that Local Land Use Plans should be developed for each family island, which allows the Bahamas to comply with one of the conditions assessed by the iGOPP, regarding the decentralization of responsibilities in the matter of development planning or territorial planning and land use<sup>6</sup>. The Planning and Subdivision Act 2010 also includes a series of objectives that empower the formation of territorial structures under an ecosystem management approach<sup>7</sup>. On the other hand, the iGOPP did not find evidence of the regulations in place that establish an approach of basin eco-region for environmental management or that empower territorial management units to create networks, agreements, alliances or territorial agreements in DRM<sup>8</sup>.

## **2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (GF-2):**

The iGOPP shows that there is no entity with a legal mandate to coordinate comprehensive DRM functions in the country, and consequently, there is not allocation of resources for an entity in charge of the aforementioned functions<sup>9</sup>.

The country does not have a disaster risk financial strategy document that establishes a policy for reducing its fiscal vulnerability against the occurrence of disasters<sup>10</sup>. Similarly, the iGOPP did not find budget categories or instruments for allocating resources to *ex ante* DRM activities<sup>11</sup> or to climate change adaptation activities<sup>12</sup>. The iGOPP also shows that there are no funds either for financing or co-financing *ex ante* risk management activities<sup>13</sup> nor for climate change adaptation activities (the country is in the process of creating the Green Climate Fund under the Ministry of the Environment and Housing)<sup>14</sup>. Finally, the country has not yet developed budgetary instruments to encourage the sectors or territorial units to implement activities in disaster risk management either.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See indicators GF-1B-1 a GF-1B-3

<sup>5</sup> See indicator GF-1B-2

<sup>6</sup> See indicator GF-1C-1

<sup>7</sup> See indicator GF-1C-4

<sup>8</sup> See indicators GF-1C-2 y GF-1C-3

<sup>9</sup> See indicator GF-2-2

<sup>10</sup> See indicator GF-2-1

<sup>11</sup> See indicator GF-2-3

<sup>12</sup> See indicator GF-2-4

<sup>13</sup> See indicator GF-2-5

<sup>14</sup> See indicator GF-2-6

<sup>15</sup> See indicator GF-2-9 and GF-2-10

It is important to underscore that The Bahamas is a member of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) which is a regional catastrophe fund for Caribbean governments, designed to limit the financial impact of devastating hurricanes and earthquakes by quickly providing financial liquidity when a policy is triggered. While The Bahamas has been paying the insurance policies with resources from the national budget, those policies do not address specific fiscal portfolios<sup>16</sup>.

3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (GF-3) The Bahamas currently lacks a normative framework regarding transparency considerations for DRM. An Act regarding Freedom of Information was passed on 31 March 2017, but only parts of it have been brought into force<sup>17</sup>. Additionally, the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, which is the current main disaster-related normative framework, is silent on national oversight bodies, and only mentions it is subject to the general policy direction of the Prime Minister<sup>18</sup>. The iGOPP did not find any evidence of a compliance assessment of DRM conducted by the Auditor General Office or by NEMA, but it is important to mention that the Office of the Auditor General is commencing an audit of NEMA in 2017.<sup>19</sup>

#### **b. Risk Identification and Knowledge (RI):**

*The RI component shows a “low level” of progress in The Bahamas, with only 6% of compliance for the indicators assessed for this component. In terms of progress according to different public policy phases (see Table 4 and Graph 6), the aspects related with the “policy evaluation” reach a 17% of compliance, followed by those aspects related to “definition of sectorial responsibilities”, with 11% of compliance. According to the iGOPP results, the indicators related to “central policy coordination and articulation”, “definition of territorial responsibilities”, and “policy implementation” don’t show any progress so far, with a 0% compliance of the respective indicators.*

**Table No. 4** – Risk identification and Knowledge component by public policy phases (2017)

<b>1</b>	<b>Central policy coordination and articulation</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Definition of sectorial responsibilities</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Definition of territorial responsibilities</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Policy Implementation</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Policy Evaluation</b>	<b>17%</b>

<sup>16</sup> See indicator GF-2-7

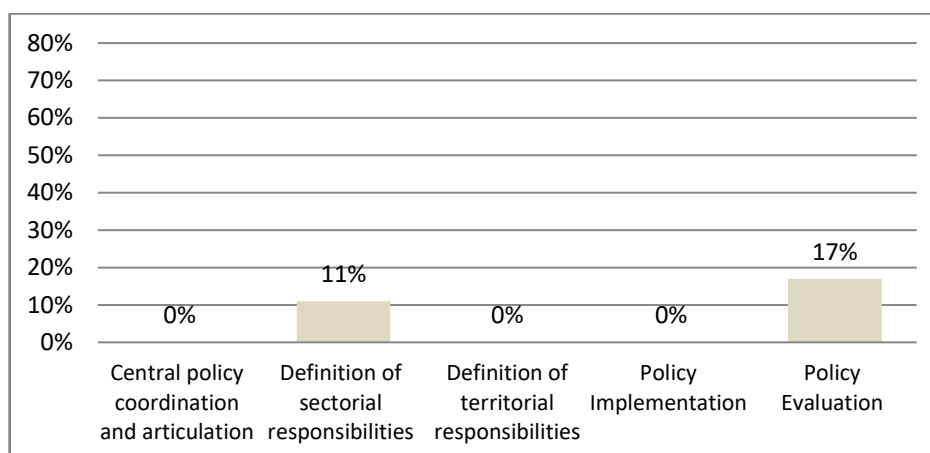
<sup>17</sup> See indicator GF-3-2

<sup>18</sup> See indicator GF-3-1

<sup>19</sup> See indicators GF-3-3 y GF-3-4



**Graph No. 6** –Risk identification and Knowledge component by public policy phases (2017)



Next, the main findings resulting from the iGOPP analysis according to the three main public policy phases for this component are presented: 1) Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation; 2) Policy Implementation; and 3) Policy Evaluation; according to the three different levels included in the iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: In terms of the inclusion of the disaster risk identification and knowledge in the government agenda and policy formulation the iGOPP reveals that this policy phase is still to be developed for the Bahamas. The analysis of these three specific dimensions is presented next.

*1.1. Central policy coordination and articulation (RI-1A)*: the iGOPP shows that the current DRM-related normative framework does not address important conditions for the RI process, such as the responsibility to provide technical guidelines to territorial and sectorial levels for disaster risk analysis or methodologies for climate change studies<sup>20</sup>. The iGOPP also shows that The Bahamas lack regulations that establish the creation and maintenance of Information Systems for DRM and related databases on the effects of disasters. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that The Bahamas Spatial Data Infrastructure Act 2014 establishes The Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems Centre (BNGIS), which acts as a repository for the central database on GIS information. While this Centre does not yet integrate information on the occurrence of natural events and vulnerability exposure, it can provide GIS training to Government departments and it is already working with NEMA. In an interview with the BNGIS, this Centre informed that it is in the process of establishing a library to house datasets from government agencies to address data gaps in DRM, but the library has not been fully populated yet<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> See indicators RI-1A-1 and RI-1A-2.

<sup>21</sup> See indicators RI-1A-3 and RI-1A-4.

*1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities (RI-1B):* The iGOPP did not find evidence that The Bahamas DRM-related regulations establish that each sector or public service companies or utilities are responsible to carry out disaster risk analysis within the scope of their powers<sup>22</sup>. The same gaps are seen in the analysis of the sectorial and public utilities normative frameworks, which do not identify responsibilities to conduct disaster risk analysis or adverse effects analysis of climate change<sup>23</sup>. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the analysis of water sector responsibilities for the Risk Reduction component of the iGOPP, it is important to highlight that this sector is in the midst of regulatory reform, with the regulatory role being transferred to the Ministry of the Environment and Housing to regulate ground water resources, and climate change has been raised as a consideration to be included in the revised regulatory role<sup>24</sup>. Another important gap is related to the lack of regulations for continuous development and maintenance of observation and monitoring networks of at least two natural hazards in the country, or in a rule that defines at a minimum which building are essential, indispensable or critical infrastructures of the country. On the other hand, the iGOPP reveals that one of the priorities for Government Agencies in the Roadmap for Science and Technology, published by the BEST Commission in 2005 includes priorities for the work of the Cabinet Office, the Meteorological Department and the Department of Lands & Surveys with regards to promotion of knowledge on disaster risk and climate change adaptation in the country<sup>25</sup>.

*1.3. Definition of territorial responsibilities (RI-1C):* the DRM-related normative framework does not establish that territorial management units are responsible for disaster risk assessment in their respective territories<sup>26</sup>. The Bahamas also lack regulations that establish the obligation to zone threatened cities, as well as regulations that identify a national stakeholder responsible for defining the scale or resolution in which risk analysis should be carried out at different government levels<sup>27</sup>. As mentioned before in 1.1., the Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems Centre (BNGIS) is authorized by The Bahamas Spatial Data Infrastructure Act 2014, to provide GIS training to Government departments. While the BNGIS does not conduct risk analysis or mention a particular scale or resolution of data, it is important to mention that this Centre is in the process of developing an action plan to meet the aims of the Spatial Data Infrastructure Act.

*2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (RI-2):* the iGOPP did not find evidence that disaster risk has been integrated into educational curricular programs at any level. In terms of the sectorial policy implementation, the iGOPP did not find budgetary evidence of funds assigned in Fiscal Year 2016/2017 to perform disaster risk analysis in any of the 10 key sectors assessed, or in the budgetary assignments of the public utilities companies analyzed<sup>28</sup>. As set out in the general framework section, it is important to note that the iGOPP did not find budget categories or instruments that allow for identification of the allocation of resources to ex ante DRM activities. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the Utilities Regulator and

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<sup>22</sup> See indicators RI-1B-3 and RI-1B-4.

<sup>23</sup> See indicators RI-1B-8 to RI-1B-17

<sup>24</sup> See indicator RI-1B-15

<sup>25</sup> See indicators RI-1B-5 y RI-1B-6

<sup>26</sup> See indicator RI-1C-1.

<sup>27</sup> See indicator RI-1C-2 and RI-1C-3

<sup>28</sup> See indicators RI-2-3 to RI-2-15

Competition Authority (URCA) informed the iGOPP team that The Bahamas Telecommunication Company (BTC) conducted a structural analysis of its mobile cellular network as it relates to resilience of the towers and their ability to withstand certain categories of storms, carried out as recently as last year, even though the team had no access to documentary evidence of such an analysis<sup>29</sup>. In the same fashion, The Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) Company informed the iGOPP team that they have conducted assessments related to fire protection of generation plants and major distribution systems, but the iGOPP team had no access to those studies<sup>30</sup>. Additionally, the Water and Sewerage Company informed the iGOPP team that they conducted a vulnerability assessment for providing power supply to critical infrastructure such as the desalinization plants<sup>31</sup>.

**3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (RI-3):** the iGOPP shows that the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008, mandates the responsibility to inform the citizens about disaster risk.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, the iGOPP found no evidence of regulations regarding the availability of information on risk analysis or on climate change studies, or which define the mechanisms or tools for their exchange, nor evidence regarding quality assessment for the geological or hydrometeorological research, monitoring and dissemination process performed by the institutions responsible for generating that information<sup>33</sup>. In an interview with the Office of the Auditor General, it was confirmed that they have not conducted an operational/financial audit on NEMA in the last 5 years, but an audit is planned for NEMA in 2017.<sup>34</sup>

### **c. Risk Reduction (RR)**

*The RR component shows an “incipient” level of progress in The Bahamas, with 22% of compliance of related indicators. In terms of the progress in the different public policy phases (see Table 5 and Graph 7), the aspects related with the “central policy coordination and articulation” and “definition of territorial responsibilities” almost reach a “good level” of progress, with 40% of compliance of the related indicators. A “low level” of progress is found for aspects related to “policy evaluation” and “definition of sectorial responsibilities”, with 20% and 11% respectively. No progress is shown by the iGOPP with regards to indicators related to policy implementation (0%).*

**Table No. 5** –Risk Reduction component by public policy phases (2017)

<b>1</b>	<b>Central policy coordination and articulation</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Definition of sectorial responsibilities</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Definition of territorial responsibilities</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Policy Implementation</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Policy Evaluation</b>	<b>20%</b>

<sup>29</sup> See indicator RI-2-11

<sup>30</sup> See indicator RI-2-12

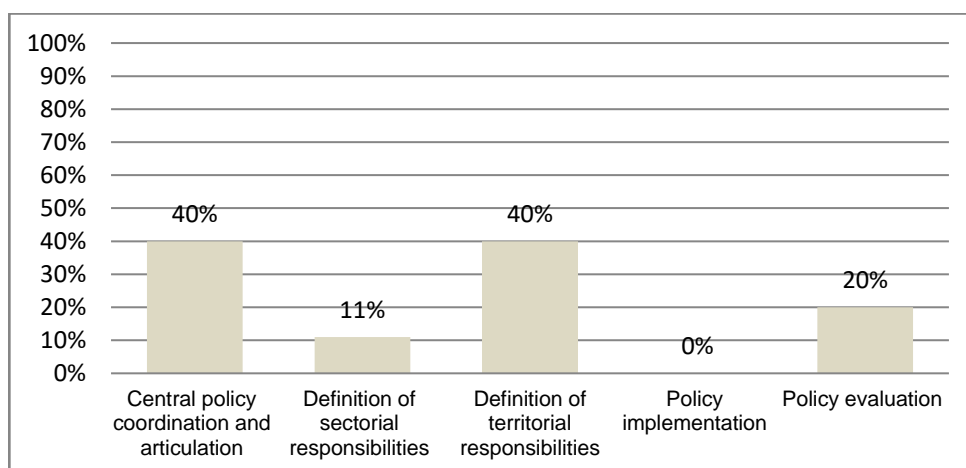
<sup>31</sup> See indicator RI-2-13

<sup>32</sup> See indicator RI-3-6

<sup>33</sup> See indicators RI-3-1 to RI-3-4.

<sup>34</sup> See indicator RI-3-5

**Graphic No. 7** – Risk Reduction component by public policy phases (2017)



Next, the main findings resulting from the iGOPP analysis, according to the three main public policy phases for this component are presented: 1) Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation; 2) Policy Implementation; and 3) Policy Evaluation; according to the three different levels included in the iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: the iGOPP shows that a few conditions of the RR process related to the central policy coordination and articulation, as well as some aspects associated with the definition of territorial responsibilities, are being considered in the normative frameworks of The Bahamas, while major gaps prevail in terms of the sectorial responsibilities. Below, these three specific dimensions of this policy phase are analyzed in more detail.

*1.1. Central policy coordination and articulation (RR-1A):* The 2005 National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change promotes a holistic and coordinated approach with disaster risk institutions, such as NEMA and CDEMA, as well with DRM-related instruments, such as the national disaster planning and considerations in the Building Code, to withstand the impacts of climate change.<sup>35</sup> Also Chapter 200 Building Regulation Act 1971, which regulates the construction of all buildings in the country, includes specific penalties for the breach of regulations related to the design, construction or location of public and private infrastructure or buildings<sup>36</sup>. Nevertheless, the iGOPP did not find evidence of national standards that refer either to essential or critical infrastructure, or to reinforcement or replacement measures to reduce the vulnerability of such infrastructure<sup>37</sup>. Additionally, the iGOPP did not find evidence of regulations that define examples of acceptable risk for at least two hazards in the country<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> See indicator RR-1A-1

<sup>36</sup> See indicator RR-1A-4

<sup>37</sup> See indicator RR-1A-3

<sup>38</sup> See indicator RR-1A-2

*1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities (RR-1B):* The iGOPP did not find evidence that DRM-related regulations in The Bahamas establish the responsibility of each sector or public service companies or utilities to reduce the disaster risk within the scope of their powers.<sup>39</sup> The same gaps are seen in the analysis of the sectorial normative frameworks, which do not identify responsibilities to reduce disaster risk within the scope of their sectorial powers<sup>40</sup>. It is interesting to mention that the Department of Housing does have as a common practice the avoidance of rebuilding in vulnerable areas in the country affected by disasters, relocating populations in low-lying areas to higher ground. Additionally, the Department of Housing usually raises the height of land required for new housing projects<sup>41</sup>, but this is not yet part of the formal regulations for the sector. Also important to mention that the Bahamas Building Code (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), published in 2003, contains provisions for “Wind Loads”, that are in line with the requirements of the American Society of Civil Engineers Minimum Design Loads for Building.<sup>42</sup> It is interesting to note that The Bahamas lacks of an integrated institutional framework for investment management and related regulations for quality control of public investments, so there are no regulations that mandate the performance of disaster risk analysis or integration of climate change studies during any investment phase<sup>43</sup>. Important to mention that all multilateral agencies are now requiring the inclusion of DRM and climate change considerations for developing investment projects funded for them, but this practice has not been reflected in normative regulations. Nevertheless, the *“Working Draft of the National Development Plan of the Bahamas”* (currently in a “public consultation” phase) proposes as *“Strategy 11.2: Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction in Development Policies”*, which includes as output *“Disaster risk considerations mainstreamed into planning procedures for major infrastructure projects with considerations given to social, economic and environmental impact assessments”*.

*1.3. Definition of territorial responsibilities (RR-1C):* One important condition contained in the Planning and Subdivision Act passed in 2010, is the establishment of the risk sensitive zoning as a determinant factor in the definition of use and occupation of the land<sup>44</sup>. Additionally, Chapter 199 Housing Act 1968 (updated in 2009), includes provisions for the overall improvement of human settlements<sup>45</sup>, but the iGOPP did not find evidence of the existence of regulations for the relocation of human settlements located in risk zones<sup>46</sup>. Another important gap revealed by the iGOPP is the lack of regulations that establish that territorial management units are responsible for disaster risk reduction in their respective territories, neither in the DRM-related normative framework nor in the Local Government Act 1996 (updated 2008).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See indicators RR-1B-1 and RR-1B-2

<sup>40</sup> See indicators RR-1B-7 and RI-1B-16

<sup>41</sup> See indicator RR-1B-10

<sup>42</sup> See indicator RR-1B-3

<sup>44</sup> See indicator RR-1C-3

<sup>45</sup> See indicator RR-1C-4

<sup>46</sup> See indicator RR-1C-5

<sup>47</sup> See indicators RR-1C-1 and RR-1C-2

## 2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (RR-2):

The iGOPP found that none of the 10 key sectors of the country allocated resources for disaster risk reduction activities in Fiscal Year 2016/2017<sup>48</sup>. Important to mention, as described in the GF component section, that the iGOPP did not find budget categories or instruments that allow identifying allocation of resources to *ex ante* DRM activities. In addition, no evidence of allocation of resources for performing disaster risk reduction activities was found at the public utilities companies<sup>49</sup>. Also, important to note that The Bahamas Water and Sewerage Corporation (WSC) mentioned in an interview that they are gradually incorporating climate change into the designs of desalination plants in six family islands as well as in New Providence.

In an interview, The Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) mentioned that they have conducted activities to improve its infrastructure, which included replacing aging infrastructure for underground cables, reinforcing overhead networks in consideration of natural hazard risks – designed to withstand Cat 3 – , and built a new set of lines on steel poles to withstand Cat 5.

3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (RR-3): the iGOPP shows that Chapter 232 Environmental Health Services Act approved in 1987 establishes a system of penalties to public and private entities when violators which cause damage to the environment.<sup>50</sup> The iGOPP team did not find any evidence of verifications or evaluations regarding disaster risk reduction which have been undertaken by the Auditor’s General Office in the last 5 years, but as mentioned in the analysis for component RI, the Auditor’s General Office informed the iGOPP team that they will perform an audit of NEMA later in 2017.<sup>51</sup> The iGOPP also reveals that regulations governing the development planning, land use and watershed planning and management, do not assign responsibilities for their monitoring and update.<sup>52</sup> The iGOPP found that there is no identification of an agency responsible for performing controls in mega projects and infrastructure.<sup>53</sup>

## c. **Disaster Preparedness (DP):**

*The DP component shows an “incipient” level of progress in the Bahamas, with 37% of compliance for the related indicators, the highest level reached for any of the six components assessed by the iGOPP in the country. In terms of the different public policy phases (see Table 6 and Graph 8), the aspects related with the “central policy coordination and articulation” reach a “very good” level of progress, with 88% of compliance. In a range considered as “incipient” progress fall the aspects related to the “definition of territorial responsibilities”, followed by those related to “policy implementation”, with 27% compliance. In a “low” level of progress the iGOPP classifies the aspects related with “policy evaluation” and “definition of sectorial responsibilities”, with 17% and 12% of compliance respectively.*

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<sup>48</sup> See indicators RR-2-1 to RR-2-10

<sup>49</sup> See indicators RR-2-11 to RR-2-13

<sup>50</sup> See indicator RR-3-1

<sup>51</sup> See indicator RR-3-2

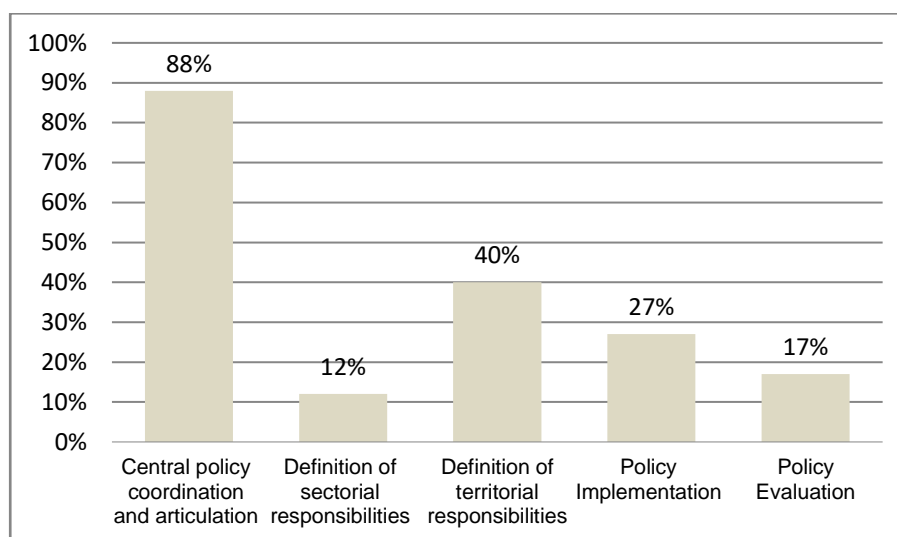
<sup>52</sup> See indicators RR-3-3- and RR-3-4

<sup>53</sup> See indicator RR-3-4

**Table No. 6** – Disaster Preparedness component by public policy phases (2017)

1	Central policy coordination and articulation	88%
2	Definition of sectorial responsibilities	12%
3	Definition of territorial responsibilities	40%
4	Policy Implementation	27%
5	Policy Evaluation	17%

**Gráfico No. 8** – Disaster Preparedness component by public policy phases (2017)



Next, the main findings resulting from the iGOPP analysis according to the three main public policy phases for this component are presented: 1) Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation; 2) Policy Implementation; and 3) Policy Evaluation; according to the three different levels included in the iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: the normative framework for disaster preparedness in The Bahamas is based on the contents of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008 which designates the National Emergency Management Agency – NEMA as the governmental agency charged with the responsibility for the process of preparedness and response in the Bahamas. Below, the iGOPP results for the three dimensions of this policy phase are analyzed.

*1.1. Central policy coordination and articulation (DP-1A)*: key conditions of the disaster preparedness component related to the central policy coordination and articulation assessed by the iGOPP are met in The Bahamas through the provisions included in Chapter 34A Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008. This Act establishes an inter-institutional organization at the national level for the process of preparedness and response, in the form of an

Advisory Committee of NEMA, consisting of various Government Ministries, as well as Consultative Committees in the Family Islands.<sup>54</sup> The Disaster Preparedness and Response Act also establishes: (i) a National Emergency Management Advisory Committee of NEMA (NEOC), on which the Prime Minister and office of Cabinet sit; (ii) the development of official protocols for the coordination of operations or incidents; (iii) the formulation of emergency or contingency plans at the national level; and (iv) a set regulations for the coordination of international assistance and mutual help in case of disaster.<sup>55</sup> The Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, approved in 1973, also contemplates the implementation of temporary regime measures in the case of disaster.<sup>56</sup> One of the few gaps revealed by the iGOPP, is the lack of references to the implementation of drills or simulations in the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act<sup>57</sup>.

*1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities (DP-1B):* the iGOPP found an important gap in the normative framework for disaster preparedness, since the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act does not cover the establishment of emergency or contingency plans in the different sectors or ministries<sup>58</sup>. The same gap is seen in the analysis of the sectorial normative frameworks, which do not identify the responsibility to carry out disaster preparedness activities within the scope of their sectorial powers, with the exception of the energy sector<sup>59</sup>. The prerogative established in the Electricity Act that allows the Minister of Energy to issue instructions for the continued operation of the sector, in the context of imminent emergencies (including those related to natural hazards) has been considered as an evidence of the sector's compliance with this condition<sup>60</sup>. In terms of the regulations that govern public service companies, the iGOPP did not find evidence of the existence of regulations that require the formulation and implementation of business continuity plans for disaster situations<sup>61</sup>. The same gap is seen as per the regulations for the implementation of emergency or contingency plans associated with transport, handling or processing of hazardous substances, or similar regulations in the event of fuel spill or oil pollution.<sup>62</sup> One condition that is included in the provisions of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act is the establishment of an early warning system.<sup>63</sup>

*1.3. Definition of territorial responsibilities (DP-1C):* the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act establishes Disaster Consultative Committees on the family islands as instances of coordination for disaster preparedness activities in the territory, including responsibilities to assist in the development of Disaster Plans, and the carrying out of the duties of NEMA on the family islands.<sup>64</sup> The iGOPP team did not find explicit regulations in the Local Government Act that define competence for the territorial management units in preparedness and response, or other regulations that enable municipalities to use their own resources outside their jurisdiction in

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<sup>54</sup> See indicator DP-1A-1

<sup>55</sup> See indicators DP-1A-2, DP-1A-3; DP-1A-5; DP-1A-6 and DP-1A-8

<sup>56</sup> See indicator DP-1A-4

<sup>57</sup> See indicator DP-1A-7

<sup>58</sup> See indicator DP-1B-1

<sup>59</sup> See indicator DP-1B-3 to DP-1B-12

<sup>60</sup> See indicator DP-1B-12

<sup>61</sup> See indicators DP-1B-13 to DP-1B-15

<sup>62</sup> See indicator DP-1B-6 and DP-1B-17

<sup>63</sup> See indicator DP-1B-2

<sup>64</sup> See indicators DP-1C-1 and DP-1C-3



situations of emergency.<sup>65</sup> Another condition that the iGOPP did not find evidence of is the existence of regulations that establish subsidiary assistance criteria between the different government levels.<sup>66</sup>

## 2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (DP-2):

The iGOPP found evidence of allocation of budget resources to the National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA, to conduct its functions related to preparedness and response, which are mandated by the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act<sup>67</sup>. The iGOPP also found evidence of allocation of budgetary resources for fire prevention and control activities in the last fiscal year. According to the Fire Services Act, the Commissioner of Police is the Fire Authority for the Bahamas, and together with the Forestry Unit, is in charge of covering forest fires as well<sup>68</sup>. On the other hand, no evidence was found regarding the existence of emergency, contingency or business continuity plans for the 10 key sectors of the country<sup>69</sup>. It is important to mention that there is a National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, approved by Cabinet in 1999, which has been included in the National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016 – 2018, but has not been updated since its approval in 1999<sup>70</sup>. Regarding allocation of resources to disaster preparedness, from the 10 key sectors, only the Ministry of Works & Urban Development allocates resources for “Hurricane Preparedness”<sup>71</sup>.

In terms of the existence of contingency or business continuity plans for the utilities companies, the iGOPP team was able to verify that The Bahamas Water and Sewerage Corporation has a “Hurricane Plan for 2017” which is annually updated<sup>72</sup>. Important to mention that The Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) informed in an interview that the institution has a Hurricane Procedures Manual that outlines steps taken for storms in terms of preparation and restoration, but the document was not accessible to the iGOPP team<sup>73</sup>. Additionally, the Bahamas Telecommunication Company Ltd (BTC) mentioned it has business continuity policies and major incident management plans in place<sup>74</sup>.

3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (DP-3): one important condition that The Bahamas met through the provisions of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act is the establishment of mechanisms in which civil society and NGOs participate in official disaster preparedness activities, given that the composition envisaged in the Consultative Committee consists of not less than five residents of each settlement or town area or district.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, the iGOPP did not find evidence that the national comptroller’s entity performed at least one assessment on disaster preparedness in the last 5 years, nor assessments ‘after event’ assessment on the government performance in relation to its emergency response. Additionally, the iGOPP did not find evidence that NEMA conducted assessments on the quality of their

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<sup>65</sup> See indicators DP-1C-4 and DP-1C-5

<sup>66</sup> See indicator DP-1C-2

<sup>67</sup> See indicator DP-2-1

<sup>68</sup> See indicator DP-2-2 and DP-2-3

<sup>69</sup> See indicators DP-2-4 to DP-2-12

<sup>70</sup> See indicator DP-2-12

<sup>71</sup> See indicators DP-2-4 to DP-2-12

<sup>72</sup> See indicator DP-2-13

<sup>73</sup> See indicator DP-2-14

<sup>74</sup> See indicators DP-2-14 and DP-2-15

<sup>75</sup> See indicator DP-3-1

processes in the last 3 years.<sup>76</sup> Even though the iGOPP did not find evidence of the adoption of standards in humanitarian assistance, it should be mentioned that according to information shared by NEMA Social Services with the iGOPP team, there is a common practice by the institution with regards to shelter and assistance, that gives priority for reconstruction of Bahamian owner/occupier homes, senior citizens, people with disabilities and single parents<sup>77</sup>.

#### **d. Post-disaster Recovery Planning (RC)**

*The results from the iGOPP application show that the RC component has a “low” progress level, with only 12% of compliance for the indicators assessed. The analysis by policy phases (see Table 7, Graph 9) shows that The Bahamas has achieved their major progress in the aspects related with “central policy coordination and articulation” and “policy evaluation”, where the iGOPP reports 25% compliance, followed by the aspects related with “policy implementation”, with 10% compliance. The iGOPP did not find evidences of compliance for any of the indicators related with “definition of sectorial and territorial responsibilities” (0%). It is important to highlight that the process related with the recovery planning component is relatively incipient in all countries the region, thus the results obtained by the iGOPP application in the Bahamas replicate in great degree the results found in most iGOPP applications implemented so far in the region.*

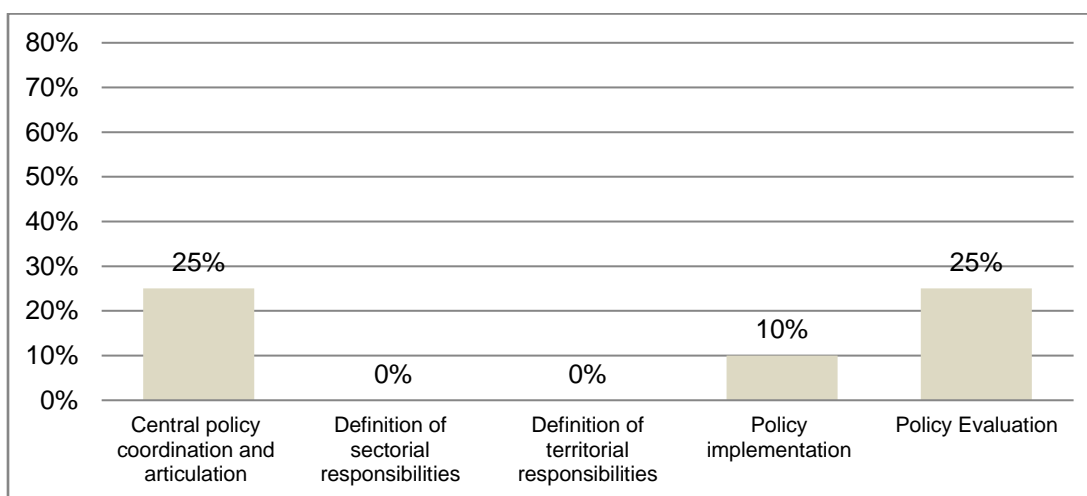
**Table No. 7** –Recovery Planning component by public policy phases (2017)

<b>1</b>	<b>Central policy coordination and articulation</b>	25%
<b>2</b>	<b>Definition of sectorial responsibilities</b>	0%
<b>3</b>	<b>Definition of territorial responsibilities</b>	0%
<b>4</b>	<b>Policy implementation</b>	10%
<b>5</b>	<b>Policy Evaluation</b>	25%

<sup>76</sup> See indicators DP-3-2 to DP-3-4

<sup>77</sup> See indicator DP-3-5

**Graph No. 9** – Recovery Planning component by public policy phases (2017)



Next, the main findings resulting from the iGOPP analysis for this component, according to the three main public policy phases, are presented: 1) Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation; 2) Policy Implementation; and 3) Policy Evaluation; according to the three different levels included in the iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: Only limited aspects related with the central coordination and articulation of this policy phase are addressed in The Bahamas legal framework. The majority of the conditions assessed by the indicators in this policy phase are not complied with and, therefore, represent a roadmap to progress in the future years in the country. The three specific dimensions of this policy phase are analyzed below.

1.1. *Central policy coordination and articulation (RC-1A)*: the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act defines the responsibility of the State facing the post-disaster recovery process, establishing the responsibility of NEMA's Director for coordinating and implementing the general policy of the Government of The Bahamas related to this process.<sup>78</sup> At the same time, this Act includes provisions for the development of *before-the-event* post-disaster recovery plan, which is an important condition that is met in The Bahamas<sup>79</sup>. Besides these two overall mandates, the iGOPP did not find any further evidence of compliance with the rest of the indicators for this dimension of the policy phase.<sup>80</sup> It is important to mention that the National Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018 contains some relevant considerations for the post-disaster recovery process, such as a "Phase 3 post emergency", which includes "restoration of services and rehabilitation", and a "Recovery Function Annex", that refers to the "Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA)", as the tool to be used to determine the overall economic impact of the disaster, recovery and rehabilitation needs and types of long-term assistance required<sup>81</sup>. Nevertheless, the iGOPP team did not find evidence of the formal adoption of this Plan, nor has

<sup>78</sup> See indicator RC-1A-1

<sup>79</sup> See indicator RC-1A-6

<sup>80</sup> See indicators RC-1A-2 to RC-1A-8

<sup>81</sup> See indicator RC-1A-4

it been published, as required by the Disaster Preparedness and response Act. Also, it is important to mention that after Hurricane Joaquin in 2015, the Department of Housing adopted as common practice the avoidance of rebuilding in low-lying, vulnerable areas, although this is not yet set out in any regulations.<sup>82</sup>

*1.2. Definition of sectorial responsibilities (RC-1B):* the iGOPP did not find evidence of regulations that establish the responsibility for carrying out recovery planning activities in the analysis of the sectorial normative framework of the ten (10) sectors assessed by the iGOPP.

*1.3. Definition of territorial responsibilities (RC-1C):* the iGOPP did not find evidence of regulations that govern the assessment; review or update of development plans after a disaster has affected the territorial management units.<sup>83</sup>

*2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (RC-2):* the iGOPP did not find evidence in any of the ten sectors assessed of the existence of an *ex ante* recovery plan formally approved in the last 5 years. It is important to mention that the Ministry of Health is working on the development of a Public Health Disaster Plan, which will take into account an all-hazards approach.<sup>84</sup> Copies of this plan for verification were not available during the iGOPP application<sup>85</sup>. The Water and Sewerage Corporation has developed a Hurricane Plan 2017 which includes some information that could feed into an *ex-ante* recovery plan, such a list of critical water infrastructure for priority restoration of electricity.<sup>86</sup> According to the Bahamas Power & Light there is also a company's contingency plan, but the iGOPP team did not have access to the document to assess the scope of its contents.<sup>87</sup>

*3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (RC-3):* the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act contemplates mechanisms for participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations in post-disaster recovery, through the composition and functions of the disaster Consultative Committees.<sup>88</sup> The iGOPP team did not find any evidence of assessments conducted by Office of the Auditor General on how the government managed the recovery process.<sup>89</sup> Additionally, the iGOPP did not find evidence that information mechanisms, or community mechanisms, were activated in relation to the recovery process.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> See indicators RC-1A-4 and RC-1A-5

<sup>83</sup> See indicators RC-1C-1 and RC-1C-2

<sup>84</sup> See indicator RC-2-2

<sup>85</sup> See indicators RC-2-1 to RC-2-10

<sup>86</sup> See indicator RC-2-8

<sup>87</sup> See indicator RC-2-10

<sup>88</sup> See indicator RC-3-1

<sup>89</sup> See indicator RC-3-2

<sup>90</sup> See indicators RC-3-3 and RC-3-4

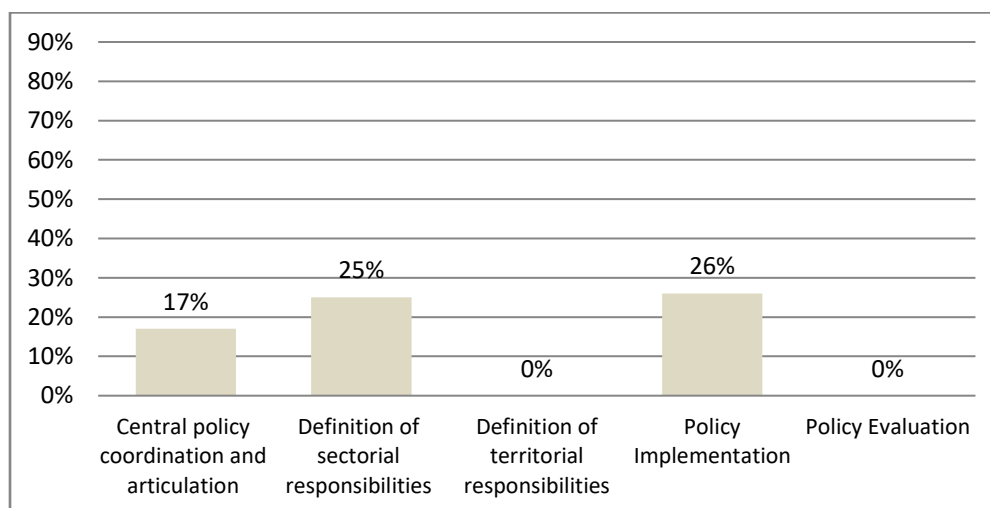
#### e. Financial Protection (FP):

iGOPP results for FP component evidenced a “low” progress level, with 13% compliance for the related indicators. The public policy analysis evidenced a heterogeneous advance of the different phases of public policy for this DRM component. “Evidence of progress in implementation” shows an advance of 26%, “definition of sectorial responsibilities” shows an advance of 25%, “central policy coordination and articulation” shows an advance of 17%. The “definition of territorial responsibilities and monitoring, accountability and participation” show no advance, with 0% compliance. (Table 8 and Graph 10).

**Table No. 8:** Financial Protection component by public policy phases (2017)

1	Central policy coordination and articulation	17%
2	Definition of sectorial responsibilities	25%
3	Definition of territorial responsibilities	0%
4	Policy Implementation	26%
5	Policy Evaluation	0%

**Graph No. 10:** Financial Protection Component by public policy phases (2017)



The following are the most noteworthy findings of the iGOPP analysis for this component according to the three major public policy phases: 1) Inclusion on the government's agenda and policy formulation; 2) Policy implementation; and 3) Policy evaluation; in the different levels considered by iGOPP.

1. Inclusion on the Government Agenda and Policy Formulation: The iGOPP reveals some progress and identifies some gaps in this policy phase. The relevant aspects of the analysis are mentioned for the three levels evaluated are set out below.

1.1. *Central policy coordination and articulation (FP-1A)*: No explicit references about financial protection as a DRM component were found in the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act of 2008. Nevertheless, this Act establishes a binding agreement with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency-CDERA (now known as CDEMA) which includes provisions for an Emergency Assistance Fund which shall be “...used solely to defray expenses incurred in connection with the rendering of assistance in the event of a disaster occurring in a Participating State”. Consequently, The Bahamas may access the mentioned regional fund for financing emergent expenses in disaster situations<sup>91</sup>. It is relevant to mention that according to the World Bank (2012) “*The capacity of the Caribbean countries individually to absorb the financial impact of such disasters is limited by a number of factors. Their small geographic size prevents diversification of their risk. The modest scale of their fiscal revenues makes establishing a financial reserve unaffordable ...*”. There are no legal provisions for establishing the annual percentage of resources to be allocated to the Emergency Assistance Fund<sup>92</sup>.

On the other hand, the country does not have development funds<sup>93</sup>, therefore this type of resource is not part of the available funding mechanisms for attending the occurrence of disasters. Additionally, the iGOPP did not find evidence of normativity that mandates the formulation of a disaster risk retention and transfer structure<sup>94</sup>. Another gap revealed by the iGOPP is the lack of a mandate related to the estimation of catastrophic risk reserves for non-homogenous/special assets and homogenous/uniform assets, based on probabilistic risk assessment models defined or certified by the sector's regulating entity<sup>95</sup>.

1.2. *Definition of sectorial responsibilities (FP-1B)*: the iGOPP shows that the Emergency Relief Guarantee Fund Act establishes a certain degree of fiscal responsibility to disasters, as it states that the Government has a specific responsibility related to guaranteeing loans for residential property as well as businesses that comply with the Act's requirements, in the case of the occurrence of a disaster<sup>96</sup>.

The iGOPP also evidenced there are no regulations assigning competencies to the Ministry of Finance for financial protection to natural disasters<sup>97</sup>. In addition, there are no regulations establishing that sectorial entities must cover their public assets with insurance policies<sup>98</sup>, or regulations on incentives for private housing insurance against disaster risk<sup>99</sup>.

1.3. *Definition of territorial responsibilities (FP-1C)*: There is no progress in this policy phase. The iGOPP shows that there are no regulations that mandate that territorial entities must cover their public assets with insurance policies<sup>100</sup>, or that mandate, at the sub-national level, the

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<sup>91</sup> See indicator PF-1A-1

<sup>92</sup> See indicator F-1A-2

<sup>93</sup> See indicator F-1A-6

<sup>94</sup> See indicator F-1A-3

<sup>95</sup> See indicators F-1A-4 and F-1A-5

<sup>96</sup> See indicator F-1B-1

<sup>97</sup> See indicator F-1B-2

<sup>98</sup> See indicator F-1B-3

<sup>99</sup> See indicator F-1B-4

<sup>100</sup> See indicator F-1C-1

implementation of financial protection schemes or mechanisms against disasters<sup>101</sup>. In addition, the capital city of Nassau does not have a fund for financing or co-financing disaster management activities<sup>102</sup>. In that regard, the national entities are the ones in charge of supporting sub-national entities, in case of the occurrence of a disaster.

2. Policy implementation- Evidence of progress in the implementation (FP-2): Regarding risk retention instruments, The Bahamas is entitled to access the Emergency Assistance Fund of CDEMA (regional fund), which does not include provisions related with the annual percentage of resources to be allocated to this Fund<sup>103</sup>, nor does it comply with the best practice of accumulation and expenditure based on anticipated annual loss or records of losses from past disasters<sup>104</sup>. CDEMA verbally informed the iGOPP team that the fund has the capacity to accumulate resources over time, but it was not possible to have access to the document that supports this affirmation<sup>105</sup>.

According to the Constitution, “*Parliament may by law provide for the establishment of a Contingencies Fund and may authorize the Minister of Finance to make advances from that Fund if he is satisfied that there is an unforeseen need for expenditure for which no provision or no sufficient provision has been made by an Appropriation Act*”. However, the iGOPP found that The Bahamas does not have a national fund specific for financing emergency expenses in disaster situations, nor a fund for financing or co-financing disaster risk management activities<sup>106</sup>. Nevertheless, resources of the national general budget are used to finance expenses during the emergency, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases. iGOPP also found that the country does not yet have credit contingency lines in case of the occurrence of disasters<sup>107</sup>.

Regarding risk transfer instruments, The Bahamas is a member of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), which is a regional catastrophe fund for Caribbean governments, designed to limit the financial impact of devastating hurricanes and earthquakes by quickly providing financial liquidity when a policy is triggered. For the decision-making process related to buying the insurance policy offered by CCRIF, the government used the estimative of Probable Maximum Loss (PML) from catastrophic events for different return periods<sup>108</sup> and the expected annual losses elaborated by CCRIF<sup>109</sup>.

On the other hand, and as previously mentioned, the insurance of the public assets is not mandatory. In the same vein, iGOPP did not find evidence of the existence of standards for the insurance of the public assets<sup>110</sup>, concessions<sup>111</sup>, or related guidelines for the sub national entities<sup>112</sup>.

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<sup>101</sup> See indicator F-1C-2

<sup>102</sup> See indicator F-1C-3

<sup>103</sup> See indicator F-2-2

<sup>104</sup> See indicator F-2-10

<sup>105</sup> See indicator F-2-9

<sup>106</sup> See indicator F-2-7

<sup>107</sup> See indicator F-2-11

<sup>108</sup> See indicator F-2-2

<sup>109</sup> See indicator F-2-3

<sup>110</sup> See indicator F-2-4

<sup>111</sup> See indicator F-2-5

<sup>112</sup> See indicator F-2-7

The capital city, Nassau, specifically does not have a financial protection structure in the event of disaster<sup>113</sup> nor a disaster risk transference instrument for a portfolio of assets of its fiscal responsibility. Resources for supporting the emergency expenses incurred at a sub-national level come from the national budget. The other financial instruments used by the country in the context of emergencies are grants and loans.

The iGOPP demonstrates that there are *ex ante* financial instruments to encourage economic recovery in areas affected by disasters<sup>114</sup>. The Emergency Relief Guarantee Fund Act includes provisions to guarantee loans: “...to repair or replace occupied residential property, furnishings and appliances damaged or destroyed by any disaster or to replace or repair businesses damaged by any disaster including rental accommodations, fishing boats, engines, farm buildings, farm equipment, citrus or fruit trees, vegetable crop, livestock, restaurants, processing plants and other commercial enterprises...”. In addition, on an *ad-hoc* basis, the fisheries sector has special mechanisms for supporting the economic reactivation of fisheries sector: (i) the voucher assistance programme, that allows to give vouchers/checks for assisting fisheries in case of disasters; and (ii) a duty-free exemption for import a list of items for commercial fishing sector and on occasion the Ministry may extend that subsidy list.

The iGOPP also evidences the lack financial protection structures for the agricultural sector<sup>115</sup>. The country has only one financial instrument in place: “the voucher assistance programme” (a financial instrument that helps to reduce the fiscal vulnerability of the agricultural sector at the time that supports the economic reactivation of fisheries sector). The Fisheries division of Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Resources and Local Government informed the iGOPP team that there have been a lot of insurance initiatives for the agricultural sector in the past. As an example, during early to mid-2000s, the Government looked at a coupon insurance programme for agriculture and fisheries sector with assistance from FAO. Currently there is a special initiative underway for the fisheries sector with support from USAID, WB, CCRIF and Caribbean Fisheries Mechanism.

### 3. Policy evaluation: Monitoring, Accountability and Participation (FP-3)

iGOPP reveals the absence of control, accountability and participation conditions in place for this component, as none of the indicators assessed have been fulfilled. In other words, the iGOPP reveals a lack of: i) the evaluation of the compliance with regulations on financial protection mechanisms, given the lack of the mentioned regulation; ii) verification of the use of the probabilistic risk assessment model for estimating catastrophic reserves (because the current regulatory framework for the insurance sector does not mandate the use of the probabilistic evaluation model for the estimation of catastrophic risk reserves of the insurance companies); and iii) evaluation of the application of the financial protection process (given the country does not have a financial protection strategy in place)<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> See indicator F-2-1

<sup>114</sup> See indicator F-2-14

<sup>115</sup> See indicator F-2-15

<sup>116</sup> See indicators F-3-1 to F-3-3



## IV. CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions revealed by the iGOPP application in The Bahamas are summarized below.

1. The Bahamas currently lacks a legal framework for comprehensive disaster risk management that explicitly addresses all risk management processes related to prospective, corrective and reactive management. The main disaster risk-related legal framework is the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008, that establishes clear responsibilities for preparedness and relief, and its main policy tool is the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan. An updated policy framework is needed to promote a more holistic approach to DRM that considers other processes such as risk identification, risk reduction, recovery planning and financial protection, and the gradual identification and establishment of sectorial and territorial responsibilities for all DRM processes.

2. In relation to the above, it is important to mention that The Bahamas has a working draft of the National Development Plan 2016 (for public consultation), which includes among its objectives *“Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction in Development Policies”*. Once this National Development Plan is approved, it can spur a more comprehensive approach to DRM in the country. Also, the National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change, issued by the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission in March 2005, emphasizes the vulnerability of the country as a small island developing state, and addresses climate related DRM objectives.

3. The iGOPP shows that the current DRM-related normative framework does not address important conditions required to adequately implement the risk identification and knowledge processes, such as the identification of an institutional stakeholder with the responsibility to provide technical guidelines to territorial and sectorial levels for disaster risk analysis or methodologies for climate change studies, or the definition of the buildings that are essential, indispensable or critical infrastructures of the country. In the same vein, the regulatory frameworks for the sectors and for the utilities companies do not identify the responsibility to carry out disaster risk analysis, and there is a lack of regulations for the development and maintenance of hazard monitoring networks. The establishment of the Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems (BNGIS) and the current process of developing the BNGIS’s plan of action may provide opportunities to address some of the gaps revealed by the iGOPP for this component.

4. In terms of the Risk Reduction component, the iGOPP demonstrates that a few normative and institutional conditions required for this process are currently met in The Bahamas, while major gaps prevail in sectorial, territorial and overall policy implementation and policy evaluation for risk reduction. One important condition that is considered in the Planning and Subdivision Act of Bahamas (approved in 2010) is the establishment of the risk sensitive zoning as a determinant factor in the definition of use and occupation of the land. There is also a very relevant, but not yet approved, policy for the housing sector with regards to the avoidance of rebuilding in vulnerable areas, as well as raising the height of land for new housing projects, which would have positive impact in the iGOPP results should they become formal regulations.

5. It is also important to underscore that The Bahamas lacks an integrated, institutional framework for investment management, as well as related regulations for quality control of public investments, which hinders the possibility of introducing disaster risk criteria into the investment planning processes. Nevertheless, it is important again to note that the *“Working Draft of the National Development Plan of the Bahamas”*, currently out for public consultation, includes as an output *“Disaster risk considerations mainstreamed into planning procedures for major*

*infrastructure projects with considerations given to social, economic and environmental impact assessments”.*

6. The Disaster Preparedness component is the most developed in The Bahamas according to the iGOPP results, with key conditions related to the central policy coordination and articulation addressed in the provisions of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, approved in 2008. This Act designates the National Emergency Management Agency – NEMA as the governmental agency charged with the responsibility for the process of preparedness and response in the Bahamas. Nevertheless, some important gaps remain, such as the lack of mandates for the establishment of emergency or contingency plans in the different sectors or ministries. This is also reflected in the analysis of the sectorial normative frameworks, which do not identify the responsibility to carry out disaster preparedness activities within the scope of their sectorial powers.

7. A key policy instrument mandated by the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, which has been formulated by NEMA but not yet formally adopted and published as a binding instrument, is the National Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations. The Act requires that this Plan must be developed annually by the Director of NEMA, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and be approved by the Prime Minister for its publication. The current version 2016-2018 has not been published and it is not available in digital format, even though it contains important planning information for disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

8. In terms of the Recovery Planning component, very limited progress is seen in The Bahamas in normative and institutional frameworks, also mirroring the results of the iGOPP in the rest of the countries of the region assessed so far. One important building block for this component is included in the Disaster Preparedness Act which establishes the responsibility of NEMA’s Director for coordinating and implementing the general policy of the Government of The Bahamas for post-disaster recovery. Other relevant elements and quality attributes for this process are included in the contents of the National Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018, but as mentioned above, this plan still needs to be formally adopted.

9. Regarding Financial Protection component, the iGOPP evidenced a low advance. The country has risk retention (Regional Fund of CDEMA) and risk transfer (insurance policies for different events through the CCRIF) instruments available to the country from binding agreements with regional instruments. In this context The Bahamas may evaluate additional financial risk retention and transfer instruments for reducing its fiscal vulnerability against the occurrence of disasters, such as a local fund for supporting financing emergency expenses in disaster situations, and for financing or co-financing risk management activities and the establishment of insurance of critical public infrastructure, as mandatory.

10. In overall terms, the iGOPP did not find evidence of the implementation of DRM public policies through budgetary allocations, for any of the DRM processes assessed by the iGOPP. In this sense, it is important to highlight that The Bahamas lacks a budgetary tracking mechanism for DRM that would allow for an easier identification of funds devoted to the different DRM processes by the public-sector institutions. A similar situation is revealed by the iGOPP in terms of the absence of quality controls and policy evaluations of the different DRM processes, which should be conducted by relevant institutions such as the national controlling entity. It is important to note that a forthcoming audit of NEMA to be performed by the General Auditors Office could set a good precedent for the policy evaluation of DRM in The Bahamas.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS OF POLICY REFORM

Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>a. General Framework of DRM Governance (GF)</i>			
Based on the policy mandates to integrate DRR into the development planning of the National Development Plan (once it is approved), it is recommended the initiation of a consultation process towards updating the contents of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, setting the normative and institutional basis for an integrative DRM policy in the country, harmonized with the vision and goals of the National Adaptation Strategy, and addressing the main normative gaps identified in the iGOPP for the different DRM processes.	X		
It is recommended to seize the opportunity of the on-going regulatory reform in the water and sanitation sector to introduce DRM and ACC related goals as part of the integrated water resources management policies in the country.	X		
It is recommended that a budgetary instrument be designed and implemented for identifying the budgetary allocations related with ex ante DRM programs and climate change adaptation activities.	X		
It is recommended that the Ministry of Finance develops a financial strategy or policy to guide the financial management of disaster risk in the country, informed by the experiences of similar undertakings by other ministries of finance (MoFs) in the region.	X		
It is recommended to include in the design of the Green Fund, under development by the Ministry of Environment, provisions for financing or co-financing ex ante Climate Change adaptation (CCA) and related DRM activities.	X		

Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>b. Risk Identification (RI)</i>			
As suggested for the DRM component, the establishment of a new policy framework focused on integral DRM is recommended. Such a policy reform should include provisions for adequately implementing the risk identification and knowledge process, such as the identification of an institutional stakeholder with the responsibility to provide technical guidelines to territorial and sectorial levels for disaster risk analysis or methodologies for climate change studies, as well as the definition of the buildings that are essential, indispensable or critical infrastructures of the country.	X		
It is recommended to develop a normative framework to shape the scope and competencies of the BEST Commission, which considers its role with regards to the implementation of the National Policy for ACC and specific responsibilities regarding the methodologies to prepare climate change studies.		X	
The establishment of regulations for the continued development and maintenance of observation and monitoring networks of at least two natural hazards in the country is recommended. This could be part of an updated normative framework for DRM, as suggested in other components, or the development of specific regulations for the Meteorological Department.		X	
It is recommended that as part of the implementation of the National Policy on ACC, the Ministry of Education considers the inclusion of ACC and related DRM aspects in the curricula.		X	

Promote the inclusion in the sectorial normative framework as well as the regulatory frameworks of utilities companies having the responsibility to carry out disaster risk analysis within the scope of their powers. URCA could have a catalytic role in this initiative, and BPL a first target, seeing that this Company is the process of developing a corporate governance risk analysis unit.		X	
It is recommended that the Bahamas National Geographic Information Systems Centre (BNGISC) considers, in the on-going planning process, the inclusion of roles and responsibilities for the creation and maintenance of Information Systems for Disaster Risk Management (including a database on the effects of disasters), in close coordination with NEMA.	X		
In the same vein, it is suggested that the Government continue to strengthen the BNGIS Government through the Geomatics Capacity Enhancement for DRM project, which includes the acquisition of high resolution imagery, topographic maps and digital terrain modeling for several islands.		X	
It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to disaster risk identification activities that can be identified through budgetary instruments.	X		
At the same time, it is suggested that NEMA promotes the implementation of sections 15 and 16 of the National Preparedness and Response Act, which gives the Prime Minister the power to declare “especially vulnerable areas”.	X		

Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>c. Risk Reduction (RR)</i>			
It is suggested that the Building Code be updated, with inclusion of standards to withstand the impacts of climate change that will be developed as part of the implementation of the National Policy on Climate Change.		X	
It is recommended that regulations that define examples of acceptable risk for at least 2 threats in the country be established. The experience of the Ministry of Housing with the minimum height land required for new housing projects to reduce flood risk could be an initial input.		X	
It is recommended that the good practice of the Department of Housing regarding avoiding rebuilds in vulnerable areas in the country affected by disasters, and relocating populations in low-lying areas to higher ground, be formalized.	X		
It is recommended that methodological guidelines, as part of the development of a regulatory framework for public investments, be developed, which include the mandatory inclusion of disaster risk analysis in all phases of the public investment process.		X	
It is recommended that legislation that mandates the inclusion of climate change studies as requirements for the approval of public investments be passed.		X	
It is recommended that in future updates of Planning and Subdivision Act 2010, the Zoning By-Law provisions include the obligation of hazard zoning in the definition of land use		X	
It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to disaster risk reduction activities that can be specifically identified through budgetary instruments.	X		

Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>d. Disaster Preparedness (DP)</i>			
It is highly recommended that NEMA formalizes, publishes and widely disseminates the National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations 2016-2018, upon the approval of the Policy Review by the Prime Minister, following the mandates of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act.	X		
Promote the development of sector regulations that define the responsibility to carry out preparedness for disaster response activities in the scope of their powers, based on the roles and responsibilities already identified in the Emergency Support Functions that are established as part of the National Disaster Plan & Instructions for Emergency Situations.		X	
It is recommended that sectors allocate resources to response preparedness activities that can be specifically identified through budgetary instruments and that they develop sectoral contingency plans in the event of disasters.	X		
It is recommended that URCA develop regulations to promote the formulation and implementation of plans for business continuity or disaster operations by the utilities companies in the country.		X	
It is suggested that in the next update of the the National Chemical Emergency Response Plan its scope is enlarged to cover safety regulations related to transport and handling of hazardous materials.	X		
It is recommended that regulations regarding the development and implementation of emergency or contingency plans in the event of fuel spill or oil pollution, which take into account the existence of relevant initiatives in the country be established, such as the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, but which are supported by and required by legislation.		X	

It is suggested that NEMA adopts quality standards in humanitarian assistance at least in relation to the water, sanitation, nutrition and temporary shelter in the elaboration of the future Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan.	X		
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Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>e. Post-disaster Recovery planning (RC)</i>			
Based on the broad mandates included in the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act, as well as the specific section incorporated in the National Preparedness & Response Plan, with regards to the recovery process, it is recommended to strengthen this process by: i) including the mandate to develop ex ante post-disaster recovery plans; ii) establishing explicit objectives for reducing the pre-existing levels of vulnerability in the recovery plans; and (iii) defining the time for the different phases of the recovery process, such as the re-establishment of the livelihoods or restoration/reconstruction of affected houses.		X	
In the same vein, it is suggested that NEMA develops a national planning framework of ex ante post-recovery process in the Bahamas, which delineates roles and responsibilities for this processes.		X	
Promote the development of sectorial regulations that mandate the formulation of ex ante post-disaster recovery plans.			X
Promote new regulation that envisage the evaluation, reviewing and/or updating existing development and land use plans in the aftermath of disasters, in the territorial units affected.		X	



Component of DRM	Short Term (1-4 years)	Medium Term (4-8 years)	Long Term (more than 8 years)
<i>f. Financial Protection (FP)</i>			
It is recommended to assign competencies to Ministry of Finance related with financial protection from disaster risk.		X	
It is recommended to evaluate having a national fund for attending the occurrence of disasters.		X	
It is recommended that a financial protection structure for the agricultural sector be designed and implemented.	X		
It is recommended that the establishment of insurance of critical public infrastructure, as mandatory, be implemented.		X	