



# Resilience Beyond Projects: Institutional Lessons from Evaluating Caribbean SIDS

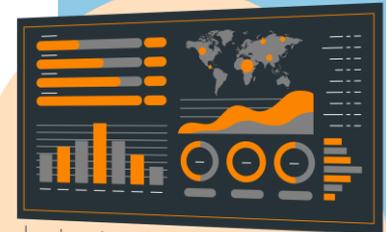
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# Caribbean SIDS: High Income, High Vulnerability, High Exposure

- A structural paradox coincides with a fragile development model
- A persistent 'grey zone' of vulnerability
- A gap between ambition and institutional realities / absorptive capacity



**91 % of global SIDS  
tropical-storm losses  
from 2000-2022**

# Evaluating Resilience Under Constraint: Rethinking the lens for Caribbean SIDS

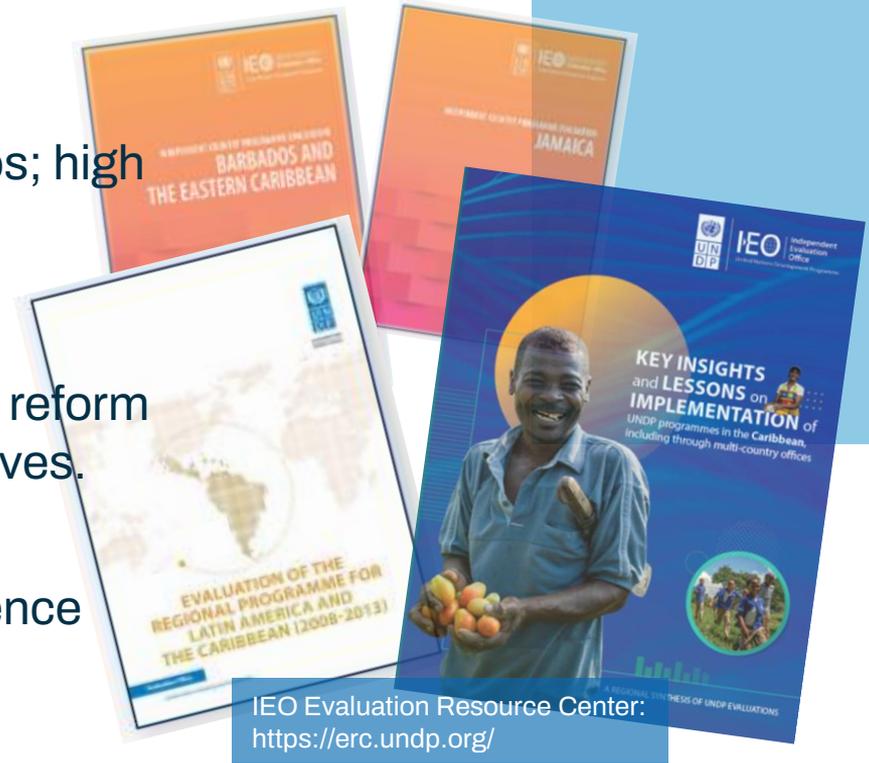
- **Structural constraints**

Thin administrations; multi-island portfolios; high transaction costs; data / statistical gaps

- **Design realities**

Short-funding cycles, vs. long institutional reform horizons; parallel global-to-national initiatives.

➔ **Tension:** Ambitious system-level resilience goals vs. projectized delivery models



IEO Evaluation Resource Center:  
<https://erc.undp.org/>

# Lessons from Evaluation Conduct in Caribbean SIDS



**1. Design clarity determines evaluability.**

**2. M&E systems tracked outputs, not institutional change.**

**3. Portfolio-level analysis was essential.**

**4. Timelines were structurally misaligned.**

**5. Contribution analysis was necessary.**

# 'What Works': Resilient Disaster Recovery & Governance

## Strengthening Shock-Responsive Capacity of Systems and People

### What shifted:

- Institutionalized recovery coordination mechanisms
- Regional- national linkage
- Clearer DRM routines
- Flexible crisis modalities

### Why this mattered in Caribbean SIDS:

- Reduced overload in thin administrations
- Strengthened absorptive capacity



**Gaps:** Underfunded prevention and mitigation relative to response; fiscal embedding

# 'What Works': Integrated Nature-Based Resilience

## Protecting the Ecological Infrastructure of SIDS

### What shifted:

- Ridge-to-reef and watershed approaches reduced land–coast risk
- Stronger marine and protected-area management improved governance of tourism and fisheries assets
- Operational environmental management improvements

### Why this mattered in Caribbean SIDS:

- Upstream land use directly affects coastal survival
- Integrated approaches essential for thin administrations



UNDP Suriname



**Gaps:** Project-financed gains; limited budget anchoring; from pilots to scale.

# The Big Picture: What the Evidence Reveals Across Caribbean SIDS

1. Modality shaped results more than sector choice.
2. Flexibility improved performance in shock-prone settings.
3. Institutional anchoring predicted durability.
4. Regional initiative required governance architecture for scale.



# Strategic Takeaways for Strengthening Resilience in Caribbean SIDS

## Takeaway 1

**Resilience is a governance and financing question**

## Takeaway 2

**Scale requires pathways, beyond proof of concept**

**RISING  
UP  
FOR  
SIDS**

## Takeaway 3

**Geographic coverage and regional cooperation must be structured to be effective**

## Takeaway 4

**In small, shock-prone systems simplicity and focus increases impact**



# ***Resilience in Caribbean SIDS strengthens when systems are reinforced — not when projects multiply.***

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