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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CDEMA and MapAction partner to enhance speed and effectiveness of disaster response in Caribbean

Bridgetown, Barbados September 11, 2018 – The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and humanitarian mapping charity MapAction yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalise their new joint working relationship. MapAction will work alongside CDEMA teams and support National Disaster Management Agencies within the Caribbean region as needed.

MapAction is supporting the teams that make up the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM), CDEMA's Participating States as well as the CDEMA Coordinating Unit, to improve their use of data gathering, mapping and analysis for the effective planning and delivery of humanitarian aid in response to disasters. The partnership is expected to help RRM teams provide disaster response support quickly and in the right places.

In the event of an emergency in the Caribbean region, MapAction will work with all responders to obtain the most complete, accurate and detailed data available. Dependent on the scale of the disaster, MapAction may deploy one team to support several RRM teams or several MapAction teams may be allocated to different RRM or member state teams. In certain situations, for example ahead of hurricanes, they may preposition to ensure the most rapid response possible. There are currently six CDEMA RRM teams, as well as the Regional Coordinating Centre in Barbados. The teams cover different aspects of disaster response, including rapid needs assessment, search and rescue, coordination and various technical specialists.

Ronald Jackson, Executive Director of CDEMA, commented, *"[Suggestion:] We had the opportunity to work closely with members of the MapAction team during the response to Hurricanes Matthew in 2016 and again during Irma and Maria in September 2017, and from this collaboration, we understood the benefits that their mapping and information management expertise could bring to our own operations. This partnership will enable us to build our teams' own capacities for mapping and analysing data to enhance our response to any future disasters, as well as calling on MapAction personnel to help us directly when emergencies happen."*

MapAction's Chief Executive Liz Hughes said, *"Collaboration and partnership are fundamental to MapAction's approach, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to deepen and formalise our working relationship with CDEMA. We are keen to support them and their partners in whatever way we can."*

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Participating States:

Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Virgin Islands



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Last month, MapAction and CDEMA together hosted a workshop in Barbados on geographical information systems (GIS), data collection and information management for 14 people from different parts of the CDEMA ecosystem.

MapAction's work to support CDEMA and national agencies in the Caribbean through training and preparedness activities is funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid.

A video of the MoU signing ceremony is viewable here: <https://www.facebook.com/cdemacu1/videos/1828675767252866/>

About MapAction

MapAction's mission is to save lives and alleviate suffering for people affected by humanitarian emergencies by mapping priority needs and helping to coordinate the response. Recognised as a leading provider of professional mapping services in emergency response, MapAction is a long-term partner of humanitarian agencies including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Food Programme, Save the Children and ACAPS and has recently joined the Missing Maps project. Since 2002, MapAction has responded to 78 humanitarian emergencies, which have impacted on the lives of tens of millions of people.

About CDEMA

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) is a regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The Agency was established in 1991 as CDERA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency) with primary responsibility for the coordination of emergency response and relief efforts to Participating States that require such assistance. It transitioned to CDEMA in 2009 to fully embrace the principles and practice of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM), an integrated and proactive approach to disaster management that seeks to reduce the risk and loss associated with natural and technological hazards and the effects of climate change to enhance regional sustainable development.

CDEMA presently comprises eighteen Participating States: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands and the Virgin Islands.

About EU ECHO

The European Union with its Member States is a leading global donor of humanitarian aid. Through the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), the EU helps over 120 million victims of conflict and disasters every year. With headquarters in Brussels and a global

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network of field offices, ECHO provides assistance to the most vulnerable people solely on the basis of humanitarian needs, without discrimination of race, ethnic group, religion, gender, age, nationality or political affiliation.

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