



**ARCHIVES AT RISK**  
**THE CARIBBEAN EXPERIENCE**  
BY RITA TJIENFOOH



# CARBICA'S ARCHIVES AT RISK PROJECT

- ❖ 2016: CARBICA submitted a project proposal to ICA- PCOM:  
'Archives at Risk: Advocacy and Capacity building in the Caribbean.
- ❖ The project is a multi-year (2016-2018) regional strategy in support of archives at risk suffering from:
  - lack of investment in infrastructure,
  - risks related to physical challenges presented by tropical climates,
  - but also from the want of trained archival professionals and of a general awareness of the importance of archives/records within government agencies and the wider community.

# CARBICA'S ARCHIVES AT RISK PROJECT

- ❖ CARBICA recognize the relatively undeveloped archival programmes in the region;
- ❖ The Region is subject to tropical climate risks and that small island nations suffered from post-colonial neglect and struggle to recover from natural disasters;
- ❖ As a result Caribbean documentary heritage is severely compromised.

# GRENADA WORKSHOP: FEBRUARY 2017

- ❖ CARBICA joined forces with ICA Expert Groups on Emergency Management and Disaster Preparedness (EMDP) and Archive Buildings and Environments (EGABE)
- ❖ Advocacy meetings with, ICA's Deputy Secretary General with CARBICA's President held advocacy meetings with the representative of Grenada's government (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister and Permanent Secretaries of the Cabinet of the Government of Grenada,
- ❖ A two day survey (on buildings and archives) on various locations in Grenada,
- ❖ Workshops on Records Management / Legislation/ Disaster Preparedness and Archives buildings.

# GRENADA WORKSHOP

Work session on Emergency Management.



# RECOMMENDATIONS GRENADA WORKSHOP

- ❖ Task Force be established to set up a national archives infrastructure which will have a clear mandate not only for archives but also for recordkeeping, including digital and audio-visual records, throughout government
- ❖ that archival legislation be drafted to address the preservation and accessibility of the nation's documentary heritage as well as to put in place policies and procedures for the creation and management of current and semi-current records;
- ❖ a government-wide capacity-building strategy be developed to increase the archives and records management expertise throughout the Grenada government as rapidly as possible
- ❖ that suitable archival accommodation be found as soon as possible and work commence to rehabilitate and clean/repair records identified as archival,

# CARBICA AFTER GRENADA WORKSHOP

- ❖ CARBICA EC member as liaison for Grenada Government,
- ❖ Circulated a survey to members. The aim of the survey was mainly to determine the needs of the members,
- ❖ CARBICA EC decided to approach the CARICOM (Regional Caribbean Community) and the OESC (Organisation of East Caribbean States) to host the second Archives at Risk workshop for the entire Caribbean community in 2017,
- ❖ In September Irma and Maria unleashed their powers through the Northern Caribbean (British /US Virgin Island, Saint Martin (French and Dutch), Dominica, Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Puerto Rico).

# BRITISH VIRGIN ISLAND



# SINT MAARTEN (DUTCH)



# ST.MAARTEN (DUTCH)



# SAINT MARTIN



# SAINT MARTIN



# OUTREACH TO MEMBERS AFTER HURRICANES

- ❖ Establish communication with members affected by the hurricane (email, social media, telph.); in cases of natural disasters heritage are always at risk’;
- ❖ ICA, Expert group EMDP, UNESCO Regional office Kingston, UNESCO Memory of the World for the Latin American and Caribbean region(MOWLAC), CDEMA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency), Blue Shield Curacao and Blue Shield Netherlands,
- ❖ Request to ICA-PCOM to redirect Archives at Risk Fund 2017 as a first aid relief fund for affected members.

# OUTREACH TO MEMBERS AFTER HURRICANES

- ❖ CARBICA circulated application form to members affected by the hurricanes to apply for a first aid relief fund,
- ❖ At the same time CARBICA is in the process in identifying the damages and needs of the members through a survey form and if needed by on site visit of regional conservators who will travel to the affected areas,
- ❖ Draft an Action plan in collaboration with EMDP to assist on site with the support of students, CARBICA members and other volunteers.

# CONCLUSION

❖ Although we are loving nature creations, we can not always control the forces of nature; we (archives, museums and libraries) need to be better equipped and prepared:

- Establish emergency preparedness and disaster management Plan for the Region with respect to heritage institutions and also integrate the response from these institutions with regional response team (CDEMA),
- Setting up a regional communication plan for after disaster hit, because communications is crucial and critical to getting aid once disaster hit,
- Necessary training in disaster recovery, conservation.

❖ ICA's Disaster Relief Fund for members to be established.