



The Relev project, led by Cerema (a centre of interdisciplinary public expertise serving local authorities and government services), brings together five universities to form a multidisciplinary team (urban and civil engineers, urban planners, geographers, sociologists, psychologists).

Our objective is to better understand post-disaster recovery management strategies in order to promote a early return to normal and a more sustainable and resilient redevelopment of the affected area. Our working methods and assumptions are based on lessons learned from affected territories that have already shared their experiences with us.

Our work here focuses on the ongoing recovery of the islands of St. Martin and St. Barthélemy following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017. Through interviews, dialogues and exchanges, we wish to leverage on and highlight the individual and collective experiences of the stakeholders who deal with and live through the everyday the recovery effort: local representatives, technicians from local authorities, state officials, companies, residents.

In the short term, this participatory approach aims to contribute to the recovery effort by improving organization and communication between local decision-makers, infrastructure managers and residents of areas exposed to natural hazards.

In anticipation of future disasters, here or elsewhere, these exchanges will also contribute to the development of tools and methods to facilitate: the organization of recovery parties, the involvement of populations in the recovery process, and the physical reconstruction of damaged infrastructure.

Our ambition, through this project, is to directly contribute to better help local stakeholders in Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy, and also those in the West Indies, to deal with disaster recovery, while sharing the experience acquired at the national level.

