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The Centrality of Community Dynamics in the Socio-Economic Recovery of Devastated Countries.

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Abstract

This paper is based on a study in the Caribbean island of Grenada with the objective of conducting an assessment of the health and socio-economic outcomes of Jubilee, a community, hit by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, and to identify remaining barriers to recovery. The assessment consisted of a mixed methods approach employing observations, household surveys, in depth interviews and focus groups.

Eighty five percent (85%) of the residents live in a single-family home type dwelling, which is occupied by multiple families. Twenty seven percent (27%) of the respondents depended on a river or stream for water and 83% utilized an outdoor pit latrine. Construction accounted for 28% of the employment while 16% reported having no occupation. Public and private transportation was limited and 48% of the residents lived on less than one U.S. dollar per day. Access to health care was reported by 89% and the prevalence of diabetes and hypertension were identified by 13% and 30% of the residents respectively. Social fragmentation within the community represents a barrier that keeps the community from developing common goals leading to full economic recovery. The results of this assessment showed that while Jubilee has not fully recovered from the effects of Hurricane Ivan, progress has been made in the reconstruction effort. These efforts have addressed the most immediate and basic needs of the community, mainly utility service infrastructural and home repairs. However, issues related to the community's economic recovery are still unresolved.