

Port Resilience: New Tools for Disaster Risk Management

Mike Smith, Chief Operations Officer, Global Support & Development



Area of Operations



- First response - 2015
- Official founding - 2019
- MV/DAWN - 2023

- *Headquarters: Charlotte, NC*
- MV DAWN operates throughout the Caribbean

Who are GSD partners?



Government Agencies & NDMOs

Working alongside national and regional disaster management offices to strengthen coordination and preparedness.



Local & Regional Actors

Strengthening the leadership of local responders and ensuring regionally driven solutions.



Private Sector & Non-Traditional Partners

Engaging businesses, logistics experts, and maritime organizations to expand response capacity and resilience-building.



International Humanitarian Actors

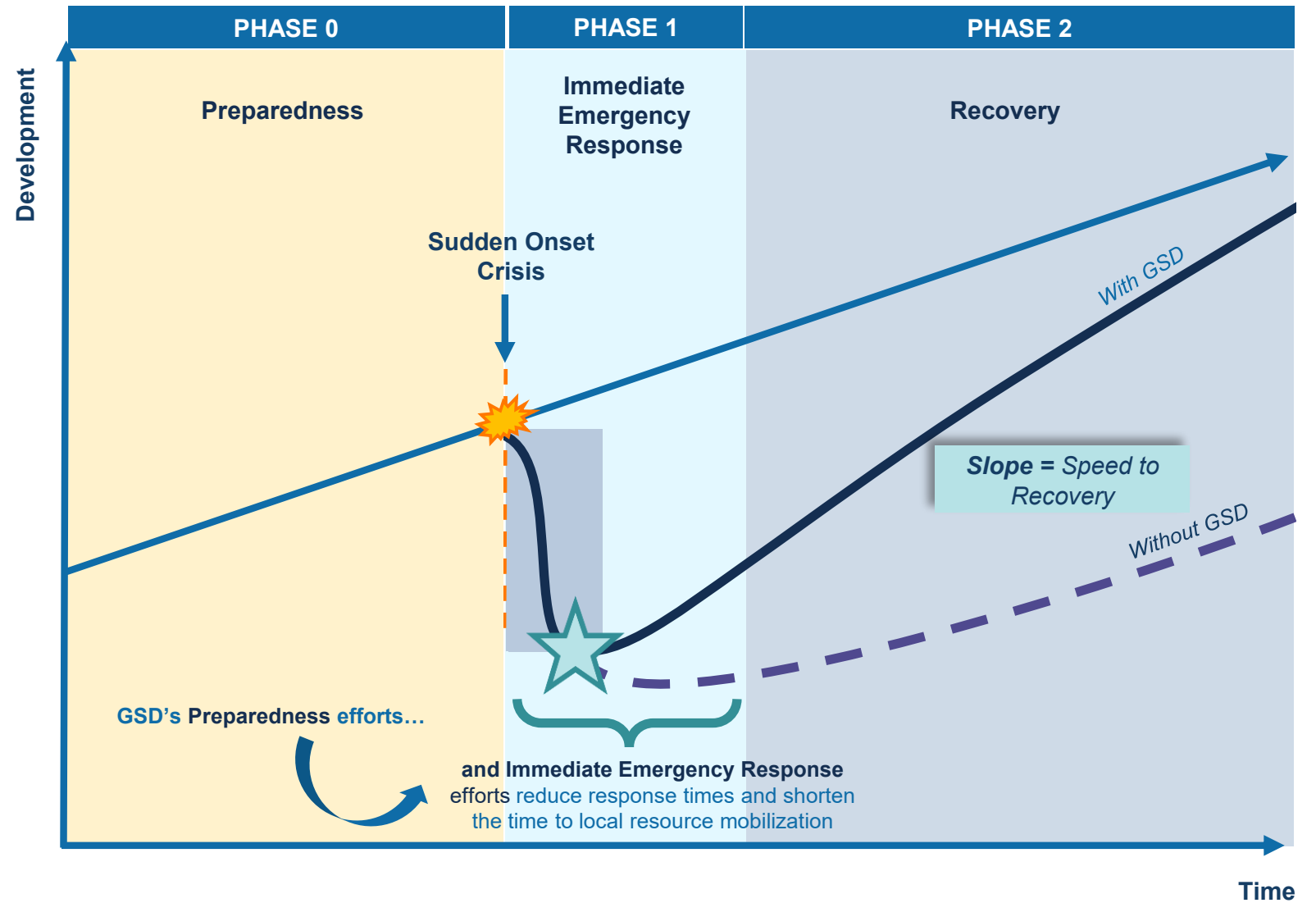
Partnering with leading INGOs and UN agencies to scale impact and align efforts.



Academia & Research Institutions

Collaborating to leverage data, research, and innovation for evidence-based decision-making.

GSD's activities in Preparedness & Response phases support a better response by expediting the return to Recovery.



Maritime Context:

Caribbean Basin Context

- **200** seaports across 21 countries
- 12 island or archipelagic nations
- **44 million** people rely on seaports
- 3.6 million people rely on a single seaport



Disaster Preparedness/Response Context

- Primary ports are critical nodes for effective disaster logistics
- Secondary and tertiary ports support distribution

Days to weeks to reopen ports + backlogs on arrival → slower response

What GSD does:

M/V DAWN

- 81m dedicated disaster preparedness and response vessel
- Operates throughout the Caribbean Basin year-round, since 2023
- Professional mariner crew + platform for response teams
- Response capabilities in WASH, NFI, Coordination, Logistics, Technical Support
- Responded in 2024 (Beryl - SVG), 2025 (Melissa - Bahamas & Jamaica)



What GSD does:

Maritime Access Team

- Bathymetric data collection for primary & priority ports
- Infrastructure assessments
- Hazard location, marking, and recovery

Maritime Sector Engagement

- Work with maritime sector and disaster managers to:
 - Enhance integration of planning and disaster operations
 - Engagement at national and regional levels

Technical Support Ashore

- Ship's engineers assess and repair emergency infrastructure in partnership with local operators

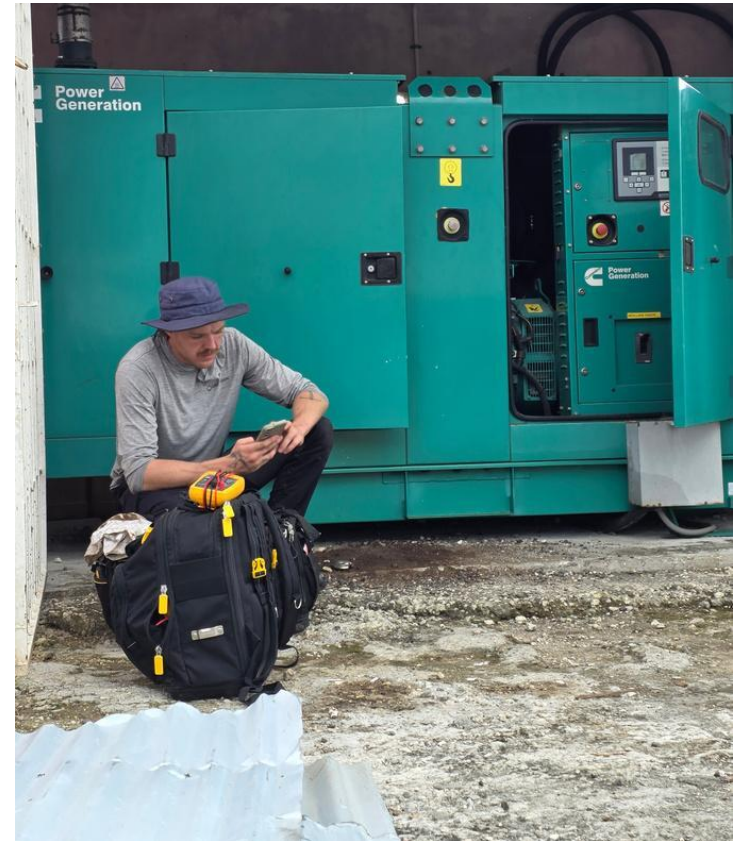


Unknowns -> Knowns

After a disaster, uncertainty can prevail. GSD works to turn unknowns into knowns for the national response system, helping make responses faster and more effective.

The types of questions we can help answer:

- What has the impact been to the port(s)?
- Who is coordinating with whom? Where are there gaps?
- What emergency systems are offline, what will it take to get them back?



Introducing Tech Tools/AI



As with any data tool, good information in results in good information out.



Information only makes a difference if it is communicated to the right decision makers at the right time.



AI platforms allow us to assess more information quickly, enabling better informed assumptions for quicker decisions.



An aerial photograph of a tropical beach. The left side shows the ocean with gentle waves washing onto a sandy shore. Numerous small, blue wooden boats are beached along the water's edge. To the right of the beach, there is a cluster of houses with various roof colors, including red, yellow, and grey. Palm trees and other tropical vegetation are scattered throughout the residential area. A semi-transparent white box with the text "Thank you!" is centered over the middle of the image.

Thank you!