



Call for expressions of interest to join a youth platform for disaster management and risk reduction in Caribbean SIDS

Background

Over the last decade, the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have suffered more frequent and severe natural disasters such as storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and droughts. Climate change and global warming further increase the risks of natural disasters. People in coastal communities are especially vulnerable as the rising sea level can flood their houses. Disasters severely affect the natural environment, the economy and livelihoods.

On 12 January 2010 Haiti was struck by an earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale, affecting more than 1.5 million people, which makes up 15% of the country's population.

According to the Haitian government, the earthquake claimed the lives of 316 000 people and caused damage of more than US\$ 7.8 billion - equivalent to 120+ of Haiti's GDP in 2009.

There are many more examples, but the fact is that climate change and natural disasters pose a critical threat to the citizens and the environment of Caribbean SIDS and thus to the sustainable development of the region.

To fight climate change and increase resilience to disasters, Caribbean SIDS need to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to support and improve their capacity to prepare for, prevent, mitigate and manage disasters in a timely and efficient manner. This approach should build on the lessons learned from past disasters and strengthen future prevention and recovery efforts. The experience of Haiti and other Caribbean SIDS suggests that such approach needs to be multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral, taking into account the expertise of different stakeholders in the region.



The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes youth as key actors for implementing sustainable change. Young people in the Caribbean can play an essential role in building and improving overall resilience to climate change and related disasters, and in promoting community-based mobilization and action.

Responding to the special needs of the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean has launched the [Special Initiative for the Caribbean \(SPIC\)](#). Reflecting upon the common challenges of the region, the SPIC harnesses the great potential with an integrated approach to sustainable development, paying special attention to Youth and Climate Change as its two thematic development priorities.

Furthermore, in December 2019, UNESCO supported the design and establishment of the [Caribbean Youth Network on Climate Change](#), which mobilizes youth leaders across the Caribbean region to take climate resilience-related action.

Building on these experiences with youth networks, the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean and the UNESCO Haiti Office aim to engage young professionals from Haiti and other Caribbean SIDS in joint efforts with relevant stakeholders at the national and regional levels for the creation of a **youth platform for disaster management and risk reduction in Caribbean SIDS**.

Objective and target group

The main objective is to establish a multidisciplinary platform of young professionals working on climate change, disaster management and resilience in Caribbean SIDS.

The proposed platform will be open to young professionals working on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) / Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) / Climate Resilience and related areas in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS). It will be a multidisciplinary hub for young professionals with different academic backgrounds, professional experience and expertise to share their knowledge, practices and experiences on DRM, discuss their views and take relevant and coordinated actions, in the form of physical (on-the-ground) or digital (online/offline) initiatives.



Roles and responsibilities of the platform members

By joining the community, young professionals will have the opportunity to engage in several different activities, such as:

- online discussions with national, regional and international stakeholders who are working on DRM, including national government authorities, regional inter-governmental bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private companies, professional associations, universities, research institutes and specialized agencies, among others.
- Organize monthly meetings and webinars with a focus on sharing DRM knowledge and practices – mainly through the analysis of real case studies.
- Design of coordinated actions, projects, events and other initiatives, aimed at improving DRM in the Caribbean SIDS, with a focus on raising public awareness and developing the disaster preparedness and response capacities of key stakeholders.
- Design of demonstrative activities (such as evacuation exercises) to raise the awareness of local communities about disasters and support their mobilization and empowerment.
- Connect with other similar platforms worldwide, to learn about best practices that could be replicated.
- Develop a realistic three-year action plan to keep the platform operational and its members actively engaged.

Eligibility criteria

To join this platform, young professionals should fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

General qualifications

Required:

- Citizenship of Haiti and/or of one of the following 20 Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.



- Professional proficiency in English – oral and written discussions on the platform will be held in English only.
- Age between 18 and 35 years
- Reside in Haiti or one of the above-referred 20 English/Dutch-speaking Caribbean SIDS.

Education

Required:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree, in any field of knowledge.

Desirable:

- Hold a master's and/or PhD degree or higher, in any field of knowledge.
- Have ongoing/past DRM/DRR related training courses

Work experience

Required:

- Have at least two (2) years of academic and/or professional experience (including internships) in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) / Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) / Climate Change Resilience and related areas, such as natural sciences, geosciences, environmental management, forestry, engineering, information and communication technologies (ICT), social and human sciences, among others. Eligible professional profiles include, for example, government officials of DRM/DRR agencies; university teachers and researchers; business managers; entrepreneurs; media professionals; and leaders of civil society organizations (such as NGOs, community-based associations...).

Desirable:

- Current employment in an institution/organization/company that works on DRM/DRR.
- Have previous/ongoing experience with youth groups/organizations.
- Have work experience in social sciences, science communication, and earth science.



Commitment and resources

Required:

- Dispose of at least two (2) hours a week to work with the platform and meet online and/or physically with other members.
- Have a good internet connection to engage in the online activities carried out through the platform.

Desirable:

- Be willing to work pro-bono with/for vulnerable groups/communities.

How to apply

To submit your application, please complete this [online form](#) by **31 January, 2021**. Please note that you will need to upload your CV/resumé (preferably in PDF format, maximum 2 pages).

All your information will be treated in strict confidence.

If you have any questions or problems filling out the form, please send an e-mail to Ms Daphning Pierre at d.pierre@unesco.org