

Concept Note

2021



Youth Forum
for Disaster Risk Reduction
The Americas and the Caribbean





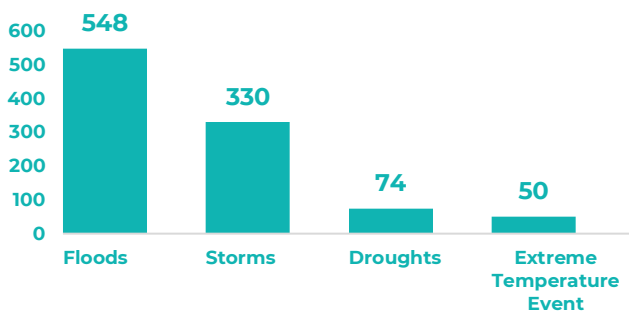
BACKGROUND

Between **1998 and 2017**, disaster-hit countries reported direct economic losses valued at **USD 2,908 billion**. Countries within The Americas and the Caribbean are vulnerable to a range of natural hazards including **droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanoes**.



In 2020, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs declared Latin America and the Caribbean as the second most disaster-prone region in the world with 1,205 disasters between 2000 and 2019. These disasters include 548 floods, 330 storms, 74 droughts and 50 extreme temperature events during that time period.

Disasters from 2000- 2019



According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2012), climate change will allow for a change in the frequency, intensity, duration and spatial extent of the hydrometeorological hazards. For the region, this may mean stronger hurricanes, more persistent droughts and more frequent flood events. Disaster losses have major social impacts that are manifested in different dimensions of human development and poverty. As a result, improving the resilience of the region against climate change and its related hazards are important to maintain

sustainable livelihoods. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Americas and the Caribbean already accounted for 53 per cent of reported global economic losses resulting from climate-related disasters. Heat waves are getting stronger, longer, and more frequent due to human-caused climate change. By June 2021, for instance, a major drought covered 38.5 per cent of the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Furthermore, the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season was the most active on record. The storms that slammed into the Gulf Coast, Central America and the Caribbean that year exhibited hallmark signs that they were exacerbated by climate change.

In any type of disaster, children and adolescents constitute a particularly vulnerable group. Children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable to disasters as they are dependent on others for access to resources, livelihood, decision making and support. Children require special protection according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and have the right to be the first to receive attention during emergencies. Peek (2007) argues, that disasters harm the physical spaces in which children live, ie, their homes, neighborhoods and schools. This may lead to long-term displacement, disrupt their daily routines and educational progress, threaten their sense of safety and security in the world, cause stress within families and communities and may result in personal injury or the death of loved ones.

Climate change and its impacts will impact the current livelihoods and future of youth. Studies also show that children and youth can be strong advocates for climate change in their various communities and groups. Notwithstanding, the youth have been identified as one of the major groups of civil society in Agenda 21 to participate in sustainable development. According to the United



Nations (UN) a youth is defined as a person between the ages of 15 to 24 years old. Within Latin

America and the Caribbean 20 per cent of the population or 106 million people are characterized as youth. It is therefore of great importance to involve the youth of the region in the activities geared to improve the resilience of the region to climate change and its related hazards.

During the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in March 2015, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) was adopted. This global framework, along with the other global agreements adopted during 2015, constitute the 2030 Agenda, which establishes comprehensive disaster risk management and its integration into development as fundamental for Member States. Global Frameworks cannot be successfully implemented in separate boxes; they require coherence in planning and in implementation. As a practical framework for dealing with risk, the **Sendai Framework is the connecting tissue** for the post-2015 international agreements. The Sendai Framework seeks to achieve “the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries”. Achieving this result requires the commitment of political leaders at all levels and for all actors to actively participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and related actions.

Jamaica will host the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the

Caribbean from 1-4 November, 2021 under the theme **“Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean”**, to raise awareness of the challenges facing Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean region and the wider Americas.

As part of the platform, Jamaica will host also a regional Youth Forum to ensure that the voices of youth are included in the deliberations. To that end, on October 26, 2021, this regional youth event will take place, in collaboration with the Jamaican Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, UNICEF, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), UNESCO and the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR).

The Regional Youth Forum will provide a space for youth representatives to voice their unique views on Disaster Risk Reduction for the Americas and the Caribbean. The Youth Forum will serve as a lead in to the VII Regional Platform and will provide the opportunity to inform and influence decision makers participating in the VII Regional Platform for DRR by sharing youth priorities, concerns and proposals related to DRR.

Through this engagement, youth will have an opportunity to have discussions and provide input on some of the thematic areas proposed and provide ideas for follow up for continued action for the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean.

OBJECTIVES





The Youth Forum, hosted by Jamaica, will be held entirely **virtually** using the **Hopin virtual platform**. It will provide a space to ensure that youth participants share their views on a wide range of issues including Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change mitigation and adaptation.

Specifically, it aims to:

- Provide a space for youth representatives to voice their unique views on Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives for the region.
- Encourage youth participation in discovery learning about their communities' vulnerability to multi hazards, especially in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provide a space for further discussion on the Sendai Framework for DRR, Agenda 2030 and plans for their rollout and implementation at the country, regional and global levels, and specifically how youth could be engaged in these processes.
- Inform and influence decision makers participating in the regional platform by sharing youth priorities, concerns and proposals related to DRR.
- Highlight the use of disaster knowledge for individual responsibility and self-protection within communities.

PROPOSED OUTCOMES AND GOALS

The outcome of the Youth Forum will be a summary document capturing key outcomes of the discussions and the youth statement of the forum which will be made available to the Ministerial Round Table during the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean. A representative of the Youth Forum will address the VII Regional Platform on a date between 1 and 4 November 2021. The Youth Forum will also provide ongoing opportunities to share and exchange information through a multilingual website for regional youth DRR organizations to build alliances and via capacity building training workshops.

The in-forum sessions will also solicit viewpoints from youth on innovative and successful initiatives and interventions aimed at building resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean. The outcomes of the Youth Forum should be transformed into effective actions requiring a correct perception of target populations including all vulnerable groups such as children, elderly folks and persons with disabilities.

Theme: “Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean”



Outcomes:

1. To highlight the work of youth in the Americas and the Caribbean on the topic of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction.
 - a. To create a medium for inclusive regional integration of youth, where knowledge on disaster/climate and environment resilience and best practices are shared in a collaborative environment and through an ongoing website to help youth in DRR form alliances with like-minded individuals.
2. To provide a space where youth and policy makers in the Americas and the Caribbean can provide strategies to change the way the region plans and responds to multiple hazards.
 - a. Adjusting the way in which the Americas and the Caribbean plans and responds to multiple hazards - climate change, earthquakes, COVID-19, hurricanes, floods (sudden-onset disaster and slow-onset hazard).
 - b. To provide a platform to discuss innovative solutions for sustainable development.
3. To develop a plan in which youth are allowed to engage and participate in decision planning.
 - a. To reduce tokenism and develop practical ways to involve youth engagement in DRR.
 - b. To provide the youth in the Americas and the Caribbean with information on alliances, support organizations) and sources of funding for DRR and climate change.



Target Participants

The forum will target a total of 1000 participants from around the region. The desired participants are aged 15 to 24 (with exceptions) and already involved in disaster risk reduction or adaptation activities or in climate action. The participants will be invited from within the Caribbean, North, Central and South America. Participants should commit to facilitate dialogue, enrich the discussions and ensure recommended actions emerging from the platform are taken forward at country level. The Youth Forum will include a balanced representation of youth from all countries including indigenous groups and people with disabilities. Gender balance will also be respected.

Criteria for Participants



- Youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years (some exceptions may apply)
- Residents of North, Central, South America and the Caribbean
- Youth leaders attached to social, cultural, environmental and educational programmes.
- Background knowledge, directly involved or have a vested interest in DRR and/or climate change

Table 1. Countries in The Americas and the Caribbean

North America	Canada Mexico United States of America
Central America	Belize Costa Rica Guatemala El Salvador Honduras Nicaragua Panama
South America	Argentina Bolivia Brazil Chile Colombia Ecuador Falkland Islands Paraguay Peru Suriname South Georgia Uruguay Venezuela
The Caribbean	Anguilla Antigua and Barbuda The Bahamas Barbados British Virgin Islands Cayman Islands Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Dutch Caribbean (Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Sint Maarten, Saba, Sint Eustatius) French Caribbean (French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Martin, St. Bartholomew) Grenada Guyana Haiti Jamaica - Host Country Montserrat Puerto Rico



- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- United States Virgin Islands
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Turks and Caicos

AGENDA



The Youth Committee team met three times over a period of three weeks to create an agenda for the Forum. The Forum will feature opening and closing plenary sessions. The Forum will adopt participatory methods to encourage innovation, stimulate creativity and raise awareness. Activities will include interactive panels, group discussions, performances and role-playing exercises. Presenters, motivational speakers and facilitators will offer informed perspectives on critical issues on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Session One

The Forum will be three hours long and will feature three segments, each focusing on one specific outcome. The forum will begin with an opening ceremony, adoption of the agenda. The first session will highlight the work of youth in the Americas and the Caribbean on the topic of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and examine disaster risk reduction from the youth perspective as well as provide information on the upcoming VII Regional Platform. This section will also address the youth role in DRR including ICTs and a myth busting interactive segment.

Session Two

The second hour will aim to provide a space where youth and policy makers in the Americas and the Caribbean can provide strategies to change the way the region plans and responds to multiple hazards. This will include an inclusive panel discussion on cost-effective strategies to reduce risk and the youth perspective on what the region will look like if adaptive action is not taken now.

Session Three

In the final hour, participants will be placed in language specific – English, Spanish, French (Portuguese) – breakout groups to discuss the proposed Youth Declaration for the VII Regional Platform and allow for feedback from each language group. The feedback will be presented by a pre-selected moderator in the following segment. The intent is to incorporate this feedback into the Declaration to be made at the VII Regional Platform in November.

In general, the Forum will adopt participatory methods to encourage innovation, stimulate creativity and raise awareness. Activities will include interactive quizzes, group discussions, polls, disaster reduction planning exercises and tips for building cost effective strategies. It is anticipated that persons who win quizzes and other interactive games within the Forum will be invited to participate in the VII Regional Platform in November. Presenters and facilitators will offer informed perspectives on critical issues on Disaster Risk Reduction. These sessions



will also solicit youths' viewpoints on innovative and successful initiatives and interventions aimed at building resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean. The outcomes of the Youth Forum should be transformed into effective actions requiring a realistic perception of target populations including all vulnerable groups such as children, elderly folks and persons with disabilities.

Table 2. Tentative Agenda

START	FINISH	
15:25	15:30	LOG ON/REGISTRATION
15:30	16:30	
15:30	15:34	Jamaican Cultural Package
15:34	16:10	Opening Address - Government of Jamaica
16:10	16:15	UNDRR Opening Address
16:15	16:20	UNICEF Opening Address
16:20	16:25	Declaration of Opening and Adoption of the Agenda
16:25	16:28:30	VOICES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
16:29	17:45	PLENARY SESSION – What will my tomorrow be? Perspective of youth from the Americas and the Caribbean moving forward in the face of multiple disasters (marginalized, indigenous and vulnerable groups).
16:30	16:35	The impact of COVID on the life of youth in the region - A Jamaican perspective
16:35	16:40	The outlook on dealing with the new normal of multiple hazards – An Eastern Caribbean perspective
16:40	16:45	The outlook on dealing with the new normal of multiple hazards - The Indigenous community perspective
16:45	16:55	BUST THAT MYTH!
16:55	17:10	PLENARY SESSION – What is the role of young people in disaster risk reduction?
16:55	17:00	Grassroots youth activism for increasing resilience to disasters



17:05	17:10	Careers and Innovation for Youth in Disaster Risk Reduction			
17:10	17:20	NETWORKING AND GAMES SESSION			
17:20	17:40	PANEL DISCUSSION - COVID-19 impact and the use of technology in the DRR space			
17:42	18:02	PANEL DISCUSSION - Implementing cost-effective grassroots strategies to increase adaptive capacity and resilience			
18:02	18:05	JAMAICA MOVES EXERCISE SESSION			
18:05	18:30	Parallel session English	Parallel session Spanish	Parallel session French	Parallel session Portuguese
18:30	18:35	DRR QUIZ			
18:35	18:38	Breakout Group Feedback English			
18:38	18:41	Breakout Group Feedback Spanish			
18:41	18:44	Breakout Group Feedback French			
18:44	18:47	Breakout Group Feedback Portuguese			
18:47	18:52	In-Forum Feedback Survey			
18:52	19:00	CLOSING CEREMONY			

Youth Forum Planning Committee

In order to encourage and foster a greater participation of young people, a Youth Steering Committee was created to co-lead the organization of the Forum, including main content, virtual consultations, format of debates and sessions making sure to achieve the key



objectives. A group of 21 youth from the Americas and the Caribbean were nominated to co-lead the overall organization of the Forum. The Youth Planning Committee members is as follows:

Table 3. Youth Forum DRR The Americas and the Caribbean Planning Committee

Name	Country	Organization
Adrian Reid	Jamaica	Jamaica Red Cross
Anabelle Jones	Jamaica	Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica
Kristinia Dougherty	Jamaica	The University of the West Indies, Mona
Nicholas Kee	Jamaica	U Report Youth Council
Jhannel Tomlinson	Jamaica	Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN)
Tahje Wallen	Jamaica	CARIDIMA
Amrita Sridhar	Singapore	UNICEF Jamaica Intern
Selena Campbell	Trinidad and Tobago	The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine
Sylvia Guzman	Costa Rica	Youth Costa Rican Red Cross
Sara Cognuck	Panama	UNICEF
Arturo Salazar	Mexico	UNICEF
Jorges Terrones	Panama	UNDRR
Alinne Olvera	Mexico	Youth STAG member
Aila Gomes	Brazil	UNMGCY
Manuela Borjas	Brazil	YCL
Jaime Maldonado	Colombia	Barranquilla +20
Diana Caceido	Colombia	Barranquilla +20
Adelin Pierre	Haiti	UNMGCY
Jerry Howard	Haiti	CARIDIMA
Sebastian Benfeld	Chile	Junior Journalist on DRR
Marcos Sepulveda	Chile	Junior Journalist on DRR

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The event will be publicized through the use of social media channels of the Government of Jamaica, UNDRR, UNICEF, UNESCO, IFRC and GNDR (members of the Youth Forum Steering Committee) as well as through the personal emails and WhatsApp groups of members of the communications working group as well as other members of the Youth Forum Committee.



Social media communications include pre-event factoids and features on youth affected by climate change and strategies for disaster risk reduction as well as pre-and post-event press releases.

A Save the Date invitation was launched on September 17.



Persons who wish to participate in the Youth Forum DRR The Americas and the Caribbean can register by clicking the registration link to the forum. <https://hopin.com/events/youth-forum-for-disaster-risk-reduction-the-americas-and-the-caribbean>.

In addition, more information on Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean, is available at the [VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction \(DRR\) in the Americas and the Caribbean](#) website.

For further information please contact:

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 876-9951932



#RP21

#ResilientCaribbean

#ResilientAmericas

#YouthForumDRR

#ResilientJA



Figure 1. Social Media Calendar

September				2021		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 UNICEF : SAVE THE DATE	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



October

2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Myth Busters Major Disaster In The Americas And The Caribbean	2
3 Myth Busters (Myth Vs. Fact)	4	5	6 Feature Of Day: Youth's Contribution To DRR	7	8 Myth Busters (Myth Vs. Fact)	9
10 Myth Busters (Myth Vs. Fact)	11	12	13 Story On Disaster Survivor's Experience	14	15 Myth Busters (Myth Vs. Fact)	16
17 Myth Busters (Myth Vs. Fact)	18	19	20 Meet The DRR Youth Forum Comm	21	22 Post Video Endorsement For DRR Youth Forum	23
24 DRR Youth Forum Post Reminder Tomorrow	25	26 DRR Youth Forum Post Link One Hour Before Forum	27	28	29	30
31						



Annex 1. Work Plan

ACTIVITIES	September 2021				October 2021				November 2021			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
PHASE 1: YOUTH FORUM PREPARATION												
Begin discussing framework for the Youth Forum, including agenda and communications plans.												
Begin working group meetings to decide action points, areas of focus, agenda, methodology and time frame and proposed participants												
LAUNCH SAVE THE DATE INVITATION			*									
Send out link and invitations for the Forum												
Finalize Concept Note												
Clarify and finalize methodology, engage translators, presenters. Methodology developed in collaboration with UNICEF and other Steering Committee members												
Finalize forum agenda												
Finalize and engage presenters, translators, animators, music, etc.												
PHASE 2: YOUTH FORUM EXECUTION												
Send out final invitations and reminders												



Youth Forum Presentations Test Run 20 October 2021													
YOUTH FORUM DRR THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN								*					
Finalize youth presenters for VII Platform and conduct final preparation of the Youth Declaration													
VII Regional Platform Presentations Test Run 29 October 2021													
VII REGIONAL PLATFORM ON DRR									*				
Post VII Regional Platform Review													*



Annex 2. Meeting Dates and Representatives from UNDRR

The youth organizing committee and the facilitator, Ms. Bogle have been holding regular meetings with members of the UNDRR, UNICEF, IFRC, GNDR, and other planning committee and steering committee members.

Date of Meeting	Attendees	Organization
7, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28 September	Rebecca Tortello	UNICEF Jamaica
September 2021	Maria Emilia Numer Rebecca Tortello Hanoch Barlevi Melany Riquetti Moran	UNICEF Regional Office focal point UNICEF Jamaica focal point UNICEF Regional Office Coordinator UNDRR Regional Office Coordinator
20 September 2021	Maria Emilia Numer Hanoch Barlevi	UNICEF UNICEF
1 st – 28 th September	Melany Riquetti Maria Emilia Numer	UNDRR UNICEF
14 September	Mikael Ashorn	UNICEF
15 September	Adrian Reid	Jamaica Red Cross
22, 23 September 2021	Delmares White Nagra Plunkett-Nugent	ODPEM MLGCD
22 September 2021	Ross Shiel Communications Working Group Melany Riquetti Saskia Carusi Jorge Terrones	UNICEF Jamaica Various UNDRR UNDRR



2, 9, 16, 23 September 2021	Youth Steering Committee	Various
10, 24 September 2021	Steering Committee	Various
27 September 2021	Marsha Henry-Martin Hon. Minister Desmond McKenzie	MLGCD
27 September 2021 27 September 2021	Vicente Teran Rebecca Tortello	UNICEF Jamaica