



VII Regional Platform for Disaster
Risk Reduction in the Americas
and the Caribbean (RP21)

*Building Resilient Economies in the
Americas and the Caribbean*

1 to 4 November 2021, Virtual Event



PROCEEDINGS OF THE VII REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

BUILDING RESILIENT ECONOMIES IN THE
AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

VII REGIONAL PLATFORM
#PR21



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Executive Summary

The VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean was held under the theme “Building resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean”. The event took place at a pivotal time, as populations across the world looked towards social and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, as countries convened at the COP26 to define commitments with regards to the climate crisis, and as States in the region reviewed the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean and looked towards assessing the progress made so far with regards to the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the achievement of its targets.

At the opening ceremony, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG) and Head of UNDRR, Ms. Mami Mizutori, foresaw that the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic would play a central role in the discussions during the RP21. Other high-level speakers referred to the broader expectations of countries in the region for recovery, disaster risk reduction, and building resilience. The Most Hon. Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica,

called upon all nations in the region and participants to reflect upon the measures needed to address the impacts of disasters and build resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean. Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), pointed out the importance of establishing socio-economic policies designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations and ensure sustainable development. In this context, SIDS face specific challenges, and as the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica indicated, they must commit to the task of developing proper DRR strategies, paying particular attention to competing priorities. A call to consider a proactive approach to building resilience rather than a reactive approach to disasters was made by the Youth Ambassador representing ODPEM, Ms. Kayla Gaynor, who urged governments and other stakeholders to hear and enable the voices of youth.

Discussions during the first High-level Session focused on the complexity of climate and disaster resilience, which requires meaningful, transformative, and inclusive cooperation that takes into account a multitude of social and economic factors at all levels to address the dynamic and complex nature of disaster risk and act with appropriate resources. Great emphasis was put on the key role of women as leaders and key agents of change to build resilient development pathways. Since its onset, the COVID-19 pandemic has derailed development trajectories throughout the region and exacerbated social and economic inequalities. Yet, the pandemic can also serve as a catalyst for human-rights based meaningful change as it has shown us the vital importance of collaboration and building alliances across critical sectors. Opportunities for collaboration include strengthening data sharing at country level and across the region and increased provision of evidence-based scientific research and analyses for decision-making.

The first Parallel Session of the RP21 provided a platform for discussing the implementation of nature-based solutions (NBS) as a mechanism to build resilience by enhancing benefits for communities and ecosystems. Speakers from the region identified opportunities for the implementation of NBS in the region considering not only the vulnerability of many local populations to environmental hazards but also the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The most significant advantages of NBS are their cross-sectoral reach and cost-benefit ratio, which make NBS an attractive alternative to reducing disaster risk through costly hard infrastructure.

The resilience of critical services and infrastructure has never been more important. Speakers in Parallel Session 2 highlighted the increasing interconnectedness of the world through globalization, the rise in threats and disaster risks, and the need to multiply the capacity of infrastructure to satisfy demand – including the regulation and legislation towards decarbonization. Disaster risk cannot be reduced without considering infrastructure. Investing in resilience is economically feasible and results in cost-effective benefits, as each dollar invested in maintaining infrastructure is equivalent to \$1.5 of savings. Giving local communities the autonomy to implement locally appropriate approaches was also seen to be of critical importance.



Special Session 1, which launched the 2021 Regional Risk Assessment Report, underlined that the manifestation of climate and disaster risk is a social construct and can therefore be socially deconstructed. The need for a systems-based approach and for inclusive, transdisciplinary, and accountable disaster-risk governance mechanisms was highlighted as means to overcoming underlying factors of risk. The discussants emphasized the importance of analysing risks based on physical space and the interconnected relationships with communities and social systems. The lessons learned from COVID-19 emphasize the importance of ensuring appropriate and proactive planning processes and developing cross-cutting strategies at all levels, in line with target E of the Sendai Framework. Establishing monitoring and periodic review mechanisms with both government and non-government actors is fundamental to securing progress and inclusivity. Science and technology – co-production of knowledge – are the primary allies in disaster risk governance.

Participants in the Learning Lab on disaster impact modelling were given a unique opportunity to gain a clear understanding on how this method works, what its scope is, what outputs can be produced, and how various models can inform decision-making on prevention, mitigation, and response. The session exposed the audience to options available for increasing disaster awareness and building trust using reliable scientific methodologies to determine risk. The benefits of disaster impact modelling are cross-cutting and provide for targeted disaster risk reduction as well as increased accountability and transparency.

The second day of the Regional Platform focused on building resilient economies by examining the lessons learned from multi-hazard response mechanisms in the Caribbean; risk-informed public and private investments; the integration of disaster displacement into inclusive DRR legal frameworks, policies, and plans; and risk-informed recovery.

The day commenced with the second High-level Session of the Platform, which focused on key drivers to building resilient economies and the importance of building back better and greener, while leaving no one behind. Speakers shared critical aspects that need to be addressed in the face of the complexity of the pandemic recovery and the climate challenge and stressed the need for a higher ambition in the implementation of the Sendai Framework in tandem with the 2030 Agenda. To achieve these goals, boosted investments in building resilience are required. A key sentiment conveyed by the panel was that in times of uncertainty, effective governance is fundamental to risk management.

The second Special Session of the Platform focused on the lessons learned from the Caribbean in 2020 and on the need to enhance regional approaches to strengthen coordination in the face of multi-hazard circumstances, which increasingly affect the region. Presentations delivered by regional agencies highlighted the role of science and education, as well as the importance of strengthened strategic planning and prioritization of resources – including human resources – for preparing better and responding more effectively and efficiently to multiple hazards. Regional response agencies also brought attention to the successes observed so far, as well as to the areas where the systemic approach to regional mechanisms could be strengthened.



The technical meeting on the Regional Action Plan aimed to review and agree on recommended adjustments and areas of prioritization for the advancement of the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the region. A primary concern was to ensure that the Regional Action Plan considered the systemic nature of risk and integrated lessons learned from the pandemic, including the need to strengthen risk governance and the linkages between disaster risk reduction and public health. Among the elements emphasized in the Plan are the need to strengthen linkages with social protection mechanisms to support the most vulnerable, the crucial role of the private sector in reducing disaster risk, and the need to strengthen public-private partnerships. Other areas that warrant special mention are the importance of ensuring access to basic services and the resilience of infrastructure, the need to strengthen capacities of local governments to assess risk, and the need to develop and implement disaster risk reduction plans and strategies in coherence with

climate change adaptation and sustainable development efforts. A special effort was made by all delegations to guarantee the inclusivity of the Regional Action Plan and ensure that no one is left behind.

The third Parallel Session of the Platform featured discussions on overcoming economic losses due to disasters – including pandemics – in the region. Several best practices were shared, highlighting gender inclusion, strategic planning, and the use of technology to strengthen public investments. Recommendations emerging from the session emphasized the need to establish systems that allow for supervision and monitoring of public expenditure and coordination of focused spending for public investments. It was also recommended that disaster risk information be cross-referenced with public health data to determine practical and sustainable public investment solutions.



The fourth Parallel Session of the event concentrated on the need for disaster-related displacement to be addressed from a cross-sectoral perspective at the local, national, and regional levels. Stakeholders, including States and civil society organizations, were called to make a concerted effort for the implementation of the Sendai Framework to include the assessment and reduction of displacement risk. Specifically, efforts should encompass the framing of innovative and necessary approaches by agencies responsible for migration management, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.



A Learning Lab on Forensic Investigations of Disasters sought to present the FORIN methodology used to explain the causality of past disasters. Facilitators emphasized the idea that disasters are a social construct and called for moving away from the notion that disasters are a purely natural phenomenon. Four approaches used and advanced by FORIN were presented, along with a list of potential new cases in the region in which the methodology could be applied in the future.

Three side events focused on resilience-building through promoting recovery practices in the Americas and the Caribbean in a multi-hazard context, presenting critical success factors for reducing disaster risk to SMEs, and the



sharing of best practices and knowledge sources for developing inclusive disaster risk reduction plans that take into account people with disabilities and indigenous knowledge as well as priority groups, such as children, adolescents, and women with disabilities. Considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, governments and intergovernmental institutions agreed on the relevance of continuously strengthening institutional capacities and coordination. Ethical principles and evidence-based decision-making will be crucial to reach a safe haven for what is left of the pandemic and to face the potential crises that may affect the region in the future.



The Regional Platform resumed on day three with the third High-Level Session, three Parallel Sessions, one Learning Lab and four Side Events highlighting ideas and best practices for building resilience in the region. The sessions focused on social protection, disaster risk financing, Impact-Based Forecasting, and Early Warning Systems.

The third High-level Session, covering social protection and inclusion to strengthen community resilience, identified concrete and feasible recommendations to enhance inter-sectoral synergies among social protection and disaster risk management policies.

Relevant lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic point towards amplifying the inclusivity of social protection mechanisms and prioritizing contributions from historically marginalized groups in decision-making processes as vehicles to achieve significant improvements in system-wide disaster risk management and governance, particularly in the context of complex and interconnected disaster risks.

Parallel Session 5 emphasized the disparity between climate change adaptation strategies and the effects of climate change on vulnerable populations. Many vulnerable groups are still left behind in emergency response interventions. Civil protection systems, disaster risk management systems, and social protection systems should evolve into comprehensive, redistributive, and universal protection systems that promote a resilience-building approach, allowing for inclusive and rapid recoveries in the aftermath of crises or shocks.

The challenges faced by governance structures in optimizing risk management solutions at the local level and in achieving policy alignment were the focus of Parallel Session 6. Without policy and

action at the local level and greater coherence with the national level, societies may fall behind in preparing to face disaster risk. Speakers called for a change of mindset in risk management and for the establishment of synergies between disaster risk management, climate change adaptation, and development. The protection of the natural environment needs to be at the heart of economic growth and sustainable development. Furthermore, risk-informed and climate-smart development policies that reflect this required shift in thinking are crucially needed. A multi-stakeholder approach that includes citizens as key stakeholders is to be used to strengthen partnerships and accountability in the performance of authorities.

Acting before a disaster or crisis hits protects the lives and livelihoods of those potentially affected and reduces suffering. In fact, if 50% of emergencies are predictable and 20% of them are highly predictable, only 1% of the funds allocated for response is channelled through anticipatory measures. Parallel Session 7 focused on anticipatory action and anticipatory financing mechanisms, sharing experiences and lessons learned from pilot projects across the globe. Although these mechanisms take time to install, they are to be integrated in emergency action plans, clearly identifying the triggers and the forecast-based data on which decisions are made. Anticipatory financing mechanisms must be developed using a multi-stakeholder approach in which communities, local governments, and humanitarian actors work together to ensure that the systems in place are sustainable.

Learning Lab 3 was an interactive session presenting contributions on the challenges and opportunities of Impact-Based Forecasting and the strengthening of Early Warning Systems (EWS) in the Caribbean. Common challenges include the lack of data sharing across critical sectors and institutions and the limited access to hydro-meteorological datasets. EWS tend to be more centred around science and infrastructure and less around a fundamental aspect for their effectiveness, which is the communication of messages to the people that will use the information they provide. Sustainable forecasting and EWS should be integrated into local DRR strategies. Finally, opportunities were identified to capitalize on existing regional partnerships.

Four Side Events took place on the third day. The Side Event on Making Cities Resilient Initiative 2030 (MCR2030) provided participants with an opportunity to share country-based experiences and best practices in building disaster resilient cities. The need to strengthen knowledge and action on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction considering the systemic nature risk was underlined. The lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the current climate challenge should inform not only short- and medium-term thinking, but also our vision for the





development of societies beyond the 2030 global landmarks. The Side Event on energy and water highlighted the need to ensure business continuity and accessibility of safe water supplies after a disaster. The feasibility and advantages of geothermal energy supply for the Caribbean were discussed, as well as the need to consider wastewater as a secondary resource for water supply through treatment and the importance of making early warnings for drought sector specific. Finally, the Side Event on resilient tourism examined the lessons learned in the management of tourism facilities as shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. While experiences on the tactics and procedures that worked or failed were shared, key recommendations and observations for post COVID-19 tourism were discussed.

A Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting, with representatives from 29 countries of the region, culminated with the adoption of a declaration that includes commitments on critical aspects to be addressed in the face of the complexity of the pandemic recovery and the climate challenge. The Ministerial Declaration stressed the need for greater ambition in the implementation of the Sendai Framework in tandem with the 2030 Agenda. Efforts towards reaching these goals include strengthening multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and multi-level risk governance and boosting investments in building resilience. Social contracts that collectively manage risk are also required, and these must be anchored in universal social protection systems. The Ministerial Meeting was attended by the Prime Minister of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and other ten Ministers of the region, holding different portfolios, signalling the importance of these discussions for the social,

political, and economic future of our region.

On the fourth and final day of the Platform, the High-level session titled “Strengthening disaster risk governance: Lessons from COVID-19” addressed the elements of governance that the current pandemic has highlighted as key to manage complex situations in the context of systemic risk. The session highlighted the need to bolster a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach to disaster risk management and to strengthen integration across sectors and at all levels. Specifically, the integration of disaster risk reduction in all government legal frameworks, policies, and plans was recommended to manage emergencies and disasters, including pandemics. The session underscored important advancements achieved in health disaster risk reduction, including the concept of Safe and Smart Hospitals (Safe and Green = Smart), the Health Sector Multi-Hazard Response Framework, and Disability Inclusion in Hospital Disaster Risk Management (INGRID-H).

The eighth and final Parallel Session of the Platform sought to promote a better understanding of systemic risk and how it is constructed, its underlying drivers, the interconnections it encompasses, and the forms in which it materializes. Country presentations showcased the ways in which national and local governments are engaging in risk-informed decision-making, beyond merely considering hazards. A telling example of the successful implementation of a systemic risk approach in the education sector was presented by the Minister of Education of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Chair of the Caribbean Safe School Initiative, the Hon. Mr. Curtis King. Finally, different tools and resources to better measure and understand risk and inform the design of strategies and decision-making processes were presented.

A Learning Lab on cultural heritage management and DRR aimed to raise awareness and promote knowledge exchange and cooperation on the benefits and necessity of integrating cultural heritage management in DRR strategies and plans. The presentation of the Addendum to the Scorecard on Cultural Heritage gave operational insights into how to concretely achieve this goal. A Learning Session on lightning and wildfires provided concise but important insights into wildfires and/or lightning information systems in the region. Specifically, it allowed for the review of wildfire monitoring, prediction, and response systems in the Americas and the Caribbean and assessment of the region's progress and challenges in lightning detection and prediction. Best practices for integrating lightning and wildfire data systems were identified and means for improving current risk management approaches for these hazards were considered.

The last two Side Events of the Platform showcased Uruguay's achievements and challenges regarding risk governance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and provided a deeper insight into how to implement Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) strategies to increase local and national resilience in the Americas and the Caribbean.



The VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean concluded with a closing ceremony. In her remarks, Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), emphasised that the outcomes of the RP21 provided a favourable context for the upcoming review process of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy 2014-2024, as well as the Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Ms. Riley read the Chair's Summary, which succinctly encapsulates the proceedings of this four-day event.

The SRSB for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, Ms. Mami Mizutori, noted that participants emerged from the Platform with the determination to promote international cooperation in favour of developing countries and support progress in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, she indicated that national authorities had reiterated their commitment to reducing mortality, the numbers of people affected by disasters, damage to critical infrastructure, and economic losses as set out in the Sendai Framework, as well as to aligning their actions with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda. Ms. Mizutori expressed satisfaction for the establishment of the Youth Forum as part of the Regional Platform and congratulated the adoption of an updated Regional Action Plan that captures the lessons learned from the disasters of the past years and recalibrates the regional priorities to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework.

The Hon. Mr. Mark Phillips, Prime Minister of Guyana, opened his remarks by describing Guyana's risk context, which includes marked coastal vulnerabilities along with other existing and emerging threats. The Prime Minister underscored that sustainable growth and development depend on risk-informed investments that build resilience. He indicated that Guyana adopted a National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2021, in line with target E of the Sendai Framework, and encouraged other States to follow suit. He invited governments of the Americas and the Caribbean to shift from a reactive approach to a preventive and holistic approach that recognizes the systemic nature of disaster risk.

In his closing remarks, the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, highlighted that the more than 30 sessions and discussions that had taken place during the four-day event, convening thousands of people from the region who shared their expertise, concerns, perspectives, and ideas, contributed to making the region more resilient. From the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in British Columbia, Canada, to the southern cone, over 2,500 people joined the event's bespoke digital platform and triggered a remarkable following on social media and the website live stream – adding up to more than 35,000 views! – making this event the most attended Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean to date. The Minister also stressed that this event had broken other very significant records. This was indeed the first Regional Platform to be preceded by a Youth Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, the first one to have a representative from the youth take the floor at the opening ceremony, the first one to invite a representative of the youth to the Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting, and the first one to conclude with concrete commitments to ensure that the youth are part and parcel of the region's collective efforts to reduce disaster risk and build resilience. Inspired by the adage and the remarkable and continuous contributions of representatives of people with disabilities to the Regional Platform, “Nothing about them without them”!

The Ministerial Declaration, the Statement of Youth , the Civil Society Statement, the adjusted Regional Action Plan, and a Chair's Summary capturing only a snapshot of the rich discussions held during these four days can be found on the [Regional Platform's webpage](#).

In his opening remarks, the Most Hon. Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica, had called upon all nations in the region and participants to reflect upon the measures needed to address the impacts of disasters and build resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean. We want to thank all participants, organizations, agencies, community leaders, and particularly session organizing teams, for having responded to that call over these four days and for having contributed to making the region's societies more resilient.



Virtual Platform and Networking

The unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has greatly accelerated the development, design, and adoption of virtual event technology. The RP21 was the first Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean to be implemented as a hybrid event. The hybrid modality presented a unique opportunity to organize a high-level event that was sustainable, more carbon-neutral and globally inclusive, while also including an audience based in the host country, Jamaica. The RP21 was implemented using an “all-in-one platform solution” through a service provider called Hopin. Hopin is one of the most advanced virtual venues for online live events available on the global market. It was conceived to enable meaningful interactions and networking opportunities between participants, similar to an in-person event.

Thanks to the virtual broadcasting modality of the Platform, the event was relayed to over 52,000 persons globally. The RP21 was attended by 75% of participants who had registered prior to the event.

Attendees did not simply watch the content but became a part of the event experience itself through a range of tools designed to provide a highly interactive online experience. At the RP21, attendees were able to:

- Network with all event attendees using one-on-one live video and direct messages and exchange virtual business cards.
- Explore the RP21 exclusive on-demand content presented in the Official Statements and access the latest innovations on DRR in the Ideas Incubator areas.
- Visit the Innovations Platform and connect with the exhibitors, watch live presentations and network with RP21 partners.
- Watch keynote presentations on stage, interact through chat messages and Q&A features, and engage with content through other interactive tools including polls, interactive boards, etc.
- Join workshop sessions and work with other participants in groups.

The Platform in Numbers



An **ADVISORY COUNCIL** helped design the event's agenda. The Advisory Council to the RP21 included representatives of Governments, Civil Society, Private Sector, Science and Technology Community, UN Agencies and International Development Banks.



PREPARATORY EVENTS

28 October
Arise Forum for the Americas and the Caribbean

26 October
Youth Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction

20 September and 13 October
Science & Technical Advisory Group Online Dialogue Series

Participants



2,873

Registrations



75%

Turnout



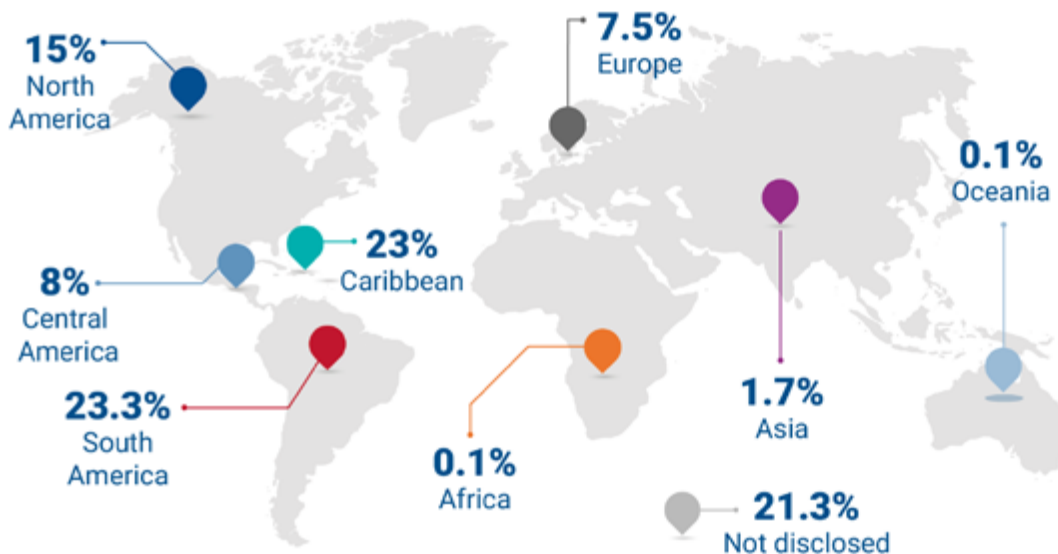
52,000

Stream viewers



85

Countries



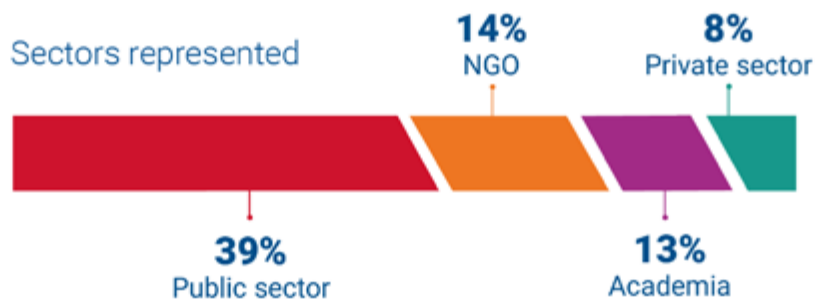
53%
Female

0.5%
Other



46.5%
Male

Sectors represented



63

Participants requested accessibility measures

Sessions

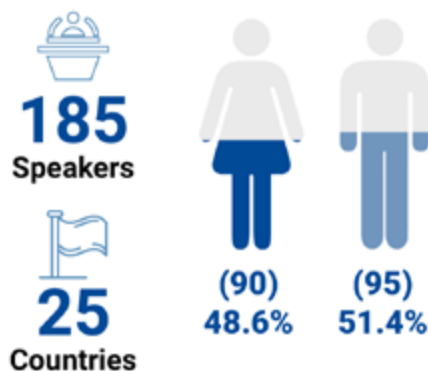


Themes

COMMUNITY RESILIENT ECONOMIES
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION SENDAI FRAMEWORK
INCLUSION SOCIAL PROTECTION
RESILIENCE
BUILD BACK BETTER LOCAL &
INTEGRATION
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
GOVERNANCE PEOPLE-CENTERED
COVID-19 RECOVERY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



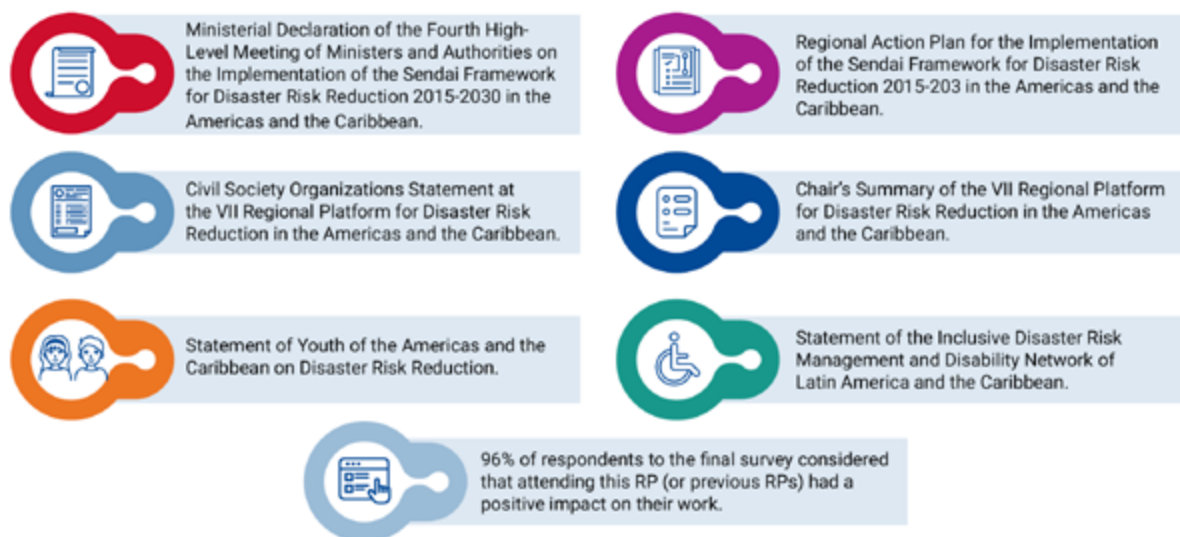
Speakers



Media



Outcomes



The event brought together thousands of people from across the globe who, by sharing their expertise, concerns, perspectives and ideas, contributed to advancing DRR implementation and making the Americas and the Caribbean more resilient.



Concept Note of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean: “Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean”

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on millions of people, causing loss of lives and devastating economic consequences. While no one remains unaffected, the most vulnerable bear the brunt of the impacts of the pandemic. The losses resulting from this global disaster have major social impacts that are apparent in different dimensions of human development, particularly regarding poverty. By the end of 2020, for instance, COVID-19 had pushed 22 million Latin Americans into poverty, bringing the poverty rates in the region to 33.7% of the total population.¹ The impact of the pandemic on education, with close to 120 million school-age children of the region losing or at-risk of losing an entire academic year, is extremely unequal.² In fact, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean faces worsening indices of inequality and will have to address recovery in a context of magnified structural gaps and tremendous indebtedness.³

¹ ECLAC (2021), Social Panorama of Latin America 2020.

² World Bank (2021), Acting Now to Protect the Human Capital of Our Children: The Costs of and Response to COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact on the Education Sector in Latin America and the Caribbean.

³ ECLAC (2021), Financing for development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond: Priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean in relation

The nature of our globally interconnected world means that shocks, stresses, and crises reverberate globally and are exacerbated by the interaction between climate change, ecosystem fragility, pre-existing inequality, and political or financial instability. The global health crisis has affected sectors that are critical for generating income and employment, such as tourism, and has revealed the precarious nature of the systems upon which trade, food, energy, transportation, and social safety nets depend. This, in turn, has challenged countries' capacities to ensure public safety and security. COVID-19 is a vivid example of systemic compound risk. It shows us that the very nature and scale of risk has changed to such a degree that it has the potential to overwhelm established risk management approaches and the reach of institutions.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, the Americas and the Caribbean already totalled 53% of reported global economic losses due to climatic-related disasters.⁴ Heatwaves are getting stronger, longer, and more frequent due to human caused climate change. By June 2021, for instance, a major drought covered 38.5% of the U.S. and Puerto Rico.⁵ On the other hand, 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. The heaviest cost of storms relative to the size of their economies fell on small island States of the Caribbean. This cycle is not sustainable in social or economic terms, hence the importance of reducing disaster risk to achieve resilience and sustainable development.

A multi-stakeholder dialogue and action to understand and manage systemic risk in the region is warranted. Progress towards risk-informed sustainable development will only be accelerated by incorporating systems-based approaches into the design of policies and investments across all sectors and regions, and at all levels.

Jamaica's hosting of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean under the theme *"Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean"* is aimed at raising awareness of the challenges facing Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean region and the wider Americas. This will be the first time a regional platform will be held in the Caribbean, one of the world's most vulnerable regions to extreme weather events and seismic activity. The United Nations lists Jamaica among the countries most exposed to natural hazards such as earthquakes, hurricanes, landslides, and flooding. The experience of Jamaica and the wider Caribbean addressing multiple-hazards, reducing disaster risk, and building resilience will offer an enabling environment for the VII Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and provide an excellent setting to reflect upon the advances and challenges in disaster risk reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean.

to the financing for development global policy agenda, Special Report COVID-19 No. 10.

4 UNDRR (2018), Economic losses, poverty, and disasters: 1998-2015.

5 According to the National Drought Mitigation Centre at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Background

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) was adopted during the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, in March 2015. This global framework, along with other global agreements adopted in 2015⁶, constitutes the 2030 Agenda, which establishes the notion of comprehensive disaster risk management and advocates for its integration into national development plans. Global frameworks cannot be successfully implemented in separate boxes; they require coherence in planning and implementation. As a practical framework for dealing with risk, the **Sendai Framework is the connecting tissue** for the post-2015 international agenda. Unacknowledged, unaddressed, and unknown risks sit at the heart of the global threat to sustainable development.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction seeks to achieve “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”. Attaining this result requires not only the commitment of political leaders at all levels, but also for all actors to actively participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework and related actions.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), which serves as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster risk reduction, supports the implementation, follow-up, and review of the Sendai Framework. One of its core activities is the organization of Regional and Global Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). The Sendai Framework ratified Global and Regional Platforms for DRR as multi-sectoral and broad participatory mechanisms to discuss advances achieved at regional level in the implementation of the Sendai Framework every two years. The Global and Regional Platforms are spaces where multiple stakeholders such as national, subnational, and local governments, intergovernmental organizations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, scientific and academic institutions, private sector representatives, donors and the media come together to share experiences and knowledge and agree on the main regional priorities for concerted action to reduce disaster risk in the Americas and the Caribbean.



⁶ The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third Conference on Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Regional Platforms in the Americas and the Regional Action Plan

Previous sessions of the Regional Platform were hosted in [Panama](#) (2009), [Mexico](#) (2011), [Chile](#) (2012), [Ecuador](#) (2014), [Canada](#) (2017) and [Colombia](#) (2018). The usual duration of a Regional Platform is three days and, as a reference, the last session counted with more than 1,400 participants. It is expected that the virtual modality of the VII Regional Platform will attract a much larger number of participants. Regional Platforms usually take place every two years, alternating with Global Platforms.

In addition, Regional Platforms include a Ministerial and High Authorities Meeting that aims to convey the political commitment of countries to DRR and counts as a highlight of the event. The first Ministerial Meeting took place in Paraguay in 2016 as a stand-alone event and was thereafter integrated into the agenda of each Regional Platform.

The V Regional Platform held in Canada in 2017 resulted in the adoption of the [Regional Action Plan](#) (RAP) for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas. The RAP incorporates DRR priorities for the Americas and supports countries in their efforts to build resilience and reduce disaster risk and impacts.



The Ministerial Meeting that took place in the frame of the VI Regional Platform in Colombia in 2018 identified advances and further commitments in reference to the RAP. In addition, the VI Regional Platform included a Special Session on the Caribbean, to showcase the specific challenges and opportunities for a risk-informed sustainable development in this sub-region. The session produced a document that articulates key actions for the Caribbean in the areas of recovery, risk reduction and resilience. It fed into the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) Council Meeting of Ministers convened in June 2018 following the Regional Platform.



Regional Platforms should not be seen as isolated events but as benchmarks in the process of implementing the RAP and the Sendai Framework in the region. They should therefore be connected to other important regional events such as the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, the Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster

Management (CDM), the sub-regional fora on Understanding Risk, and the regional meetings of the International Mechanism for Humanitarian Assistance (MIAH), among other important regional convenings addressing disaster risk. Likewise, Regional Platforms and Global Platforms are connected and feed into each other to contribute to advancing efforts to implement the Sendai



Framework.

VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean

It was due time for the Caribbean to host a Regional Platform given the significant contribution of its regional organizations and frameworks, such as CDEMA and the Caribbean Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy (CDM), to achieving the commitments of the Hyogo and the Sendai frameworks. In the Caribbean, Jamaica has made considerable progress in reducing disaster risk and building resilience domestically and has played an active role in advancing DRR beyond its borders. For instance, Jamaica has contributed significantly to Global and Regional Platforms, chaired the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEIWG) on Indicators and Terminology relating to Disaster Risk Reduction, hosted numerous regional DRR-related events, and has shown great willingness to strengthen the topic at all levels. By hosting the VII Regional Platform, Jamaica will be the first country in the Caribbean to lead the organization of a Regional Platform in the Americas and the Caribbean.

The VII Regional Platform was originally scheduled to take place in Montego Bay in June 2020 but was rescheduled due to COVID-19 considerations and will now take place *virtually*, from 1 to 4 November 2021. The leadership of Jamaica and the experience of CDEMA will contribute to

placing Jamaica and the Caribbean at the centre of the discussion and setting the regional agenda for advancing disaster risk reduction efforts towards resilience, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development, as called for in international agreements. The event will also provide an opportunity to review, jointly with participating countries in the region, the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, to assess the progress made in building resilient economies, and to promote further actions and commitments towards enhanced disaster risk governance.

To this end, Jamaica will lead a *regional consultation* on the progress made in implementing the Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas and the Caribbean ahead of the event. This consultation will serve to assess and propose any necessary adjustments to the RAP considering the lessons learned and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to inform the discussions and deliberations of the delegates attending the Regional Platform. The VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean will be a privileged space to underline the need to reduce disaster risk for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in these critical times and the paramount importance of a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach to building resilience.



One of the conclusions of the discussions at the last Global Platform in May 2019 was that the pace of implementation was not fast enough to meet the 2020 deadline for target E and risked delaying further progress on other targets while jeopardizing the achievement of the SDGs. A stock-taking process around the implementation of the RAP and reflections on the challenges and opportunities in the region should consider the urgency of setting a higher ambition for achieving the targets of the Sendai Framework.

Objectives and expected results

The VII Regional Platform pursues three general objectives:

- 1 Present and analyse the progress achieved at the regional level regarding the comprehensive and inclusive implementation of the Sendai Framework and its targets, identifying key areas of success and areas where concerted attention is needed.
- 2 Considering the risks and impacts of COVID-19 and other disasters, review the Regional Action Plan to assess needed adjustments, define regional priorities for the following two years and identify mechanisms to promote the integration of disaster risk management within and across sectors.



- 3 Considering the systemic nature of risk, the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, climate change and other compounding risks in the region, take stock of the recovery efforts and recommend strategies to achieve resilient economies and build a risk-informed inclusive sustainable development.

As such, the role of multiple actors shall be recognized, highlighted and strengthened, including the role and leadership of community networks, the private sector, development banks, finance and planning institutions, civil society, the youth, volunteer groups, women, older people, people with disabilities, indigenous populations, migrants and groups living in conditions of high vulnerability as agents of change in disaster risk reduction and in strengthening resilience throughout the Americas and the Caribbean.

The VII Regional Platform constitutes an opportunity for Member States to share experiences, build capacities, transfer knowledge, and show successes related to disaster risk reduction at the national and local levels. Similarly, the event is expected to increase the degree of participation and commitment of parties and stakeholders interested in the implementation of the Sendai Framework as well as in promoting comprehensive disaster risk management as a key component of sustainable development.



The VII Regional Platform will include high-level, technical, and parallel sessions, as well as special activities in which participants will have the opportunity to interact and discuss the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework, as well as identify best practices and lessons learned in these areas. In addition, the Platform will include Learning Labs, an Innovations Platform (Marketplace) and an Ideas Incubator where various professionals and experts will present innovative tools and initiatives in disaster risk reduction. Finally, the Platform will convene intergovernmental segments, where ministerial and high-level authorities from different sectors (education, agriculture, finance, tourism, etc.) will discuss the regional advances in DRR and set regional priorities for the following two years.

The different spaces that make up the VII Regional Platform will provide an opportunity for regional and sub-regional intergovernmental groups to interact and strengthen working partnerships, as well as to share experiences with a view to achieving the seven global targets outlined in the Sendai Framework. Likewise, the private sector and finance sectoral entities are expected to play a key role in the conversation to build resilient economies. Finally, the Platform will contribute to strengthening the links between United Nations agencies and other regional organizations to ensure consistency between the implementation of the Sendai Framework and other relevant global agreements.

The main **expected outcomes** of the VII Regional Platform are:

- The Chair's Summary
- The Declaration of the Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting (Ministerial Declaration)
- The updated Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean
- The proceedings of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean

It is expected that the deliberations and outcomes of the VII Regional Platform inform other regional and global mechanisms that review the progress made in achieving the 2030 Agenda, in particular the [Conference of the Parties](#) (COP 26), the [High-Level Political Forum](#) (HLPF), the [Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development](#), and the upcoming [Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) (23 to 28 May 2022), among other important fora.

In addition to the official outcomes mentioned above, the Regional Platform will provide an exceptional space for participants to:

- Interact virtually with DRR leaders and decision makers from the public and private sectors, including members of the science and technology community, the private sector, academia, civil society, community leaders, and government representatives from across the region.
- Be exposed to the latest thinking in DRR and learn from experiences from across the region.
- Forge new alliances and explore new partnership opportunities with the hundreds of organizations and agencies attending the event.
- Present their own experiences and learnings in the Ideas Incubator.

Presentation and Contents of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean



The VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean featured 36 sessions, broken down as follows:

- Opening Ceremony
- Technical Session on the Regional Action Plan
- Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting
- Four High-Level Sessions
- Eight Parallel Sessions
- Two Special Sessions
- Five Learning Labs
- Closing Ceremony
- Twenty-three Official Statements
- Eight Side Events
- Twenty-nine Ideas Incubator projects
- Twenty-two Innovations Platform booths
- Seven Media Engagement Activities

Three preparatory events also took place in the weeks leading up to the RP21:

- Regional Scientific and Technological Advisory Group [Online Dialogue Series](#): Challenges for Disaster Risk and Territorial Governance in the Post-COVID-19 Era
- [Youth Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) on 26 October 2021
- [Arise Forum for the Americas and the Caribbean](#) on 28 October 2021



Opening Ceremony

The seventh edition of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean took place at a pivotal time, as populations across the world looked towards social and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, as countries convened at the COP26 to define commitments with regards to the climate crisis, and as States assessed the progress made in implementing the Sendai Framework in the region.

In his opening remarks, the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, stressed the need to seize the RP21 as an opportunity to monitor and review the progress made in implementing the Sendai Framework in the region. In particular, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) must commit to the task of developing proper DRR strategies, as they are more vulnerable to disasters than others, and focus on addressing competing priorities when contradictions arise. Jamaica stands out in the region as a country that has established a solid legal framework for DRR, notably through the Disaster Risk Management Act and the Building Act, enabling the establishment of a disaster fund and major infrastructural programmes at country level. Aside from risk reduction, Jamaica also makes financial protection and resilient reconstruction its priorities – priorities that have not been lowered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Youth Ambassador highlighted the importance of the Youth Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction that brought together youth voices from the region in a preliminary event to the Platform. Young people were given the opportunity to present their views, concerns and, most importantly, ideas on how to strengthen DRR in the region. Their input led to the drafting of the Statement of Youth

of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction. The Youth Ambassador requested all stakeholders, and national authorities in particular, to acknowledge the Statement of Youth and ensure that the voices of youth are heard. Moreover, given their already solid contribution to disaster impact management, youth should be included in dialogues and decision-making processes concerning disaster risk management. If building resilience is indeed the aim, it is fundamental that these processes be proactive and not reactive. Listening to the voice of youth will help secure a better way of life in the new post-COVID normalcy.

In her opening address, Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), highlighted the challenges faced by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In these times of great uncertainty, structural problems such as poverty and inequality need to be addressed urgently, as they are bound to intensify with emerging critical issues such as migration, digitalization, and climate change. Although no one in the region is safe from risk, it is the most vulnerable populations that suffer most from disasters, as the COVID-19 pandemic has shown. Given the region's high exposure to natural hazards, with hurricanes, droughts and earthquakes hitting Central America and the Caribbean disproportionately, it is crucial that socio-economic policies be set up to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations. Within the very heterogeneous group of vulnerable populations, women and girls are the ones most at risk. Not only do they face the most severe socio-economic consequences of disasters, but they also suffer a higher rate of mortality and gender-based violence, as reported during the pandemic. Despite international guidelines existing to protect them, these are not always enforced during response and recovery processes. Indeed, recovery efforts should not focus on reconstruction alone but integrate a human dimension to ensure no one is left behind. Furthermore, because disaster recovery packages are generally designed to support the formal sector, the poorest, who fall within informal structures, do not always benefit from them. Similarly, indigenous populations are also disproportionately affected by disasters. Disasters are local as much as social phenomena and have very asymmetric socio-economic impacts. Therefore, it is crucial that DRR mechanisms, programmes, legislation, and policies prioritize vulnerable groups.

Ms. Mami Mizutori, SRSG for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, highlighted that the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic would certainly be very present throughout the RP21, and in particular in the prospect of the Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework. To stress the importance of the discussions programmed in the following days, Ms. Mizutori referred to the release of the Sixth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the content of which was described by the Secretary-General as "a code red for humanity". Pressing issues in this regard are human displacements and the need for the region to strengthen multi-hazard Early Warning Systems, disaster risk governance, and urban resilience. The RP21 will present the Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, which acknowledges the region's role as a major contributor to disaster risk



knowledge and understanding, particularly through disaster-related data collection and analysis. Ms. Mizutori commended Jamaica for having played a significant role in previous Regional and Global Platforms, as well as for having chaired the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Indicators and Terminology relating to Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Most Hon. Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica, highlighted the leading role of Jamaica in building resilience at local level, through enrolling all local governments in the MCR2020 initiative, as well as in promoting DRR in the Caribbean. He called other Caribbean nations to strengthen their stress test mechanisms and DRR policies and programmes to enable effective prevention and sustainable recovery. He further invited all countries in the region and participants to reflect upon the measures required to address the impacts of disasters and build resilient economies in the Americas and the Caribbean.



Technical Session on the Regional Action Plan

The Technical Session on the Regional Action Plan (RAP) took place on 2 November 2021. The Regional Action Plan is a non-binding agreement between the countries of the region to work towards measuring progress in implementing the Sendai Framework. The meeting was chaired by the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, and co-chaired by Raul Salazar, Chief of UNDRR Office of the Americas and the Caribbean. In his opening remarks, the Minister presented the decline of economic activity in the region, amplified by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, as a topic of concern. Mr. Salazar congratulated participants on a fruitful consultative process that provided sound input from inter-governmental organizations and countries of the region.

The objective of the meeting was to review and agree on recommended changes and updates to the Regional Action Plan. The discussion focused on the following broad areas: strengthen social protection mechanisms and safeguards for vulnerable populations, livelihoods, and low cost and low vulnerable housing; focus on business, government, and basic service continuity in the event of disasters; enhance public-private partnerships; invest in DRR for sustainable development; and take action to strengthen local government capacities to address systemic and cascading risks.

The major outcomes of the meeting included:

- Agreement on the adjustments made to the Regional Action Plan to reflect progress and priorities of each country; and
- The re-circulation of the agreed changes for adoption at the Ministerial Meeting and presentation as an official conference output.

The adjusted Regional Action Plan is the result of a rich dialogue among the region's senior officials, who agreed on the numerous challenges facing the region. It reflects a general disposition of readiness, which augurs well for achieving the goals of the Sendai Framework.

The adjusted Regional Action Plan can be found in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), and [Portuguese](#) online.

Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting

The fourth Ministerial and High-Level Authorities Meeting on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean was held on 3 November 2021, in Kingston, Jamaica, and counted with the online participation of Member States from the region. The meeting was chaired by the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica.

In his opening remarks, the Minister pointed out that the staging of a Youth Forum prior to the Regional Platform should be repeated in future



sessions. Highlighting the recent impacts of multiple hazards in the region, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the volcanic eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and numerous flood events, he reiterated the need for increased financial resources to advance disaster mitigation and response.

Ms. Mami Mizutori, SRSG for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, urged countries in the region to pursue their efforts in building resilient economies, particularly considering the intensity of climate change exacerbated disasters and increasingly severe disaster impacts.

The Ministerial Meeting achieved the following results:

- Discussion of the Ministerial Declaration
- Presentation of the Statement of Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction, which was accepted
- Presentation of the Civil Society Organizations Statement, which was accepted
- Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean
- Resolution of the Chair

Outcomes of the closed meeting included the consideration of an integrated approach to achieving the four priorities of the Sendai Framework. Ministers spoke to the importance of understanding disaster risk using an all-hazards approach, while stressing the need for a whole-of-society approach to meet the commitments set out in the Sendai Framework. Participants highlighted the need to strengthen international cooperation for development and solidarity to help societies recover from the pandemic, for example by facilitating access to vaccines against COVID-19 for the countries in the region that require them. The meeting also addressed issues posed by climate change and variability as underlying factors of risk and highlighted the urgency to embark on a pathway to resilience by redoubling efforts in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Finally, the meeting emphasized the importance of linking DRR, partnerships, and financing to build resilience.

The Ministerial Declaration can be found in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), and [Portuguese](#) online.



High-Level Sessions

High-Level Session 1: Americas & Caribbean: The resilience-building challenge for the next decades

Hosts

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)

Speakers

- H.E. Epsy Campbell Barr, Vice-President and Secretary of State of Costa Rica
- Rolando Ocampo, Director, Statistics Division, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- Maria Noel Vaeza, Regional Director of UN Women- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) (moderator)
- Dr. David Applegate, Associate Director for Natural Hazards Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Director, U.S. Geological Survey
- Myriam Urzúa, Secretary of Integral Risk Management and Civil Protection of Mexico City, Mexico
- Dário Jorge Giolo Saadi, Mayor of Campinas, Brazil

Session summary

The COVID-19 pandemic, a global disaster of epic proportions, has transformed our world affecting millions of people. It has devastated global economic and financial markets and thrown millions into poverty. The social impact has also been high, particularly for women, children, elderly people, and people with disabilities. It has changed the way we live, interact, behave, work, and even die. Since its onset, the COVID-19 pandemic has derailed development trajectories across the region. Similarly, social and economic inequalities have been exacerbated. Yet, the pandemic can also serve as a catalyst for human-rights based change as it has shown us the vital importance of collaboration and alliances across critical sectors throughout the region.

The first High-Level Session offered a timely opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on and take stock of the most salient challenges in the region hindering the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The session identified priorities to tackle the main challenges to building resilience in the region over the next decade, considering the differentiated impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current climate crises. Building resilience is a team sport that requires global collaboration, multi-level participation, scientific exchange, and coordinated actions.

Speakers first highlighted the need to increase both human and financial resources for DRR while guaranteeing the autonomy of decision-making processes. Human resources must consider social and gender inclusion to target the most vulnerable populations. They should be aimed at enhancing local capacities and secure greater participation of communities and civil society. Financial resources must be used to design or strengthen policies geared towards solidarity, especially given the fact that most LAC countries are middle-income countries. Emphasis should be placed on enhancing social protection systems, which requires the adoption of a financial risk strategy, as well as on taking into account the interplays between public services and fiscal policies. The whole-of-society approach promoted by the Sendai Framework makes a strong case for solidarity and insists on strengthening the involvement of and collaboration between all stakeholders, government levels, populations, and services. Furthermore, the interdependence of systems in the region should act as a catalyst to share resources in a more efficient way. A regional action plan is needed to move away from relying solely on international cooperation. Pooling resources will help generate new perspectives, trigger innovation, and create new opportunities for the region, while impeding the repetition of mistakes. Raised in the context of climate change, the idea of resourcing resilience aims at capturing social dimensions in the policy conversation, including gender transformation.

Second, speakers insisted on the key role of vulnerable populations as agents of change to build resilient development pathways. This approach requires including the most vulnerable populations in budgetary considerations, particularly women. Women must be placed at the forefront of concerns, especially in recovery processes. Tools and mechanisms are needed to implement a

gender approach, and more generally, a human approach to building resilience. The establishment of gender units or divisions has proven crucial to set gender standards for operations. Similarly, gender markers can be used to assess the use of resources and redirect them if necessary. Moreover, manuals and guidelines can be distributed in shelters and spaces where gender-based violence is susceptible to take place. In all endeavours, it is essential to consider the diversity of women, as per descent, age, and sexuality.

Third, panellists insisted on increasing data sharing and exchange of evidence-based scientific research to help bolster scientific advances, assist the decision-making process, and benefit those who need it the most. The focus should lie on building partnerships between and amongst countries and regions by creating effective exchange platforms (such as the US-Caribbean Resilience partnership or the International Charter for Space and Disasters that makes earth observation resources available to disaster response units) and engaging under-represented youth in protecting communities and livelihoods, following the idea that if some of us are not safe, none of us are. Aligning public communications with scientific evidence is crucial to ensuring that information on hazards is conveyed to the local level in a clear, accessible, and timely manner. In this regard, social sciences are key to understand how communities can take advantage of hazard-related information to make informed decisions. Speakers also stressed the fact that measuring development in terms of GDP per capita is insufficient. Criteria to measure development should be aligned with transitional development, which requires stronger links with the OECD framework agreements to reduce carbon emissions, boost productivity, enhance public services, stabilize savings, and lower death rates.

Strengthening climate and disaster resilience requires meaningful, transformative, and inclusive cooperation with consideration for a multitude of social and economic factors to account for the dynamic and complex nature of systemic risk with appropriate resourcing.



High-Level Session 2: Building resilient economies: Building back, better and greener, leaving no one behind

Hosts

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

Speakers

- Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Luis Felipe López-Calva, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Seynabou Sakho, Director of Strategy and Operations for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Bank
- Luz Keila Virginia Gramajo Vilchez, Secretary of Planning and Programming, Presidency of Guatemala
- Laura Cárdenas Lorenzo, Consultant in communications and visibility for Governance Unit at EUROsociAL+ (moderator)

Session summary

The SDGs are integrated, indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. However, this century is likely to be dominated by the emergence of large-scale dynamic risks that inherently cut across these dimensions. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the extent to which a single hazard has the potential to trigger a multitude of cascading effects, impacting the life support systems of societies and economies worldwide and at all scales.

Given this context, the second High-level Session featured a moderated round-table discussion that focussed on four pillars for building resilient economies, with an emphasis on a greener recovery. The pillars are elaborated below:

- 1) Ensuring coherence between disaster risk reduction and the climate change agenda is an opportunity for a greener and more resilient recovery
- A considerable level of coherence between climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk

reduction (DRR) in policy and practice is crucial to ensuring the efficient use of capacities and financial resources. Coherence is also needed to advance technical knowledge and expertise in assessing, understanding, reducing, and managing both climate and non-climate risk, thereby increasing effectiveness and sustainability of both CCA and DRR measures while enhancing disaster preparedness and response planning.

2) Promoting disaster risk reduction with a green bias, highlighting the importance of prevention
Investments in disaster risk reduction must remain a key aspect of resilience-building policies. Investments in green-biased DRR can focus on promoting low carbon emissions or nature-based solutions, for example, in the case of marine coasts, by channelling funds to coral reef and mangrove restoration projects, or in the case of rivers, to integrated basin management.

3) Financing disaster risk management with a green tax incentive to achieve a green recovery
Many disasters can be prevented or mitigated if long-term funded strategies are in place to manage and reduce existing levels of risk and prevent the creation of new risks. It is important to develop financial policies capable of addressing risk and facing disasters without unbalancing fiscal accounts. These policies should address residual and current risks and include elements for financing response when disasters occur, establishing disaster recovery funds, and promoting resilient public investments.

4) Integrating disaster risk management into development planning
Development planning recognizes the complexity of the interrelationships between the different dimensions involved: processes, instruments, institutions, and actors. A systems approach to development planning implies an effort to avoid fragmented responses while recognizing existing organizational and operational challenges. Development planning is the preferred mechanism for establishing coherence between these different dimensions in pursuit of a common goal and through articulated practices. Integrating DRR into development planning and mainstreaming DRR within and across sectors ensures that decisions and activities are risk-centred and risk-informed.

During the session, speakers stressed the need for increased investment to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework in tandem with the 2030 Agenda. One of the barriers to scaling up investments in disaster risk reduction is the perception by governments that spending on DRR is a “cost” rather than an “investment”. Drawing on the current pandemic, it was highlighted that what is now estimated to be a \$21 trillion problem could have been significantly mitigated with billions of dollars of investment. Panellists discussed the need to adopt a “prevention-first” policy approach in all sectors and agendas.

Panellists also shared clear views on the mindset shift required to ensure that a “Think Resilience” approach is adopted, moving away from a short-term outlook that under-prioritizes disaster risk.

Considerations on how such systemic approach could be advanced and mainstreamed throughout public and private sectors were provided.

The discussion then moved on to offer concrete examples from various countries that demonstrate greener and more inclusive reconstruction. The example of Guatemala was used to illustrate successes and challenges in integrating DRR into development planning, which is considered a well-accepted means of strengthening the resilience of national sectors and their respective systems.

Finally, opportunities for future investments into preventive disaster risk reduction were discussed, considering the progress made by multilateral banking institutions in the area of risk transfer in the Americas and the Caribbean. Panellists indicated that comprehensive, risk-informed public and private investments are also required, particularly considering the projection that investments worth several trillion dollars will be made by the public and private sectors, with the private sector accounting for approximately 80% of these investments.



High-Level Session 3: Social protection and inclusion to strengthen community resilience

Hosts

International Federation of Red Cross and of Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Global Network for Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Speakers

- Lola Castro, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Food Programme (WFP)
- Marcie Roth, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, World Institute on Disability, United States
- Roger Alonso, Head, Disasters, Crises and Climate Unit, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
- Liza Mariana Hernández-Betancourth, Regional Lead for Americas and the Caribbean, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

Session summary

For the purposes of the third High-Level Session, social protection was defined as a means to preventing, managing, and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's well-being. Social protection encompasses a set of policies and programmes designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability – including inequality and exclusion – in social, political, and economic processes. It involves actions aimed at protecting and guaranteeing the income of individuals, particularly those living in conditions of extreme poverty, but also at providing certain basic services such as health, education, housing, and nutrition, particularly for those lacking access to such services. Social protection policies and programmes constitute one of the channels through which governments redistribute resources and share the benefits of economic growth. In recent decades, social protection policies have moved away from providing assistance to embracing a more inclusive perspective based on the protection of rights. The aim was to reduce and ultimately eliminate forms of discrimination that denied or hindered the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality, particularly for certain groups such as children and youth, indigenous populations, women, elderly people, people with disabilities, and migrants, among others. Newly emerging paradigms are lending support to multi-sectoral programmes aimed at eradicating multidimensional poverty and making sustainable development a right for all individuals.

The importance of social protection to strengthen community resilience, particularly in the context of complex and interconnected risks, has been made abundantly evident by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Americas and the Caribbean, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have deteriorated overall socio-economic well-being while disproportionately affecting women, girls, and other historically marginalized groups, exacerbating already existing inequalities. If inclusion is key to strengthening community resilience, social protection mechanisms ought to be more inclusive and focus on those most vulnerable, not just as victims, but as main actors in building resilience. More generally, making social protection policies and programmes more inclusive is of vital importance to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the targets established by the Sendai Framework, and the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The first point of discussion concerned regional mechanisms and practices to create synergies between social protection and disaster risk management systems with a food security lens. Challenges for social protection platforms to reduce disaster-exacerbated hunger and food insecurity in LAC include issues of coverage and adequacy to needs. In contrast, several good practices contribute to building resilience and minimizing disaster shocks. School feeding programmes, community resilience programmes, and multisectoral and multilevel approaches to risk financing are some of them.

The second point of discussion assessed key factors to better integrate social protection measures into disaster risk reduction and community resilience policies and programmes. Emphasis was placed on devising an organic approach to DRR and community resilience that can be achieved by strengthening local leadership to better respond to affected populations' needs, consolidating collaboration with key local actors, including representatives of faith-based and vulnerable communities' organizations, ensuring stability and continuity of protection mechanisms during crises through enhanced communication and transparent admission criteria, and reinforcing a gender perspective based on differentiated needs.

The third item of deliberations evaluated policies and practices that have systematically enhanced inclusion and participation, as well as promoted active engagement and meaningful representation of traditionally marginalized groups, in particular people with disabilities. Contributions from historically marginalized groups in decision-making are vehicles for significant improvements in system-wide disaster risk management and governance, particularly in the context of complex and interconnected disaster risks. More specifically, the focus on people with disabilities accelerates a much-needed paradigm shift following two mottos: "Nothing about them without them" and "The people closest to pain should be the people closest to power". Meaningful participation of people with disabilities in turn requires information to be accessible and actionable, together with evacuations and relocations being considered as potential life-improving opportunities.

Panellists also discussed the extent to which the capacities, strengths, and weaknesses of social protection systems in the region have been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Social protection mechanisms adopted at national level, such as cash and in-kind transfers, pension fund withdrawals, and child and disability benefits, contributed to cushioning the social impacts caused by the pandemic. However, the challenges remain significant, and it is essential to expand the scope of social protection systems to respond to the magnitude and duration of the crisis. Upstream, it is of vital importance that coherence be reinforced during the design and implementation phases of comprehensive programmes targeting the most marginalized groups. The harmonization of public policies on social protection and disaster risk reduction presents a unique opportunity for jointly addressing social justice and sustainable development, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework targets, and the Paris Agreement goals.



Four recommendations on inclusive social protection mechanisms to enhance community resilience were put to vote through a SLIDO poll. Participants deemed that improving articulation between government and non-governmental actors should receive precedence over mobilizing historically marginalized population groups in decision-making, supporting voluntary networks and alliances and strengthening coherence of public policies. Panellists shared their own recommendations, emphasizing the importance of using local level information in all mechanisms considering a systemic approach; involving all relevant stakeholders when using social protection systems to respond to emergencies, including faith-based organizations and representatives of vulnerable communities; ensuring stable and continuous access to social protection mechanisms in times of crisis, including clear communications to beneficiaries; enhancing gender mainstreaming and feminization of poverty for sustainable community resilience; positioning accessibility and universal design, especially in formulating disability-inclusive strategies (the assumption that affirmative action is not needed is a barrier to building back better); strengthening inter-sectoral synergies between social protection and disaster risk management policies and increase investments – including system level investments and fair financing – for building social protection systems that are inclusive of historically marginalized groups, comprehensive, and multi-sectoral to facilitate scaling-up.





High-Level Session 4: Strengthening disaster risk governance: Lessons from COVID-19

Hosts

Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Network for Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)

Speakers

- Dr. Paula Daza, Undersecretary of Public Health, Government of Chile
- Dr. Allan Lavell, Coordinator, Social Studies, Risks and Disasters Programme, Latin American Faculty of Social Science Faculty (FLACSO), Costa Rica
- Dr. Ciro Ugarte, Director, Department of Health Emergencies, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/ World Health Organization (WHO)
- Claudia Herrera, Executive Secretary, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)
- Colonel Sergio Rico, Director, National Emergency System (SINAE), Office of the Presidency, Uruguay
- Simone Keizer-Beache, Chief Medical Officer Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Dr. Wayne Henry, Chairman & Director General, Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)
- Bijay Kumar, Executive Director, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

Session summary

The second priority for action of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) states the need to “strengthen disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk”. Cross-sectoral coordination, legal frameworks, policies, and plans, up-to-date risk information to drive decision-making, clear participation mechanisms and integration from the global to the regional and the local level are elements of governance that the current pandemic has highlighted as key to manage complex situations in the context of systemic risk. Addressing current challenges and preparing for future ones requires focusing efforts on actions aimed at strengthening governance, highlighting the importance of cross-sectoral and international coordination on disaster risk in a multi-sectoral context, and promoting the full and meaningful participation of all relevant actors at the appropriate levels.

There is an urgent need for prospective management of systemic risk to bolster a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to disaster risk management. Disaster risk management can only become sufficiently comprehensive and integrated to address multi-hazard environments if more emphasis is placed on fostering cross-sectoral and international collaboration in development planning and humanitarian assistance. Further development of prospective systemic risk management will help guide governments and other sectors in assessing their post-pandemic recovery and improve future preparedness and response mechanisms to local and global emergencies and disasters.

Panellists emphasized the need to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into national legal frameworks, policies, and plans to better manage emergencies and disasters, including pandemics. They urged countries to achieve or tighten this integration by focusing on closer collaboration between all governance levels, giving priority to the local level and vulnerable groups, and enhancing cross-border coordination to relieve affected populations. The development and updating of legislation, policies, and plans for disaster risk reduction and management should indeed be more inclusive and focus on the participation of affected communities and vulnerable populations. Panellists further insisted that multi-hazard approaches to disaster risk management should focus on climate change adaptation to limit impacts on societies, that the use of technology in development planning, risk assessment, and education be enhanced at all levels, and that Early Warning Systems be integral to community preparedness and response mechanisms and be included in relevant plans and capacity building programmes through training.

The COVID-19 pandemic started as a health emergency, but rapidly evolved into a global pandemic, with significant impacts at all levels and on all sectors, including health, finance, and security. Fortunately, the leverage of existing disaster risk management mechanisms at national and sub-national levels allowed for a satisfactory governance of the COVID-19 crisis. Prioritization by

governments of legislation, policies, and plans for disaster risk management at national and sub-national levels resulted in improved and rapid response. Similarly, the resort to post-disaster needs assessments provided valuable information to prepare for future emergencies and disasters. Risk communications and community engagement were effectively utilized to implement programmes and interventions at all levels, with social media playing a critical role in this process. In fact, the inclusion of civil society organizations, academia, and other stakeholders in COVID-19 response mechanisms had a positive impact on supporting vulnerable groups. Furthermore, governments resorted to social protection mechanisms to assist in stabilizing economies. Ensuring continued access to basic life services and business continuity for small enterprises proved vital to society. The provision of mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable groups, including front-line workers and people residing in shelters, in isolation or quarantine, was essential to secure the well-being of the populations affected by the virus. More broadly, important progress has been made in the LAC region regarding DRR and health, notably with the introduction of the concept of Safe and Smart Hospitals (Safe and Green = Smart), the Health Sector Multi-Hazard Response Framework and the Disability Inclusion in Hospital Disaster Risk Management (INGRID-H). Despite satisfying results, however, supply chains of vital commodities are to be strengthened to ensure equality in the provision of life saving therapeutics, among others.

Parallel Sessions

Parallel Session 1: Environmental protection and climate change adaptation to build local and national resilient economies: Dividends of Nature-based Solutions

Hosts

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), United Nations Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Climate Change and Resilience of Latin America and the Caribbean

Speakers

- Odalys de la Caridad Goicochea Cardoso, General Director for the Environment (CITMA), Government of Cuba
- Leticia Gutierrez, General Director on Policy Coordination and Environmental Culture, Ministry of Environment, Mexico City, Mexico
- Kevin P. Douglas, Manager, Emergency Services Section, Jamaica Red Cross
- Dr. Laura Kuhl, Assistant Professor, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs and International Affairs, Global Resilience Institute, Northeastern University
- Lyes Ferroukhi, Regional Technical Lead, NCE Team, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Latin America and the Caribbean
- Montserrat Xilotl, Regional Technical Specialist in Climate Adaptation, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (moderator)

Session summary

Parallel Session 1 aimed to highlight the link between environment protection and disaster risk reduction enabled by nature-based solutions (NBS). Nature-based solutions broadly refer to conservation, rehabilitation, and sustainable management strategies that include nature to achieve development goals. Nature-based solutions have the potential to cost-effectively achieve ecological, social, and economic goals and thereby promote long-term resilience across multiple sectors. The growing interest in NBS is due to their ability to simultaneously achieve multiple policy objectives

related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and economic and social development. They are often much more cost effective than traditional alternatives, such as grey infrastructure, including sea walls. The LAC region is well positioned to lead on NBS due to its rich natural capital base, including 40% of remaining tropical forests, and more marine ecoregions than in any other region in the world. This wealth provides important benefits and services for communities and livelihoods.

An increase in calls for NBS has been observed in line with the commitments expressed in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the SDGs. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have further strengthened the relevance of green recovery. A strong economic case for NBS can be made by highlighting the impacts of investing in NBS on employment, livelihoods, and income, as well as on non-monetary benefits for communities.

Among its numerous benefits, NBS can improve the resilience of entire market systems. The productivity and diversity of the agricultural sector, for example, can be enhanced by connecting producers to specialty markets or offering payments conditional upon restoring ecosystem services. In these contexts, NBS have the potential to benefit communities as a whole. The benefits for vulnerable households indeed range beyond improved livelihoods and income and include non-monetary returns, such as enhanced food sovereignty. The geographical scope also extends beyond the communities where activities are executed as the implementation of NBS favours the creation of networks.

However, these synergies must be designed carefully to guarantee results. Enabling conditions based on good practice include integrating ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA) and nature-based solutions into wider climate and sustainable development policies and strategies, adapting legal frameworks at national and local levels to facilitate the planning and implementation of NBS and EBA in accordance with the timelines imposed by climate change, and making the case for the economic rationale of NBS to ensure buy-in from communities and stakeholders. Furthermore, local ownership has proven essential to guarantee the sustainability of all projects. Therefore, it is strongly advised to involve local populations at all stages of the process, to enable access of local populations and vulnerable groups in particular to restored areas and ecosystems, as well as to enhance capacities – with a focus on women to address gender gaps and decrease environmental vulnerability.

Cuba's national development plan integrates objectives relevant to strengthening resilience in vulnerable areas. With the support of multiple partners, including UNDP, ecosystem-based adaptation has been integrated into different environmental and development policies, namely the Estrategia Ambiental Nacional, the Programa Nacional de Diversidad Biológica, and Tarea Vida. Tarea Vida, as the normative basis of the national environmental policy, focuses on the most vulnerable regions of

the country, where the impacts of climate change are more severe. Initiatives such as coastal and forest restoration have benefited from strong EBA approaches, which have been accompanied by sound housing and tourism considerations. For example, the restoration of over 400 beach sites has had impacts on the environment, on the protection of local people and on the tourism sector. As for the mangrove restoration project south of Artemisa and Mayabeque through the Manglar Vivo project, it has benefited greatly from the involvement of local populations. The involvement of local communities and their knowledge has been crucial in Cuba's approach to EBA, as local ownership has ensured the sustainability of the various projects implemented.

EBA and NBS should aim at protecting the environment as much as local communities. Relying on a wide range of local assessments that involve the community in capturing information contributes to implementing projects that equally target ecosystems and populations. If ecosystems can easily be overlooked or not considered in vulnerability assessments, the cases of Cuba, Mexico and Jamaica show how assessing the state of ecosystems can help identifying vulnerabilities. Practically, this double focus on nature and people requires a multi-stakeholder partnership approach to ownership and funding. Partners can include national governments, the community, local authorities but also academia, civil society, and the private sector.

The main challenges to implementing NBS include the lack of political and societal buy-in, as well as the shortage of funding and evidence as to results. Yet NBS are in some cases considered the best solution to build resilience and accompany national development plans, as they are capable of sustaining, in a non-competing manner, the double priority on nature and people.

Parallel Session 2: Enhancing the resilience of infrastructure

Hosts

Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

Speakers

- Dr. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness, Jamaica
- Favio López Chacón, Mayor of Cóbano, Costa Rica
- Alejandro Rossi, Director, Multi-Country Office for Costa Rica, Panama and English/Dutch speaking Caribbean, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- Dr. Liz Varga, Professor of Complex Systems, University College London (UCL)
- Dawn Skaggs, Emergency, Disaster and Climate Resilience Specialist, World Institute on Disability (moderator)

Session summary

Recent extreme events and resulting disaster impacts around the world have highlighted the importance of sustainable, resilient infrastructure systems, especially in historically disadvantaged communities and hazard-prone areas. Public and private agencies have begun to develop sustainability plans that focus on protecting physical systems along with community capital and public health in the face of disasters and climate change. However, these emerging developments require long-term cooperative management, investment, and coordination across multiple agencies and sectors, while communities face limited budgets and reduced capacity to address looming environmental impacts.

Resilient infrastructure is infrastructure that is shared, protected by design, responds to the principles of adaptive transformation, promotes continuous learning, is compatible with the environment, and is socially engaged. Beyond economic factors, infrastructure has important implications in terms of social development, as it directly determines the population's access to basic services, facilitates the supply of drinking water and energy, and provides better defence against shocks and stresses.

During the session, speakers proposed a framework for building resilient infrastructure. This framework includes the need for geopolitical leadership to ensure that the principles of resilient infrastructure are promoted as standards, regulations, and guidelines for increased investment in new and existing infrastructure. The net resilience gain – along with its short-term and long term-outcomes – was presented as a concept that speaks to the increased resilience of a nation that has benefited from advances in risk-resilient infrastructure.

To build resilience at the infrastructure level, participation and investment are essential. The economic benefit of investing in resilience is quantifiable, as we can currently determine the costs of not investing. As a reference, every dollar invested in infrastructure is equivalent to \$1.5 in savings. Furthermore, investing in infrastructure maintenance increases the return on investment as it keeps the infrastructure operating for a longer period. To further illustrate, in Latin America alone, \$75 billion is allocated to infrastructure each year, according to Infralata data. However, to adequately factor in disaster risk, an estimated \$150 billion worth of investment would be needed, without which losses could amount to \$1 trillion over the next ten years. Hurricanes Eta and Iota, which struck Central America in late 2020, precisely illustrate the vulnerability of today's infrastructure to disasters.

In the specific context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Small Island Developing States are challenged by capacity limitations and are left to rely on larger, developed States to meet their needs. In Jamaica, for example, the considerable need for vaccines and adequately trained health care personnel had to be filled by foreign countries. SIDS could mitigate the risks associated with the pandemic and other types of hazards by devising plans that take into consideration known vulnerabilities, as well as by engaging in bilateral and multilateral partnerships.

Challenges to resilient infrastructure include the increasing interconnectedness of the world, the growing risk of disasters amplified by climate change, the need to scale up the capacity of infrastructure to satisfy demand, and regulation and legislation towards decarbonization. It is crucial to focus on developing climate-compatible infrastructure while maximizing development. Other areas of special focus include securing multilateral cooperation, ensuring the participation of the public and the private sectors, notably in investment, and providing local communities with the autonomy and resources to implement context-specific approaches. Finally, community participation is to be strengthened to ensure that no one is left behind. Empowering new generations and communities is the best strategy to achieve effective ownership of resilient solutions.

Parallel Session 3: Overcoming disaster economic losses: Integrating risk and hazard information in public and private investment

Hosts

Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

Speakers

- Claudia Herrera, Executive Secretary, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)
- Lennox O'Reilly Lewis, Head of the Economic Infrastructure Division, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- Zoila Navarro Portocarrero, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, World Bank
- Sergio Pengel, Founder, PIEDATA (moderator)
- Dante Arenas Caruti, Economic Affairs Assistant, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Session summary

Integrating hazard and risk information into public and private investment programming is essential to reducing risks and losses, overcoming business disruption, and restoring economies when affected by a disaster. The implementation of systemic risk-informed strategies and plans at the country and business levels are of utmost importance to achieve resilient sustainable development in the Americas and the Caribbean.

Over the past five years, disasters have caused significant economic losses throughout the region. Most disaster losses are associated with hydro-meteorological events such as storms and hurricanes. During the 2020-2021 period, more than 30 severe weather events impacted the economy of countries in the region. With the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in 2021, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines counted losses amounting to more than \$400 million. Similarly, the 2021 earthquake in Haiti caused losses totalling \$1.6 billion. Declining freshwater availability, rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and flooding are common throughout the region and exacerbate economic losses due to damage to critical infrastructure during disasters. Tourism, a macro-sector in the region, is consequently affected, which results in revenue and income losses. Improved disaster preparedness and the ability to build back better depend on the availability of relevant risk and hazard information to allow for informed decisions to be made at the country and business levels.

The World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, and other public and private sector partners in the region have taken the initiative to establish new criteria and strategies for public investments to reduce economic losses in the event of a disaster. First, new investments must address existing risks and avoid creating new ones. Therefore, strategic lines for generating knowledge on disaster risk and linking this information to financial instruments that will enable agile resource mobilization should be enhanced. Conversely, the growing need to incorporate climate change adaptation strategies and disaster risk management mechanisms into investment projects designed to withstand the onset of hydro-meteorological and geological hazards deserves particular attention. Second, greater use should be made of available technologies to support public investment projects. Systems should be established to monitor and supervise public spending and to coordinate more focused spending for public investments. This is to include social and fiscal elements that will allow for rapid mobilization of financial resources in the event of a disaster. Third, gender awareness and inclusiveness are critical to ensuring the success of public investments. Indeed, a key aspect of building back better is to address the differentiated needs and vulnerability patterns of marginalized groups and ensure the sustainability of systems that generate increased income levels and improved well-being for all citizens. Fourth, it is crucial that governments target labour intensive sectors and refrain from investing in areas where investments will become public expenditure and threaten the reactivation of the economy. The recovery process must impulse income generation activities where there has been a reduction in productivity and provide for the expenses of affected populations.

The following initiatives presented by the panellists evidence the work carried out in the region to increase public investments that reduce risk and protect populations: the Women Outreach Programmes in Guatemala; the Regional Contingency Plan developed in 2020 prioritizes assessments and investments that address the effects of the pandemic in the region; the Regional Coordination Platform provides real-time hazard monitoring and assessment tools as well as educational tools to address hazard susceptibility and enhance response capacities; the Central American Atlas for Risk; the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), developed jointly with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), uses satellite imagery to display information for prevention; the Recovery Observatory uses satellite imagery to compare data within the region; the Capacities Plan aims at prioritizing resources for investment; the Regional Authority of Humanitarian Assistance provides strategic guidelines and holistic approaches using multi-hazard scenarios to support disaster recovery; Early Warning Systems (EWS) and Impact-Based Forecasting (IBF) are implemented through partnerships with meteorological offices in the region; the Multi-Hazard Disaster Risk Management Guide developed by the Caribbean Tourism Organization helps tourism stakeholders incorporate DRM, CCA, and gender responsiveness; and the Planning Observatory Portal developed by ECLAC acts as a platform to share risk information and ideas for boosting sustainable public investment.

In addition, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) developed a Disaster Management Policy for integrating climate change considerations into new projects, includes DRM and CCA in all internal and external operations, requests all public investment projects to include environmental impact assessments (EIA) as well as hazard and climate risk assessments, provides grants to countries that factor climate change adaptation, partnered with the Climate Studies Group of UWI Mona in Jamaica to develop the Climate Studies 2021 that can be used for evidence-based planning in public investments, and continues to implement the Safe Schools Programme within the region (participating States include Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia).

Of the countries that have embarked on economic reactivation processes following the impacts of a disaster, Uruguay focuses on public investments in the transportation and telecommunications sectors; Chile increases investments that will boost national GDP up to 90%; Mexico pursues the construction of the Mayan Train and a new airport in Mexico City; Panama has established the Panama Reactivation Plan 2021; and Peru and Chile focus on green public investments that will include social prices for carbon emissions and impulse projects that are socially and environmentally sustainable. Overall, countries agree that disaster risk information must cross reference pandemic impact data to determine suitable projects and areas for public investments in the region.

Parallel Session 4: Integrating disaster displacement into DRR strategies, policies, plans, and legal frameworks

Hosts

Platform on Disaster Displacement, International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Speakers

- Michelle Forbes, Director, National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Luis Doñas, Foreign Affairs Liaison Officer, National Emergency Office of the Ministry of Interior and Public Security (ONEMI), Chile
- Liza Mariana Hernández-Betancourth, Regional Lead for Americas and the Caribbean, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)
- Pablo Escribano, Regional Thematic Specialist on Migration, Environment and Climate Change, Regional Office for Central America, North America and the Caribbean, International Organization for Migration (IOM) (moderator)
- Juan Carlos Méndez, Advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean, Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), former Nansen Initiative (moderator)
- Sophie Teyssier, Coordinator for the Americas, Disaster Law and Legislative Advocacy, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Session summary

The year 2020 saw 30.7 million people displaced globally due to disasters. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of people displaced by disasters, including across borders, indicates the vulnerability of the region's populations to multiple hazards. Losses of lives, of income generating activities, and of livelihoods count among the main challenges faced by disaster-displaced populations in the region, together with a widespread lack of access to basic services, such as health, water, and education. Disaster response strategies must address the differentiated needs of vulnerable populations, amongst them people with disabilities, children, and women. Transportation and shelter management, for instance, need to integrate these multiple perspectives to avoid protection gaps. In turn, nature-based solutions and climate change mitigation strategies can help address issues of food security and water sanitation.

At the national level, the integration of disaster displacement considerations into disaster risk reduction legal frameworks, policies, and plans must become a priority. Such efforts require a strong focus on hazard mapping to better understand hazards, as well as on anticipatory assessments to better understand the needs of communities exposed to displacement risk. Data is indeed critical for preventing and addressing disaster displacement. In Chile, for example, the full implementation of the national guidelines on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change, developed by the National DRR Platform, is dependent upon robust data on disaster-related displacement and climate change-associated mobility to enable the design of targeted policies. Second, planning is equally paramount. After the 2021 eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for example, although the national coordination mechanism that had been set up allowed for the effective coordination of evacuations, elderly people who had been left behind had to be cared for on a separate basis, as the strategy did not foresee measures to address this issue. Likewise, determining upfront what services can realistically be made available by the government to displaced or evacuated populations and identifying exactly where the responsibility of the State ends is key. Third, collaboration between national and local government levels as well as across borders must be enhanced, together with cross-sectoral collaboration to develop a multi-disciplinary cluster approach to human mobility, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. Government needs should be assessed, and frameworks put in place to channel multi-stakeholder inputs and make them available at the implementation level. Similarly, establishing clear coordination mechanisms between different sectors ahead of a disaster is crucial to ensuring an effective response to disaster displacement. As an example, the National DRR Platform in Chile, notably through its Human Mobility Working Group, provides an ideal opportunity to advance cross-sectoral policymaking. Finally, ensuring the translation of political disposition into implementation at the national level while addressing compatibility with international commitments is crucial to developing further social protection or migration-related instruments, including at the regional level.

At the regional level, cross-border displacements are to be met with strong collaborative policy responses, offering non-nationals the same treatment as nationals. During the latest hurricane season, as well as after the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, CDEMA became involved in evacuation processes, the IOM focused on response, notably providing protection to the elderly, the Red Cross paid rents for persons sheltered in schools, and WFP established a relief management hub.

In terms of policy, efforts are to be deployed to ensure that disaster displacement and the situation of displaced persons are accounted for in disaster laws as well as in national disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation policies. Disaster laws usually clarify roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms, but often do not cover displacement. IFRC has issued a Checklist on Law and Disaster Preparedness and Response that features recommendations related to disaster and climate displacement and planned relocation. In terms of displacement, IFRC recommends the

inclusion of an integrated approach to DRR and displacement in legal frameworks and policies, the identification and addressing of entitlements of cross-border displaced persons in alignment with international law, and the need for protection and assistance to meet basic needs and potential return. In terms of planned relocation, IFRC recommends establishing comprehensive frameworks that use planned relocation as a last-resort measure, integrating provisions for affected communities to contest relocation decisions, requiring the maintenance of livelihood opportunities, mitigating adverse impacts for host communities, and ensuring community participation. Likewise, the UNDRR Words into Action guidelines on disaster displacement provide best practices in this regard.

Parallel Session 5: Using social protection mechanisms to address inequalities in preparedness, response, and recovery

Hosts

Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), Inter-American Conference on Social Security (CISS), Secretariat of Central American Social Integration (SISCA)

Speakers

- Liza Mariana Hernández-Betancourth, Regional Lead for Americas and the Caribbean, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)
- Carlos Kaiser, Executive Director, ONG Inclusiva
- Santa Sandoval, Coordinator, Dominican Churches Social Service
- Anita Zetina, Secretary General, Secretariat of Central American Social Integration (SISCA)
- Dr. Verhonica Zamudio Santos, Researcher, Inter-American Conference on Social Security (CISS)

Session summary

Social protection policies include interventions that aim to protect individuals against the risks associated with income loss through non-contributory, contributory and labour-related measures. They also seek to secure access to basic services, such as health, education, housing, nutrition, and bring the most vulnerable and affected groups closer to the public services they need. Social protection mechanisms thereby constitute a fundamental pillar for the construction of more just and inclusive societies. They also represent an area of opportunity for building resilience because of to their ability to contribute to the achievement of multiple social policy objectives, such as the reduction of poverty and inequality and the development human capital.

Social protection mechanisms have the potential to reduce poverty and extreme poverty linked to conditions of vulnerability to natural hazards. It is indeed widely recognized today that the poorest members of society are both more exposed to the impacts of disasters and climate change (IPCC, 2014) and more heavily affected by diseases and health problems exacerbated by these impacts (Hallegatte et al., 2016). Social protection mechanisms that effectively target poor populations can ensure the protection of the most vulnerable populations against shocks. When focussed on insurance against risk, social protection mechanisms allow for the mitigation of losses and enable resilience in the face of future events. A social protection system designed and adapted to better anticipate and respond to shocks, in coordination with other sectors associated with risk management, can play an important role in enabling children and their families to better prepare for,

cope with, and recover from the impacts of hazardous events in a timely and appropriate manner.

The provision of social protection is deeply embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly Goals 1 and 10) and has been a growing political priority in low- and middle-income countries in recent years, as evidenced by increased coverage rates and levels of institutionalization. Often, however, national social protection policy objectives are hampered by the recurrence of climate change-related events that disproportionately affect populations in situations of social and economic vulnerability. From a DRR perspective, a shift is needed from the emergency response paradigm to the development of risk-informed models for resilience-building strategies, particularly in the most risk-prone areas. Only by becoming more integrated can social protection and disaster risk reduction programmes contribute to advancing both the SDGs and the targets of the Sendai Framework. Achieving this goal requires that all cross-sectoral and territorial actions be guided by the objectives of national social protection systems, from design to monitoring and evaluation.

Strengthening the nexus between resilience and disaster risk reduction requires attention to two pillars: social protection systems and disaster risk management systems. Regarding social protection systems, although benefits and coverage have increased in many countries due to the current health emergency, certain gaps still need to be filled. First, progress should be made towards establishing comprehensive, redistributive, and universal protection systems that promote a resilience-building approach, allowing for inclusive and rapid recoveries in the face of crises or shocks. Second, the integration of inception spaces should be strengthened. Social cabinets should focus on promoting spaces for coordination and analysis that leverage international good practice and strengthen internal processes to advance planning, monitoring, and evaluation of policy effectiveness. Regarding disaster risk management systems, it is crucial that contributory social security mechanisms be incorporated into disaster risk reduction strategies. Furthermore, a rights-based approach to disaster response should be mainstreamed and focus on inclusion so that no one is left behind. Speakers recommended that most vulnerable populations be included in planning processes to increase knowledge on how actions will be implemented and ensure actions target differentiated needs. In Chile, for example, technical aid for people with disabilities is usually delayed by three to six years. In most cases, support devices arrive when the beneficiaries no longer need them. However, when an event occurs and a person loses the technical aid received, provided the government declares a state of emergency, a card is distributed that allows the beneficiary to purchase a replacement device immediately.

Parallel Session 6: Local government, environmental management and DRR addressing multiple hazards and supporting the most at risk

Hosts

Government of Jamaica, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Government of Colombia, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Speakers

- Hon. Homer Davis, Minister of State, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Jamaica
- María Emilsen Angulo, Mayor of Tumaco, Nariño, Colombia
- Yuri Chakalall, Senior Specialist, Natural Disaster & Risk Management, Inter-American Development Bank (moderator)
- Robert Hill, Chief Executive Officer, Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation
- Mayor Delroy Williams, Senator Councillor, Mayor of Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation
- Mayor Glen Ram, Parliament of Trinidad & Tobago, Advisor to the Member of Parliament for Cumuto/Manzanilla
- Eleanor Coombs, Parish Disaster Coordinator, Clarendon Municipal Corporation, Jamaica

Session summary

Parallel Session 6 sought to explore the impacts caused by the convergence of multiple environmental, climate, and biological hazards and to highlight the need to resort to a comprehensive approach to risk management. The session turned the lens on the need for local government processes to integrate DRR actions and environmental systems management to build resilience and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with the effects of climate change force local governments and environmental health and climate change actors to examine the realities of an already compounded systemic risk environment and to act accordingly.

The systemic nature of disaster risk urgently calls for the adoption of a network perspective to risk governance and a situational and contextual approach to risk management resting on collaboration between multiple sectors and levels. For this approach to be successful, it is paramount that disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and environmental systems management be integrated into local government processes. Despite successes, integration still faces challenges, including

issues of policy coherence, as well as lack of coordination and collaboration. Furthermore, although sectoral governance structures already exist in many national DRM frameworks, their optimization in actual operational or functional practice at the local level remains insufficient. Operational performance needs to be highly flexible to help local governments address multiple hazards with cascading effects capable of precipitating systematic failure.

The slowness and complexity of bureaucratic systems are the main reasons why governments fail to consistently deliver timely policy outcomes to their citizens. Institutional clumsiness in turn makes it difficult for local authorities to effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities. Policies are misaligned and need restructuring to favour cross-sectoral collaboration. Areas such as economic expansion and environmental protection are not to be dealt with separately but as one. For example, the coastline protection project on the Montego Bay waterfront in Jamaica translates the need to better regulate the building sector to prevent construction failures from becoming a threat to the State, to citizens, and to businesses. In this regard, more focus should be placed on local governments, as they are an important conduit for the enforcement of the Building Act in Jamaica. Furthermore, citizens should monitor the risks they could be responsible for at the formal and informal housing level to lessen the burden placed on the government.

Aiming at removing complexity from policy formulation processes is necessary but not always sufficient. In Trinidad and Tobago, for example, it is the lack of tools and resources, including financial resources, to adequately deal with disaster risk reduction at the local level that poses the greatest challenges to disaster preparedness and recovery.

The 2021 Regional Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean provides sobering statistics on the region's level of resilience to a multi-hazard environment. Of every four disasters occurring at global level, one strikes in the LAC region. A total of 277 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean have been directly or indirectly affected by disaster events. The region further accounts for 53% of reported global economic losses due to climate-related disasters in the last 20 years. Similarly, COVID-19 infections in the region amounted to 20% of total reported cases. This panorama first highlights the importance of disaster preparedness and the need for readiness to be adaptive, dynamic, and flexible. Shelters, for example, are now to be restructured to meet the COVID-19 sanitation standards and include isolation rooms and spaces for families. Second, greater coherence between policies, legislation, and planning for DRR, environmental management, and climate change adaptation should be fostered at the national and local levels. Multi-hazard disaster risk reduction efforts urgently require rigorous, inclusive, and collaborative policy formulation processes that are understanding of environmental systems management, climate change, and emergency management. Cross-ministerial coordination and partnerships between government levels are key to provide better guidance on disaster and crisis preparedness and recovery. As opposed to the COVID-19 pandemic, the timescale of climate change is decades-

long and requires a legal framework capable of supporting long-term and adaptative policies to strengthen confidence in the future.

It is crucial to improve clarity in policies on DRR and climate change adaptation and strengthen coordination to ensure the application of DRR and climate change adaptation principles in daily operations. Institutional entities responsible for coordinating or implementing projects and programmes at the local level often lack the funds to do so. Therefore, specifically in the context of disaster response, first responders and supportive entities should be part of the conversation. Furthermore, it is critical that technical, institutional, and financial capacities are strengthened for policies, standards, and regulations to be effectively coordinated. Results could range from the enforcement of no-built zones to the effective management of protected areas such as mangroves and rivers, as well as the rise in informed decisions made regarding vulnerable areas. A means of sustained financing is needed for the State to effectively manage disaster risk reduction. Similarly, more importance and credit should be given to civil society and non-governmental organizations for their important role in DRR. Finally, performance-based measurement methods should be established to monitor the performance of risk management at the local government level and citizens should be given a role in observing and assessing performance.

Parallel Session 7: Anticipatory financing

Hosts

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Speakers

- Claudia Herrera, Executive Secretary, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPRENAC)
- Shelley Cheatham, Head of Office, UN OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Alvaro Vicente, Chief, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the General Directorate of Civil Protection and European Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
- Raquel Peña, Emergencies and Resilience Specialist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Mathieu Destrooper, Regional Anticipation Advisor for LAC, Red Cross, Latin America and the Caribbean
- Zinta Zommers, Programme Management Officer, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

Session summary

The economic and financial impacts of disasters in the Americas and the Caribbean go beyond a rising domestic debt. Disaster impacts also affect development plans by reversing progress and redirecting funds for response purposes. Indeed, emergencies continue to provoke additional spending that could be better used if invested in prevention or resilience. Against this background, the IFRC suggests strengthening anticipatory action with forecast-based financing. As weather forecasts have become more precise and accurate, it is now technically possible to know when and where to act to mitigate the humanitarian impacts of shocks on communities. Anticipatory action with forecast-based financing takes into consideration the lead time of the forecast and rests on pre-agreed triggers and pre-secured financial mechanisms to finance action.

A critical element of anticipatory action is the connection with financial mechanisms. Indeed, the financing of anticipatory action requires overcoming significant challenges related to the structure of the funding. These challenges include the possibility of investing in early action, the capacity of service providers to execute cash transfer mechanisms, and the availability of funds relative to the scale of the event. To overcome these barriers and ensure sustainability and effectiveness of anticipatory action and forecast-based financing, the approach must be embedded in broader risk management structures at the country level. Furthermore, anticipatory action requires financing

mechanisms that are flexible, coordinated, and predictable. To be brought to scale, they must further be quickly and automatically activable. Funds such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the OCHA-managed country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) are effective instruments to enable collective anticipatory action. Several Member States and stakeholders pledged to increase their pre-agreed contribution to these funds. Some are beginning to align the percentage of spending with the proportion of crises that can be accurately predicted (currently ca. 20%). For example, Ireland provides some 25% of its humanitarian funding directly to mechanisms that support anticipatory action.

Interlinkages between anticipatory action and financial mechanisms must be integrated into early action plans and protocols to speed up decision-making and the implementation of activities. Although the integration of anticipatory financing mechanisms into national institutions and disaster risk management systems takes time, it also presents opportunities for strengthening institutions, enhancing risk-informed decision-making, building new alliances for action, and improving existing early warning mechanisms.

For anticipatory action to be operative, triggers, forecasts, and actions must be identified and consolidated into early action plans. As anticipatory mechanisms fill the gaps upstream and allow for operations to be undertaken in a timely manner, they complement disaster risk reduction and prevention programming efforts. In LAC, the focus has been set on storms, floods, and droughts, although other hazardous events could also be considered, such as volcanic activity and population movements. Furthermore, scaling up of pilot projects is necessary to build the case for anticipatory mechanisms. This aim requires efforts to focus on strengthening i) evidence – “test and learn” is the only way to evaluate the benefits of anticipatory actions for populations and communities; ii) inclusion – stakeholders should ensure that the voices of communities and local governments are fully integrated into anticipatory action protocols; and iii) funding – top donors should be encouraged to further increase their support to anticipatory action, helping build, fuel, and evaluate frameworks.

Finally, evidence suggests a high return on investment, in that for every dollar invested in anticipatory action in the agriculture sector, additional benefits are generated that range between \$2.5 and \$7.10. Also, evidence suggests that the benefits are beyond monetary and apply to food security, nutrition, resilience, dignity, and social cohesion. Anticipatory action can thus reduce the impacts of shocks on populations and ultimately save lives and livelihoods.

Parallel Session 8: Understanding systemic risk and promoting a risk-informed people-centred sustainable development

Hosts

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), The University of the West Indies (UWI), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Speakers

- Hon. Dr. Curtis King, Minister of Education, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Dr. Rolando Ocampo, Chief, Statistics Division, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- Arlette Magaly Montero, Chief, Prevention Management, Standing Committee on Contingencies (COPECO), Honduras
- Luis Castillo, Manager of Decentralization and Municipal Development. Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON), Honduras
- Dr. Evangeline Inniss-Springer, Director (ag), Disaster Risk Reduction Centre, University of the West Indies
- Dr. Lina Marlene Dorado Gonzalez, Deputy Director for Risk Knowledge, National Unit for Disaster Risk Management (UNGRD), Colombia
- Dr. Roger Pulwarty, Senior Scientist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Jeremy Collymore, DRM and Resilience Specialist and Honorary Research Fellow, Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD), University of the West Indies
- David Smith, Director, Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD), University of the West Indies

Session summary

The nature of our interconnected world means that shocks, stresses, and crises reverberate globally and are exacerbated by the interaction between climate change, ecosystem fragility, pre-existing inequality, and political or financial instability. The current COVID-19 disaster is a vivid example of systemic compound risk. It shows us that the very nature and scale of risk have changed to such a degree that they have the potential to overwhelm established risk management approaches and the reach of institutions. The global health crisis has revealed the precarious nature of the systems upon which trade, food, energy, transportation, and social safety nets depend.

Parallel Session 8 sought to promote a better understanding of systemic risk by focusing on how it is constructed, its underlying drivers, the interconnections it encompasses, and the ways in which it

materializes. According to the panellists, only a holistic understanding of the multidimensional and systemic nature of risk can inform the development of robust policy frameworks to build resilience. Country presentations showcased national and local government efforts to base decision-making processes on considerations related to systemic risk, moving away from considering single hazards alone. Different tools and resources to better measure systemic risk were shared, as well as best practices to better understand it. Among these, the Caribbean Safe School Initiative constitutes an example of how systemic risk can be integrated in the education sector by including curricula on DRR and resilience in education programmes.

At present, disaster risk management is fully integrated into the global development agenda. In 2015, three international frameworks were signed with clear targets to reduce disaster risk and human suffering. In March, national governments adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and thereby committed to preventing new and reducing existing risks by reducing exposure and vulnerability to hazards and increasing preparedness and resilience. In September, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. Disaster risk is prominent in three of them: end poverty, build resilient cities, and combat climate change. In December, the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secured the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which charts a new course in the global climate effort by rallying party countries around the common cause of undertaking ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. All three frameworks emphasize the role of science and data (including territorial information systems) in improving understanding of risk and monitoring progress in risk reduction. However, despite dedicated efforts, the necessary paradigm shift towards prevention has not yet taken place.

As protracted crises can last decades and transitioning out of crises proves very challenging, the need for humanitarian funds is at an all-time high. Meeting growing demands requires a shift in focus from simply providing aid to reducing the need for humanitarian interventions. Humanitarian and development actors, governments and donors must jointly address structural inequalities and reduce underlying risks, so that vulnerable communities can withstand future natural and human-induced crises even as they recover from them. These joint efforts need to be based on a shared analysis of the dimensions of risk (hazards, exposure, vulnerabilities, and capacities) facing populations, and the interconnections between them. In most cases, this shared analysis is lacking, resulting in a fragmented and inefficient overall response to risk. Understanding risk and its systemic nature is a fundamental step towards reducing and managing it.

Speakers issued several recommendations to advance the understanding, mitigation, and reduction of systemic risk. First, progress towards risk-informed sustainable development can only be accelerated if policy design and investment planning, at all levels, across all sectors, and in all regions, are based on a systemic approach. Second, many disasters can be avoided or prevented if funded

strategies are in place to manage and reduce existing levels of risk and prevent the creation of new ones. These strategies need to integrate not only different government sectors but also different levels of government and multiple actors. Third, disaster risk governance must be transformed under conditions of increased complexity and uncertainty. This transformation requires to raise awareness on the need to move from responding to extreme events to addressing accumulation of extreme risk. It further implies translating information into knowledge, overcoming the gap between theory and practice, and containing risk drivers by adapting legislative frameworks. Fourth, research on risk should be interdisciplinary, involve non-traditional partners, trigger collaboration between different sectors, and enable innovative as much as collective action. Finally, relevant stakeholders should ensure the articulation between sectoral policies and plans and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement.

Special Sessions

Special Session 1: Regional Risk Assessment Report 2021: Towards an integrated, multi-stakeholder, gender-responsive risk governance

Hosts

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

Speakers

- Raúl Salazar, Chief, Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Carlos Uribe, Programme Management Officer, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Raquel Lejtregger, Former Vice Minister of Housing, Land Management and Environment in Uruguay
- Alexander Solis Delgado, President, National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response (CNE)
- Carolina Moreira, National Officer of International Strategies for Risk Reduction of the National Service for Risk and Emergency Management, Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE)
- Dr. Allan Lavell, Coordinator, Social Studies, Risks and Disasters Programme, Latin American Faculty of Social Science Faculty (FLACSO)
- Irasema Alcantara, Mexican geographer, Co-author of FORIN, Professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)

Session summary

Special Session 1 launched the UNDRR 2021 Regional Risk Assessment Report on Disaster Risk in Latin America and the Caribbean. Developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the RAR-LAC 2021 offers an overview of the emerging trends of risk in the Americas and the Caribbean jointly with an analysis of the root causes, drivers, and manifestations of risk leading to increasingly devastating disasters in both human and material terms. The publication further includes a critical assessment of how risk is managed in the region and an objective review of the actions taken to establish a new paradigm for policymaking that aims to reduce and impede the construction of disaster risk.

Finally, it presents an innovative methodology that models risk management according to a holistic, comprehensive, and in-depth approach. The RAR provides data, new knowledge on risk construction processes, and indications as to how the much-needed transformation of both policy and action might begin.

To clarify the necessary interactions between climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and poverty reduction, presentations highlighted the importance of analysing risk through the lens of the interrelationships between physical space, communities, and social systems. Indeed, the RAR argues that understanding the interconnections and interdependencies between systems is essential to aligning disaster risk reduction priorities with other regional or global issues. This approach has the additional benefit, for example, of obviating the need to address compatibility between measurement methods such as the Human Development Index, GDP, and poverty indexes. Presentations also stressed the importance of understanding how risk is constructed to establish action-based strategies. It was recommended that multiple stakeholders be included in inception processes, including academia and civil society, and that activism be reinterpreted to adjust to our contemporary world. The importance of involving the science and technology community was emphasized as well, with knowledge co-production being the main ally for disaster risk governance. Panellists also highlighted the importance of aligning the agendas of international commitments and national planning for disaster risk management. Finally, they stressed the need to recover the necessary methodologies, regulations, ideas, and actions to achieve the territorial management model outlined in the RAR, which would allow for the implementation of safe territories and the reduction of vulnerabilities and inequalities.

The panel outlined the major concepts and conceptual frameworks that informed the analyses presented in the RAR. These were used to explain how disaster risk is constructed and experienced in society, based on the premise that disaster risk-related decisions ultimately differ according to the conceptual foundations underpinning them. The conceptual model taken up in the RAR, following the Sendai Framework and other policies in the Americas and the Caribbean, is the product of an evolution that started three or four decades ago and that rested on the joint participation of key actors in the region to receive inputs and convey results to the world. This conceptual model builds on the premise that risk is socially constructed and looks at hazards through a socio-natural lens. It contrasts with the conceptual basis underlying a physical construct of risk in which hazards are central, rather than vulnerability and exposure. The conceptual foundation of the analyses contained in the RAR also provides a compass to account for continuum facts, namely the recognition and understanding of risk, extensive (recurrent) versus intensive risk, and asset-based calculation of loss due to systemic risk.

Special Session 2: Regional approach to coordination on multi-hazards: 2020 Lessons from the Caribbean

Hosts

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Government of Jamaica, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Speakers

- Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) (moderator)
- Michelle Forbes, Director, National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Cynthia Spishak, Associate Administrator, Office of Policy & Programme Analysis, Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Dr. Joy St. John, Executive Director, Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)
- Claudia Herrera, Director, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)
- Keisha Linton, Regional Security System (RSS)
- Rhea Pierre, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Session summary

Special Session 2 sought to review how countries in the Caribbean experienced the impacts of multiple hazards during the year 2020 (COVID-19, major hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, displacement, etc.) and highlight how national and regional agencies such as CDEMA and CEPREDENAC dealt with this multi-hazard environment.

The multi-hazard context in the Americas and the Caribbean has increased the degree of complexity faced by the region as it addresses hazards. Events tend to happen concurrently, more frequently, more intensely, and result in cascading effects. A plethora of hazards impacted the region in 2020, from vector borne diseases and flooding to landslides, tropical systems, effusive volcanic eruptions, and the latest COVID-19 pandemic. These events caused national capacities to be overwhelmed and countries to request regional and international support.

Owing to the above, many national and regional plans were developed and updated to mitigate against the multiple hazards faced, and an all-hazard approach to disaster management was adopted across countries in the region. Health agencies in the region, including CARPHA and PAHO,

developed COVID-19 tracking and projection software mechanisms in an attempt to keep the region well-resourced to combat the pandemic. Shelter management protocols were also developed to adapt shelter operations for cases where natural hazards were coupled with COVID-19.

The session aimed to increase understanding of the importance of partnerships, collaboration, and coordination for disaster risk reduction and emergency management in a multi-hazard context. Panellists advanced recommendations on actions that countries and agencies in the Caribbean could take to strengthen regional coordination for multi-hazard resilience. First, national disaster risk reduction frameworks must be widened to cover multiple hazards, including biological, natural, socio-natural, and social hazards. Second, adjusting governance arrangements to this multi-hazard context implies strengthening coordination and collaboration mechanisms, including enhancing agility and flexibility in existing response mechanisms. This means that legal frameworks and government processes must be adapted to ensure coordination among different sectors. Public health and elected officials, for example, must jointly identify the outcomes to be achieved by emergency management plans and set the relevant priorities. Consequently, greater emphasis on resource mobilization is required, with a focus on partnerships to achieve common results. Likewise, ICT platforms ought to be mainstreamed to facilitate multi-hazard coordination. Third, panellists stressed that successful disaster risk reduction efforts are those that take root at the local level and adopt a bottom-up approach. They further highlighted that education and awareness of the multi-hazard context, as well as operational guidelines, tools, and strategic planning are critical to effectively manage disaster risk in the entire region. Data management tools, including to factor human behaviour for example, can be very useful to reduce and mitigate existing risks as well as to establish efficient preparedness and response mechanisms.

Resilience remains the main objective of the region and implies not only bouncing back but bouncing forward. Several critical parameters must be dealt with as the region pools efforts towards building resilience, including maximizing human security, ensuring continuity of economic activities, operational readiness and recovery, environmental sustainability, social protection, as well as safeguarding the infrastructure; but most importantly reducing disaster risk. There is an urgent call for a paradigm shift between emergency response and concrete disaster risk reduction. Similarly, having in mind the systemic nature of risk, it is paramount to move away from managing single or individual hazards to an approach that understands the complexity and interconnectivity of hazards and risks.

Learning Labs and Learning Session

The Learning Labs of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean were designed to allow for the transfer of knowledge and/or skills in specific areas of disaster risk reduction. Each Learning Lab took on the form of an interactive workshop-style session led by one or more technical experts in each field.

Learning Lab 1: Disaster Impact Modelling

Hosts

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Facilitators

- Claudia Herrera, Executive Secretary, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)
- Rogerio Mobilia, Head of Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- Leonardo Milano, Predictive Analytics Team Lead, UN OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data
- Dr. Nicole Greenidge, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)
- Marianela Guzmán, Advisor on Public-Private Partnerships and Resilient Investment in Disaster Risk Management, Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)

Summary

Disaster impact modelling provides a scientific approach to understanding disaster risk by generating standardized data from impacts of past events and projecting potential impacts based on risk exposure. Both components are combined using variables to develop a disaster impact model. The model serves to identify high-risk areas/ areas of concentrated risks and to classify risk levels to better target disaster risk reduction measures. The model thereby effectively contributes to fostering a common understanding of disaster risk and ultimately building resilience.

The benefits associated with disaster impact modelling as discussed during the session include:

- Key stakeholders having access to real-time data. The model develops information products that can be shared with stakeholders at national and local levels. The model provides disaster risk information for multiple systems, through the analysis of layers of information on hazards, populations at risk, and cumulative impacts from events.
- The model extends to vulnerable populations. Forecasting models usually receive low acceptance from key stakeholders due to a lack of communication between scientists, technical experts, decision makers and vulnerable populations at national and local levels. This is in part due to the inability of disaster impact forecasting models to unveil concrete linkages between modelled constructs and the daily lives of populations. In the case of disaster impact modelling, the information provided can be packaged in a manner that links disaster risk to the daily lives of exposed groups. While contributing to a better understanding of risk at the local level, the information also acts as a means to foster greater buy-in from populations at risk.
- The model provides logistical perspective to critical sectors and systems. The model applies multiple scales to identify areas of increased disaster risk and reduces the uncertainty and subjectivity in categorizing disaster risk. The model thereby allows public and private stakeholders to prioritize areas of intervention and channel resources accordingly. More specifically, it helps to establish Early Warning Systems (EWS), increases the timeliness of emergency response, improves cost-benefit analyses to enhance decision-making, and strengthens capabilities at national and local levels. By allowing for effective planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction measures, the model significantly contributes to reducing disaster impacts.
- The model aids decision-making from a risk informed position backed by scientific research. A generalized lack of trust regarding forecasts requires experts to provide evidence-based research and resort to scientific methodologies to determine risk. The use of disaster impact modelling precisely increases transparency and accountability in identifying disaster risk. It rests on scientific methodologies to provide a credible basis for informed decision-making by governance structures within the region. The information can further instil trust as it builds on evidence-based research analyses and is freed from biases and political influence.

Key challenges to making disaster impact modelling available and operational at the regional level include tackling the insufficiency of cross-institutional baseline data to inform risk analyses, the weak technical capacities for using geospatial technology in the region, and the lack of readiness of disaster impact models shared by meteorological services for stakeholders, especially at the community level. Furthermore, some regional trends are to be considered to conduct disaster impact modelling with the aim of using the results for disaster risk reduction planning purposes, namely: the growing threat of climate change, especially to Small Island Developing States (SIDs); the

forced migration of vulnerable populations due to complex socio-economic factors including loss of livelihoods, public health issues, including those associated with the pandemic, and vulnerability; and the rising inequalities within the region due to recurrent shocks from disasters and the slow recovery processes across territories, combined with political crises in some countries, the current pandemic, and the widening digital divide that reduces access to critical information and resources for vulnerable populations.

Learning Lab 2: Forensic Investigations of Disasters (FORIN)

Hosts

Social Studies Network for Disaster Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean (LA RED), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Regional Scientific and Technological Advisory Group (RSTAG)

Facilitators

- Alonso Brenes, Costa Rican geographer, Coordinator of the Social Studies Network for Disaster Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean (LA RED)
- Dr. Allan Lavell, British geographer, Co-author of FORIN, Coordinator of the Social Studies, Risks and Disasters Programme, Latin American Faculty of Social Science (FLACSO), Costa Rica
- Dr. Michael Taylor, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology, University of the West Indies, Jamaica
- Dr. Irasema Alcántara-Ayala, Mexican geographer, Co-author of FORIN, Professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)
- Zelmira May, Uruguayan agronomist, Responsible for Disaster Risk Management, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Montevideo

Summary

Learning Lab 2 presented the FORIN methodology, which aims at tracing the root causes of disasters to explain the causality of disasters that have occurred and allow for risk informed recovery.

Risk informed recovery is aligned to all four priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. First, science and technology for forensic investigation of disasters is vital to understanding disaster risk (priority 1). Assessing risk allows vulnerabilities to be fully taken into consideration and planning to unfold accordingly. For instance, plans to ease the impacts of COVID-19 require a vast amount of science and technology meta-analyses along deliberate intergovernmental intervention. Second, the implementation of solid and effective mitigation and planning approaches are to improve and strengthen disaster risk governance around the globe

(priority 2). To this end, research and methodologies should play a major role in garnering ideas and best practices to create territories that are resilient and better equipped to manage disaster risk recovery. Third, investing in pre-recovery measures and research tactics has proven useful to reduce the effects of contemporaneous hazards in Latin America and Caribbean (priority 3). Investing in study/research in science and technology is also intended to reduce the cost of future disaster impacts. Fourth, building back better (priority 4) requires that disaster preparedness be taken seriously, and mitigation and prevention measures be carefully thought out and implemented with the support of advanced technology.

Presentations highlighted the importance of meta-analyses to understand disaster risk. Meta-analyses entail reviewing the existing literature on disaster risks, the impacts of past disasters, as well as disaster trends. Meta-analyses can be used to formulate recommendations or provide guidance for the design of future clinical trials or mitigation practices in preparation for future disasters.

Of all factors to be considered, climate change has become the greatest source of vulnerability in the region and no longer acts as a buttress for Caribbean economies. Unprecedented impacts are expected across the region, including warmer periods, drier conditions, higher sea levels, increased flooding and more intense and extreme storm surges and waves. Understanding the present and future impacts of climate change is as key as preventing progress towards achieving the SDGs to be threatened by it. Because the Caribbean cannot afford the cost of the consequences of climate change, the region cannot afford not to mitigate the impacts of climate change now. The focus must therefore lie on mitigating the unfamiliar effects of climate change, in the hope that the region can guide itself out of the unprecedented conditions to come.

The FORIN methodology will be of significant help in this task as it aims to explain and highlight the trends of disasters in the region. Understanding the patterns of disaster can counteract the lack of proper planning and governance that negatively influences the impacts of disasters in the region. The region as a whole should be more proactive and prepare strategically to protect all lives and economies.

Learning Lab 3: From Early Warning Systems to Impact-Based Forecasting: Strengthening people-centred multi-hazard early warning services in the Caribbean region

Hosts

Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Caribbean, World Bank/Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Facilitators

- Dr. Nicole Greenidge, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)
- Anna-Maria Bogdanova, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, World Bank/ Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)
- Janot-Reine Mendler, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, World Bank/ Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)
- Lina Sjaavik, Project Officer, World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- Stephanie Gallasch, Associate Project Officer, World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- Saudia Rahat, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Carlos Uribe, Programme Management Officer, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Jair Torres, Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

Summary

Learning Lab 3 aimed to strengthen the understanding of Early Warning Systems (EWS) and Impact-Based Forecasting (IBF) services, which routinely operate to provide actionable information on the potential impacts of hazards, in a form that the public, disaster managers, the private sector, and other stakeholders understand and can use to protect lives, livelihoods, assets, and property.

The topics covered by Learning Lab 3 aligned with Sendai priorities 1 and 4. Standardization of Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning Systems and messages help strengthen awareness and knowledge on disaster risk (priority 1). It is advised that multiple communication channels be used to disseminate information to increase reach and expand general understanding of how

the systems work. Moreover, an enhanced implementation of Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning Systems will increase the region's ability to predict the severity of future impacts. Therefore, the information provided can further be used as a preventative measure to reduce disaster risk (priority 4).

Participants were divided into eight groups to discuss the challenges and opportunities of EWS and IBF. The challenges identified for the use of multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in the Caribbean and the wider region included: the lack of human and technical capacities to implement geospatial technologies; the limited scope of scientific expertise in the region reducing the availability of evidence-based data and information on disasters; the existing gaps in policies relative to multi-hazard Early Warning Systems; the majority of financial resources being directed towards science and not enough towards disseminating of EWS messages to the populations that will eventually use the information; the sustainability of the platforms developed, as new platforms seem to add to a list of already existing underused platforms; the low level of familiarity of some stakeholders with the responsibilities they have been assigned to in some areas of work; the inability of most disaster impact assessments and EWS systems to factor people with disabilities and marginalized groups; the lack of basic hydro-meteorological data and data inputs; the data gaps due to unavailability or inaccessibility of data; the varying mandates and levels of commitment across institutions and countries; the lack of clarity in defining EWS and the interpretation needed to clarify information; the loose articulation and synergies among sectors and institutions; and the apathy of populations and governments in using disaster risk reduction tools.

Identified opportunities for the use of multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in the Caribbean and wider region included: the monetizing of risk and vulnerability information for commercial purposes; the development of high-resolution data at national level for future datasets and impacts, the standardization of information through trustworthy databases, the availability of multiple channels to inform individuals and institutions; the establishment of a regional rainfall grid and radar network with public access; the adoption of best practices in EWS at local level and the integration of local strategies with technical strategies to increase buy-in at community level.

Learning Lab 4: Cultural heritage management & DRR: Introducing the Scorecard's new addendum to make cities resilient

Hosts

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), AECOM, University G. d'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara (Ud'A)

Facilitators

- Barbara Minguez Garcia, Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- T. Luke Young, Resilience and Climate Change Practice Lead, AECOM
- Dr. Alberto Basaglia, Postdoctoral Research Associate, D'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara
- Debra Kay Palmer, Director, World Heritage and Cultural Conventions, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Jamaica
- Raquel Núñez Elizondo, Technical Director, Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination of the Central American Integration System (CECC/SICA)
- Carolina Vélchez Carrasco, Director, Decentralized Directorate of Culture of Piura, Ministry of Culture, Peru
- Johanna Granados, Urban Risk Advisor, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN-DRR)
- Caroline Munier, Programme Specialist for Culture, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Cluster Office, San José
- Enrique Lopez Hurtado, Programme Officer, Culture, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Lima
- Yuri Peshkov, Programme Specialist, Culture, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Cluster Office (Caribbean)

Summary

The overall goal of Learning Lab 4 was to raise awareness and promote knowledge exchange and cooperation on the benefits and necessity of integrating cultural heritage management in DRR strategies and plans. The presentation of the Addendum to the Scorecard on Cultural Heritage aimed at providing operational insights on how to concretely achieve this goal.

In their opening remarks, UNESCO representatives framed the relevance of integrating cultural heritage management strategies into DRR and resilience objectives. Cultural heritage (tangible and intangible heritage and cultural industries) can be extremely vulnerable to the adverse impacts of disasters and climate change, particularly in contexts in which urban planning overlooked cultural heritage. Conversely, the lack of infrastructure maintenance of tangible heritage and the loss of traditional knowledge together with other intangible cultural elements act as an aggravating factor of vulnerability in the Americas and the Caribbean.

While the Sendai Framework recognizes the importance of including cultural heritage into disaster risk reduction policies, national and local DRR strategies often lack a systematic integration thereof. The "Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities: Cultural Heritage Resilience – Addendum" was therefore presented by representatives of AECOM and the University G. d'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara as an opportunity to raise awareness of the need to integrate cultural heritage into DRR strategies and

plans, while promoting DRR into cultural heritage management. The tool aims to mainstream and strengthen the integration of cultural heritage management in the recipe for building more resilient cities.

Guest-speakers from Jamaica, Peru, and CECC-SICA highlighted the importance of strengthening the resilience of people and assets and making disaster risk reduction an intrinsic part of cultural heritage management to effectively protect lives, livelihoods, and cultural heritage. Likewise, in post-disaster situations, cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, plays a key role in the recovery of affected communities, as it strengthens identity and social cohesion and inclusion. The sharing of good practices in resilient cultural heritage management at the local level conveyed the relevance of the “Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities: Cultural Heritage Resilience – Addendum” and its utility in documenting, monitoring, and improving these inspiring practices.

The main challenges to integrating DRR and cultural heritage management include a low level of data collection and management, the need to promote inclusion and participation through enhanced communication strategies, and the urgency to strengthen the role played by young people in safeguarding heritage and promoting changes in the development of pathways for our countries.

Learning Session: Lightning and wildfires

Hosts

World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Climate Change and Resilience of Latin America and the Caribbean, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Facilitators

- Dr. Roger Pulwarty, Senior Scientist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA (moderator)
- Rodney Martinez, Representative, North America, Central America and the Caribbean, World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- Dr. Pieter Van Lierop, Regional Forestry Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Dennis Dudley, Manager of the Canadian Lightning Detection Network, Meteorological Service of Canada
- Heath Hockenberry, Fire Weather Programme Manager, National Weather Service
- Dr. Radenko Pavlovic, Numerical Weather Prediction Development Section Chief at the Canadian Meteorological Centre (CMC)
- Dr. Arlene Laing, Coordinating Director, Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)
- Berta Olmedo, Executive Secretary, Regional Committee on Water Resources (CRRH)
- Dr. Osvaldo Moraes, Director, National Centre for Monitoring and Early Warning of Natural Disasters (CEMADEN)

Summary

The Learning Session aimed to provide concise but relevant information about wildfires and/or lightning information systems in the Americas and the Caribbean.

Wildfires and lightning events have notably increased in the Americas and the Caribbean due to climate change. Current forecasting and warning systems do not reflect the extreme severity of these risks, while lightning is often overlooked or not considered. The case studies presented demonstrated the need for strengthened regional coordination to implement Early Warning Systems. A case was made to improve communication, including on historical contexts and their impacts, to better structure disaster risk reduction efforts. It is crucial that resources be allocated to support fire data collection and that analyses be carried out to improve understanding of the causes of fires and identify existing management practices.

Learning to cope with uncertainty and engaging with international partners are equally important to trigger local and national support in the Americas, as is establishing strategic plans on multi-hazard events with stakeholders in the region.



Closing Ceremony

The VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean concluded with a closing ceremony. Speakers celebrated the five important outputs of the Platform, namely the Civil Society Organizations Statement, the Statement of Youth, the Ministerial Declaration, the Regional Action Plan, and the daily Chair Summaries encapsulating the rich discussions held throughout the event.

In her remarks, Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of CDEMA, underscored that the Platform had succeeded in deepening multidimensional discussions between civil society, youth, Ministers, and other stakeholders in the region, thereby opening avenues for collaborative social, political, and economic development. Throughout the event, sessions stressed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and on the progress of development at regional level. Ms. Riley highlighted the importance of committing to the outcomes of the Regional Platform to effect change in the region, especially given that the LAC region is the most vulnerable to extreme weather events and seismic action.

The SRSB for DRR and Head of UNDRR, Ms. Mami Mizutori, underlined the significance of the Regional Platform, which highlighted the importance of risk governance in the region, built on multi-stakeholder engagement. Ms. Mizutori welcomed the fact that the Regional Action Plan also included vulnerable groups as agents of change, thereby encouraging the implementation of inclusive and diverse strategies. Ms. Mizutori further stated that the Platform had had the merit of addressing the linkages between DRR and climate change and expressed the hope that this echo of the themes discussed at the COP26 would strengthen the dialogue between the two events. Finally, she reiterated the need to establish green and sustainable mechanisms and plans for climate change adaptation and DRR at local, national, and regional levels.

The Hon. Mr. Mark Phillips, Prime Minister of Guyana, recalled that the Americas and the Caribbean are the region most affected by natural hazards globally, with losses due to climate-related events, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and recurrent floods, accounting for 53% of global economic losses. To counter compounding risks looming in the background, commitments to DRR and the targets of the Sendai Framework must be strongly reaffirmed. Current trajectories do not absolve the region from development, but rather require informed investments to sustain growth and development in the region. Priority must be given to building resilient infrastructure, including coastal infrastructure, road networks, drainage and irrigation systems, and smart hospitals. Resilient economies can only emerge from pooling experiences, practices, resources, and skills to combine risks and catalyse development. The region's mission is to get and stay ahead of the curve. Mr. Phillips officially announced the establishment of a new Disaster Risk Management Centre in one of Guyana's most vulnerable cities and showcased the country's successes in aligning public policies with disaster risk reduction considerations, for example through the development of a low carbon 2030 strategy.

The Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, reiterated the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the face of climate change. If no significant changes occur in the region, by 2050, more than \$20 billion will have been lost to disasters. Young people have a crucial role to play in altering this trajectory. In the Americas and the Caribbean, the 106 million young people represent 20% of the total population. Their participation in the Youth Forum is vital to strengthen disaster risk reduction strategies. Likewise, the inclusion of a Statement of Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Ministerial Declaration counts as a significant achievement of the Platform.

Speakers thanked the Government of Jamaica for contributing to advancing the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the region and celebrated the inclusive, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder nature of the RP21, which brought the whole-of-society approach to life.



Official Statements

- Argentina – [Written statement](#)
 - Canada – [English video statement](#) & [French video statement](#)
 - Chile – [Video statement](#)
 - Colombia – [Video statement](#)
 - Costa Rica – [Video statement](#)
 - Ecuador – [Written statement](#) / [Video statement](#)
 - Guatemala – [Video statement](#)
 - Jamaica – [Written statement](#)
 - México – [Written statement](#)
 - Paraguay – [Written statement](#) / [Video statement](#)
 - Perú – [Video statement](#)
 - Suriname – [Video statement](#)
 - Trinidad & Tobago – [Video statement](#)
 - United States of America – [Video statement](#)
 - Uruguay – [Video statement](#)
-
- Andean Community – [Video statement](#)
 - Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) – [Video statement](#)
 - Colegio Mayor de Antioquia University Institution – [Written statement](#)
 - Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPRENAC) – [Video statement](#)
 - Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) – [Written statement](#) / [Video statement](#)
 - International University of Ecuador – [Written statement](#)
 - Regional Education Group (Education LAC) – [Video statement](#)
 - RET, Latin America and the Caribbean – [Written statement](#)

Side Events

Eight Side Events were hosted during the Regional Platform and reflected the multi-actor and multi-sectoral nature of the conference. All eight events were organized and convened by partners. They covered key areas of DRR debates and learning at the regional level.

Risk-informed recovery in a multi-hazard context: Lessons learned from current times

Organizers

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank

The first Side Event to take place aimed at promoting knowledge sharing and experience exchange to advance recovery in the Americas and the Caribbean. Planning for recovery ex-ante enables governments and partners to build consensus on recovery goals and strategies, gather critical information to inform decisions, define roles and responsibilities, and develop the necessary capacities to efficiently implement recovery processes. Planning benefits post-disaster recovery insofar as it contributes to building back better, enables a demand-driven and inclusive recovery, minimizes development deficits, and reduces recovery costs. Likewise, assessment tools, such as the PDNA, provide a solid evidence basis for quantifying recovery needs and formulating broad strategies towards long-term recovery. Disaster recovery and development are closely intertwined. Policies must therefore reach far beyond addressing emergencies to balance short-term and long-term measures. Especially in the LDCs and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), recovery is an opportunity to expand productive capacities and leverage on drivers of economic resilience (education, economic diversification, jobs creation, climate change adaptation, and more). Successful recovery requires that governance systems be tailored to the demands of the circumstances and that a whole-of-society approach be put in place to promote coordination and complementary actions across sectors and stakeholder groups and move away from silo approaches. Likewise, successful recovery rests on diverse financing arrangements to help sustain long-term endeavours and economic reforms where needed.

Resilience of SMEs

Organizers

CARICHAM, University of the West Indies, ARISE

This Side Event aimed at raising awareness of the critical success factors for achieving SME resilience. When a disaster strikes, SMEs are harder hit than other businesses, bearing around 75% of the losses incurred by the sector. SMEs also suffer longer than larger businesses and are slower to recover. Losses incurred by SMEs often have spill-over effects into the wider economy, compounding the hardship of vulnerable groups. The disproportionate share of risk borne by SMEs is partly due to their concentration in hazard-prone areas of the global South and in highly vulnerable sectors of the economy, such as agriculture. SMEs currently underinvest in DRR activities. Evidence shows, however, that investments in DRR are highly cost-effective as they reduce impacts while allowing for faster recovery. The session highlighted tools and mechanisms to increase SME resilience, such as access to financial mechanisms, digitalization, business risk assessments, and management tools, including BCPs.

Developing inclusive disaster risk reduction plans

Organizers

Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE)

The third Side Event to take place aimed to identify and share best practices in the implementation of DRR plans that are inclusive of people with disabilities and indigenous traditional knowledge; to ensure the inclusion, participation and empowerment of priority groups (children, adolescents, women, people with disabilities) in disaster risk management in the Americas and the Caribbean; and to establish guiding principles for the development of sources of information on the situation of people with disabilities in the region.

Making cities resilient: The urban challenge

Organizers

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), ICLEI South America, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

This Side Event aimed to reaffirm the need to strengthen knowledge and action on climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and community resilience building in urban development, to raise awareness on the role of innovation and communication in risk and climate change education, and to promote the revision of the UNFCCC. The session showcased concrete prevention and resilience initiatives led by communities and other stakeholder groups in different areas of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. Important exchanges took place on issues surrounding communication in the quest to raise social awareness, promote prevention, and build resilience. The session touched upon questions as broad as adapted channels, adequate form and content, target audiences, context specifics, and language to narrow down best practices.

Energy & water in resilient economies

Organizers

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

This Side Event looked at how the energy-water nexus affects economic resilience. During the session, recommendations were made on actions that can be taken by governments and the private sector to strengthen the role of the water and energy sector in fostering economic resilience. Two issues linking the energy-water nexus to poverty and gender were emphasized. First, evidence shows that the access of poor households to water and energy is significantly more affected when services are interrupted. Among poor households, women and children bear the heaviest burden. Second, a gap regarding the presence of women in managerial and leadership positions is observed in the water and energy sector and needs to be addressed.

Resilient tourism: Lessons from 2020

Organizers

Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)

The sixth Side Event to take place discussed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector in the region and showcased the resilience of the tourism industry. COVID-19 has indeed severely impacted tourism worldwide, and the Caribbean has been no exception. It has forced countries to be inner-looking and to search for new resilience mechanisms. The crisis, although serious, has also presented an opportunity to re-discover local cultures and explore new business models. Domestic tourism has been the first sector to recover, although this recovery does not compensate for the loss endured in international tourism. Stakeholders of the tourism industry discussed the management of tourism facilities in the face of the pandemic and highlighted tactics, processes, and procedures that had worked or failed. Facilitators expressed the need for tourism authorities to foster enhanced participation of tourism actors and stakeholders to discuss sustainable tourism practices and acknowledge the importance of diversifying business models. Beyond the national level, cooperation to develop regional responses and consistent requirements have contributed to accelerate the recovery of the tourism sector. One of the most important lessons of the pandemic has been the fostering of solidarity, partnerships, collaboration, and teamwork with the common goal of accelerating the safe recovery of the sector.

Achievements and challenges of risk governance in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic: The case of Uruguay

Organizers

National Emergency System (SINAE) Uruguay

This Side Event aimed at exposing the governance model of Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management implemented in Uruguay in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The audience was exposed to several aspects of this bi-national health emergency management structure, including the application of the legal framework, the methods used for the geo-referencing of cases, the communication channels used to convey data to the population, and the lessons learned regarding the entry of migrants and the care of children.

Ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (Nature-based Solutions) for increased resilience in the Americas and Caribbean

Organizers

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The last Side Event to take place pursued the goal of promoting the implementation of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR) tools to increase local and national resilience. In the language of the Regional Action Plan, this Side Event highlighted the importance of conceiving natural ecosystems as tools for preventing disasters and building resilience. Examples of bioengineering works in rural areas of Central America, coral-reefs flood-protection projects in Quintana Roo (Mexico), and mangrove recovery in Colombia and the Caribbean were presented. Worth noting is the fact that studies carried out in Colombia have shown the economic benefit of resorting to eco-reduction works over traditional engineering works. The implementation of bioengineering and eco-solutions requires political support as well as traditional and alternative funding mechanisms.

Ideas Incubator

Title	Proposed by	Organized by
The adventures of Zeus and his friends in Osasco	Alba Helena Ramos D'Ávila	Municipal Civil Defense Coordination and Secretariat of Environment and Water Resources of the Osasco Municipal Government
Understanding climate change and its risks with a systemic and comprehensive vision	Alejandro Arias Diaz	AURORA science communications
A way forward towards a systemic and risk-centred disaster preparedness approach in the Region: The results of the 2021 ECHO DP Workshop	Álvaro de Vicente Sandoval	ECHO
Resilient MSMEs	Alejandro Rodríguez Valdivia	Previdere Lex
A day in Disaster Risk Management	Carlos David Ortega González	Red Cross National Society, Colombia
Transforming information management into knowledge to develop more resilient territories	Dalton Andres Andrade Rodriguez	Independent
Understanding disaster risk for cultural heritage in the historic city of Arequipa, Peru	Eduardo Ugarte y Chocano	International Counsel of Museums, Perú (ICOM)
Music and crypto to improve hurricane preparedness	Emiliano Rodriguez Nuesch	Pacífico
Equipping ourselves: Tools for community resilience	Magela Grisoni	Pacífico
Analysis of the tsunamigenic potential of the Mexican subduction zone	Edilson Fernando Salazar Monroy	Institute of Engineering, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)
Inclusive community Early Warning Systems: An effective tool to build resilience	Ibia Vega Cuza	Humanity & Inclusion
Technological tools for disaster risk reduction in public investments	Iván Cerda Escares	Central American Institute of Public Administration (ICAP) (ICAP)
Protocols to build resilient communities: A new proposal	Jocelyn Jimenez	Autonomous University of Mexico City (UACM)
Preparation of risk management plans and execution of family drills by university students from urban and rural areas as a process of risk reduction and resilience in their communities	Juan Felipe Florez Montoya	Jaime Isaza Cadavid
Inclusive diagnostic and risk analysis for more effective DRM	Milagros Jimena Anaya Robles	Humanity & Inclusion
Awareness workshops on comprehensive risk management in rural schools in Uruguay	Matias Ocampos Figueroa	National Emergency System (SINAE) Uruguay

Title	Proposed by	Organized by
Integrated and interdisciplinary disaster risk assessment	Paola Cardozo	National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET)
Improving connectivity for Early Warning Systems and COVID-19 response in Alto Paraguay	Fabiola Guerrero Rodas	COOPI
COVID response and disability: Nothing about us without us	Otto Amílcar Mazariegos	Red GIRDD-LAC
Design structure matrix for modelling infrastructure interdependencies in community recovery	Rameez Qureshi	Texas A&M University
Master in urbanism, mention in governance with a focus on climate change, course in resilience and risk management (from the Ecuadorian Academy)	Sylvia Viviana Jiménez Riofrio	Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador
Integrating disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, and management of environmental systems into local government	Mikhail Johns	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)
Tsunami ready: Towards a safer ocean	Alison Brome	UNESCO/IOC – Tsunami Unit and Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre (CTIC)
CADRI's new digital tool strengthening Interagency work in DRR	Rubén Vargas	UNDP
Fiberglass rods a sustainable and safe proposal	Sebastian Torres Forero	B&C Projects S.A.S – Armastek Colombia
Video contest "Voices of the community in the Americas and the Caribbean: Getting ready for a resilient future": Youth	MCR2020 ROAMC	MCR2030
Video contest "Voices of the community in the Americas and the Caribbean: Getting ready for a resilient future": Community practices	MCR2020 ROAMC	MCR2030
Disaster Resilience Week: Learn to prevent, prevent to protect	Dr. Carlos Oliver Llanos Valencia	Disaster Medical Assistance Team
Tsunamis Girls	Saskia Carusi	UNDRR/UNESCO



Innovations Platform

Innovations Platform booths at the RP21

1. ESTRATEGO
2. UNESCO/IOC – Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre
3. University of Quindío – REDULAC/RRD Colombia
4. DG ECHO
5. CIMA Research Foundation
6. CBM
7. CDEMA
8. Red GIRDD-LAC
9. Humanity & Inclusion
10. Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Secretariat
11. IsraAID
12. CEPREDENAC
13. UNDRR
14. SIPROL SpA
15. Colegio Mayor de Antioquia University Institution
16. Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
17. Care International Honduras
18. Water Resources Authority
19. World Bank
20. German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
21. Jamaica National Group
22. Special presentation by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Media Engagement Activities

Media activities played a crucial role in ensuring the quality of coverage of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean. The special plan designed to encourage and foster media participation included two press conferences, four media trainings, and a closing certificate ceremony.

In total, 60 people registered to take part in these activities. Twelve of the registered participants came from the media sector and the rest from DRR communication offices. Of the 60 participants, 32 identified as men and 28 as women. The participants represented media from 17 countries (Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, Bolivia, Anguilla, United States, Colombia, Barbados, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Trinidad, Perú, Guyana, Spain, Mexico, Chile, and Guatemala).

The media activities held during RP21 were as follows:

- 1 The Opening Press Conference, held on 1 November (3:00 pm Jamaica time), chaired by the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, and Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR. The conference was conducted and moderated by Jamaican journalist Ms. Emily Shields.
- 2 The Closing Press Conference, held on 4 November (12:00 pm Jamaica time), chaired by the Hon. Mr. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Jamaica, Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, and Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). The conference was conducted and moderated by Jamaican journalist Ms. Emily Shields and attended by 30 participants.
- 3 The Closing Certificate Ceremony, under the theme Media Training Saves Lives, chaired by Mr. Raúl Salazar, Chief of the UNDRR Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Ms. Brigitte Leoni, World Broadcasting Union (WBU), Ms. Sonia Gill, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), and Ms. Kayleaser Deveaux-Isaacs, President of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU). The Closing Certificate Ceremony was moderated and conducted by Ms. Saskia Carusi, External Relations Officer of the UNDRR Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean and was attended by 52 participants.
- 4 Media Training session 1 took place on 27 October via Zoom (2:00 pm Jamaica time). This preparatory event to the RP21 lasted 90 minutes and was attended by 50 participants. The

session was chaired by Mr. Kevin Blanchard, Director of the #NoNaturalDisasters International Campaign, and Dr. Raymundo Padilla, expert on disaster media coverage in Latin America at the University of Colima, Mexico.

5 Media Training session 2, titled The Role of the Media in Disaster Risk Reduction, took place on 1 November via Hopin (12:00 pm Jamaica time) and lasted 30 minutes. The session was chaired by Ms. Jeannette Elsworth, Chief of Communications, Advocacy, Knowledge Management, and ICT at UNDRR in Geneva, and was attended by 24 participants.

6 Media Training session 3, titled The Role of the Media: Saving Lives, took place on 2 November via Hopin (12:00 pm Jamaica time) and lasted 35 minutes. The session was chaired by Mr. Carlton Pickering, CEO of KCN Anguilla TV Channel, and was attended by 42 participants.

7 Media Training session 4, titled Drivers of Systemic Risk, Enemies of Development: Are we Prepared for New Pandemics? Lessons learned (or still to be learned) regarding COVID-19, took place on 3 November via Hopin (12:00 pm Jamaica time) and lasted 40 minutes. The session was chaired by Mr. Andrew Smith, Coordinator of the Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of West Indies, Jamaica, and Dr. Raymundo Padilla, expert on disaster media coverage in Latin America at the University of Colima, Mexico, and was attended by 25 participants.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The General Assembly through its resolutions 65/186, 64/131 and 64/154 urged the United Nations system to make a concerted effort to integrate disability into its work and encouraged the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to work to ensure that development programmes, including Sustainable Development Goals policies, processes, and mechanisms, are inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities.

In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities principle on full and effective participation and inclusion in society, persons with disabilities should have the opportunity, on an equal basis with others, to be actively involved in all decision-making processes on policies and programmes, and at fora where international development is discussed.

Given the mandate to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework and commitment to ensure a disability-inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction, real time captioning and international sign language interpreters supported the entire agenda of the event to ensure the meaningful and active participation of people with disabilities in the 2021 Regional Platform procedures and proceedings.

Women's Participation and Leadership in the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP21)

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 recognizes women's central role in reducing disaster risk. UNDRR proudly supports women's equal participation and leadership in public life as an important goal in itself and an essential means to reducing disaster risk and achieving a broad range of Sustainable Development Goals.

In line with its commitment to implement the Sendai Framework in an inclusive and gender-responsive manner, and its efforts to promote and support the visibility and role of women, UNDRR is proud to have worked with the Government of Jamaica, CDEMA, and the members of the RP21 Advisory Council to support women's active participation and leadership in the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean.

More specifically, UNDRR,

- Supported discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment held by the Advisory Council and session organizing teams throughout the organization process of the RP21;
- Ensured gender parity across all RP21 sessions and events;
- Encouraged the participation of women in the RP21. Out of the total of 2873 registered participants, 53% identified as women;
- Supported women to take on leading speaking roles during the event, including 22 (co)chairs, 103 speakers, and 12 in other roles of responsibility such as moderators and facilitators;
- Held a Side Event on Women's Entrepreneurship & DRR as part of the formal programme of the VII Regional Platform.
- Continues to call upon partners and stakeholders to work towards achieving gender equality in each and every one of their initiatives.

LAC Women's Network for DRR

The LAC Women's Network for DRR brings together women and girls involved in different aspects of disaster risk management throughout the LAC region. It pursues gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and the inclusion of historically marginalized populations across LAC and beyond. The Network stands out as a platform to share experiences, challenges, and opportunities,

generate ideas, and showcase innovative and transformative solutions. These horizontal learning experiences promote synergies and collaboration to strengthen comprehensive disaster risk management across the region.

The webinar launching the Network was organized jointly by the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), UN-Women and UNDRR. It was held on 13 October 2021, to celebrate the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR), the focus of which, in 2021, was international cooperation in line with target F of the Sendai Framework. The webinar included a kick-off high-level dialogue among LAC women working in DRR, including government, UN system and civil society representatives. Participants shared their insights on the challenges and advances of gender equality in the context of the implementation of target F of the Sendai Framework. Participants were also consulted on the governance mechanisms, meeting frequency, and initial priorities of the Network. Some of the priorities mentioned during the session included sharing community-level experiences and lessons, creating gender indicators and participatory spaces, fostering learning exchanges, and strengthening capacity-building.

The Network currently counts 950 members from more than 30 countries.

Further readings:

- <https://www.undrr.org/news/women-latin-america-and-caribbean-launch-network-disaster-risk-reduction>
- <https://www.preventionweb.net/event/iddrr-launch-latin-american-and-caribbean-network-women-disaster-risk-reduction>
- Recording of Launch Webinar: <https://fb.watch/8CKC0R31FS/>
- Sign up form to join the Network: <https://forms.office.com/r/sjg3xj3zz8>
- Community of Practice: <https://cc.preventionweb.net/lac-women-for-drr>
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mujeresrddlac>

Acknowledgements

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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
High Commission of Canada – Government of Canada
German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS)

Organizers and co-organizers

AECOM

Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE)

Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Central American Integration System (SICA)

Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Caribbean

Coordination Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Global Network for Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)

Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC)

Government of Colombia

Government of Jamaica

ICLEI South America

Inter-American Conference on Social Security (CISS)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
International Organization for Migration
National Emergency System (SINAE) Uruguay
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Network of Chambers of Commerce (Caribbean) (CARICHAM)
Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)
Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)
Platform on Disaster Displacement
Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies (ARISE)
Secretariat of Central American Social Integration (SISCA)
Social Studies Network for Disaster Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean (LA RED)
The University of the West Indies (UWI)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)
United Nations Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Climate Change and Resilience of Latin America and the Caribbean
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
University G. d'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara (Ud'A)
World Bank
World Bank/Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)



Annexes

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Annex 1: Ministerial Declaration

Ministerial Declaration of the Fourth Ministers and High-Level Authorities Meeting on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean: https://rp-americas.undrr.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Ministerial%20Declaration_EN.pdf

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

Fourth High-Level Meeting of Ministers and Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean

1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation gathered at the Fourth High-Level Meeting of Ministers and Authorities on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean during the 7th Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP21) hosted by the Government of Jamaica from November 1-4, 2021:
2. *Expressing solidarity* with all people and countries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims of the pandemic and those whose lives and livelihoods have been affected by it, especially in the Americas and the Caribbean;
3. *Emphasizing* that the COVID-19 pandemic, as a manifestation of the systemic nature of risk that we all face, has underlined the urgency to address disaster risk and build resilience;
4. *Noting with concern* that the human and financial cost of disasters is rapidly rising, trapping countries in a continuous cycle of emergency response and curtailing governments in their capacity to grow and develop;
5. *Recognizing* the impact recent disasters have had in the Americas and the Caribbean, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the volcanic eruption in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the 7.2 earthquake in Haiti, the ETA and IOTA hurricanes in the Central American region, and hurricane ELSA in the Caribbean territory, among others, and the specific challenges facing Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean region, requiring a concerted integration of disaster risk reduction into recovery plans and development planning;
6. *Reinforcing* the need to integrate disaster risk reduction at the core of the political and technical sustainable development and climate agendas, as well as the new urban agenda;
7. *Acknowledging* the need to enhance risk governance through a truly multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement at national and local / municipal and community levels;

Annex 2: Revised Regional Action Plan

Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean (updated November 2021): https://rp-americas.undrr.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Regional%20Action%20Plan_EN.pdf

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030 IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN (UPDATED NOVEMBER 2021)

Introduction

This Regional Action Plan (RAP) is meant to serve as a foundational document, of a non-legally binding nature, that identifies practices and processes to advance implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-2030 throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. It marks an evolutionary step towards a concerted regional approach to supporting countries in their efforts to build whole-of-society resilience, reduce disaster risk and impacts, and contribute to the well-being of our societies.

The RAP helps further the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Americas and the Caribbean through the identification of local, national and regional initiatives that contribute to one or more of the Sendai targets. This approach helps Member States to collectively build upon the Guiding Principles established in the Sendai Framework, in particular those aimed at fostering a whole-of-society approach, in line with the groups and stakeholders identified in the Sendai Framework and coherence across the DRR, climate change new urban agenda and sustainable development frameworks, as well as the Regional Actions listed in the "Guidelines Towards a Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030". The latter were agreed at the First Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas hosted by the Government of Paraguay on 9 June 2016.

The Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean was first adopted by Member States in the Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (March 7-9, 2017, Montreal, Canada). The RAP was then re-confirmed as valid by Member States at the Sixth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (June 20-22, 2018, Cartagena, Colombia).

Ahead of the Seventh Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (1-4 November 2021, hosted virtually by the Government of Jamaica), an e-consultation was designed by UNDRR in collaboration with the Government of Jamaica in order to collect relevant information to be used as a basis for reflection and discussion on the challenges and opportunities present in the region to advance in the implementation of the Sendai Framework. Further consultations were held with Intergovernmental Organizations, with youth and with civil society organizations.

Annex 3: Statement of Youth and Civil Society Organizations Statements

Statement of Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction within the framework of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Statement%20of%20Youth.pdf>

Civil Society Organizations Statement at the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/CSOs%20Statement.pdf>

Statement of Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction within the framework of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Good afternoon, I would like to thank you all for allowing me to join this space and present the validated statement by the youth of the Americas and the Caribbean. I would also like to extend a special thanks to

- Minister Min. Hon. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Government of Jamaica,
- Ms Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
- As well as the Ministers from the region

This Statement is the result of the Youth Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), developed virtually in the framework of the Preparatory Meeting of the VII Regional Platform for DRR. The Youth Forum, "Building Resilient Economies in the Americas and the Caribbean" had the participation of over 400 youth from the Americas and the Caribbean. The Forum allowed the discussion of young people to build this statement. The statement is supported by the members of the steering committee which includes the Government of Jamaica, UNDRR, UNICEF, IFRC, UNESCO and GNDR.

While the Youth Forum was held on October 26, 2021, the statement is a culmination of work by the Youth Committee since 2020 which include the development of a survey with over 1000 responses from the region and a youth webinar on the topic of DRR and Climate Change on the international day of the youth and the virtual DRR communication campaign.



CSO Statement at the 2021 Regional Platform for the Americas

Since the 2018 Regional Platform in Cartagena, the world has significantly changed: the pandemic caused by **Covid-19** and **events that were not previously categorized as disasters**, such as what happened, last 14 August 2021, "a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit the southwestern region of Haiti severely impacting South, Nippes and Grand'Anse departments, changed the landscape of the world and particularly of vulnerable communities in Latin America".

Annex 4: Social Media Highlights and Statistics Details

Messages of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean were shared via social media throughout the event. Captures of the highlights from various social media platforms are presented below.

One of the Top Tweets of the RP21



During the event, the Regional Platform achieved **26.5K impressions** per day on Twitter. **Clicks** on links in posts amounted to **163** throughout the event, **33** clicks on average per day. **Retweets** without comments totalled **431**, with an average of **86** per day. **Likes** totalled to **791**, with an average of **158** per day.

Monday, November 1, 2021	Tuesday, November 2, 2021	Wednesday, November 3, 2021	Thursday, November 4, 2021	Friday, November 5, 2021
Organic impressions: 21.583	Organic impressions: 39.893	Organic impressions: 25.805	Organic impressions: 20.615	Organic impressions: 24.735
Tweet: 43	Tweet: 23	Tweet: 22	Tweet: 35	Tweet: 26

One of the Top Facebook posts of the RP21



People reached	53.3K
+54.2% compared to previous 69 days	
Net followers	126
+241% compared to previous 69 days	
Engagement	12.1K
+206% compared to previous 69 days	
New followers	228
Link clicks	1775

Annex 5: Additional Information, Photos, and Videos

Website: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/>

Chair's Summary of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Chair%27s%20Summary.pdf>

Digital Brochure: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/publication/rp21-digital-brochure>

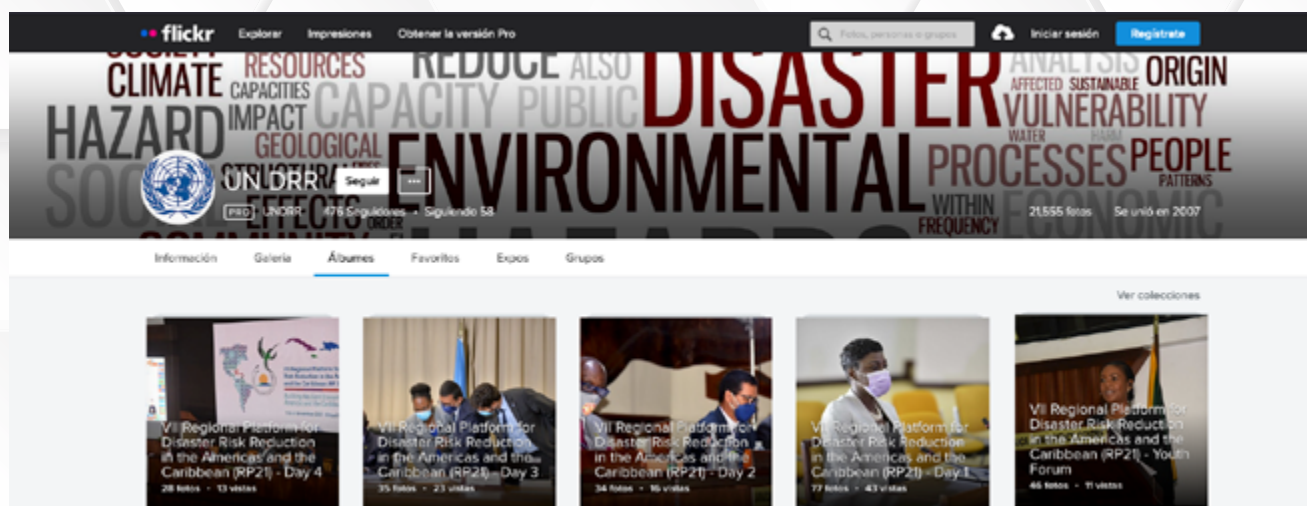
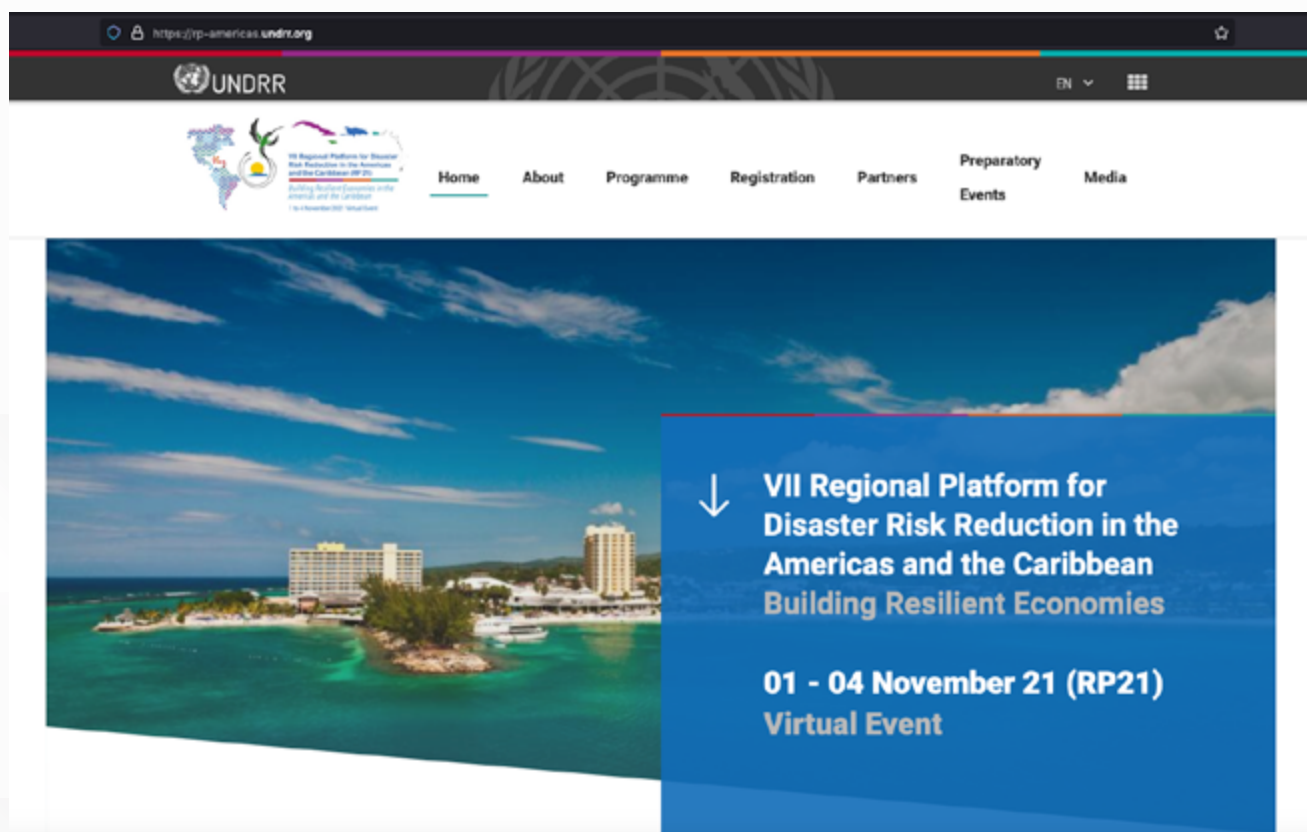
Session recordings and materials: <https://rp-americas.undrr.org/programme/RP21>

Final video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=osG9auvFjfl&feature=youtu.be>

YouTube playlists: [Day 1](#) – [Day 2](#) – [Day 3](#) – [Day 4](#)

Flickr: [Day 1](#) – [Day 2](#) – [Day 3](#) – [Day 4](#)

Website



Annex 6: Media Coverage

TV

CLICK VERDE-NTN24

ONU hace llamado a mejorar la gestión del riesgo ante aumento de fenómenos climáticos

<https://www.ntn24.com/programas/click-verde/onu-hace-llamado-a-mejorar-la-gestion-del-riesgo-ante-aumento-de-fenom-387791>

FRANCE 24 MEDIOAMBIENTE

Los desastres climáticos se quintuplicaron en los últimos 50 años

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHTcNMEIPyc&list=PLgETi64bAeW5YbYVwRYODISU6IJ2Zcz-1t&ab_channel=FRANCE24Espa%C3%B1ol

PUBLIC BROADCASTING CORPORATION OF JAMAICA (PBCJ)

Disaster Risk Reduction Forum to be held this week

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9ejPhZzdwM>

Opening and closing ceremonies and selected sessions everyday streamed live by Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBCJ)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRfqvdYOW_A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XOSXBZ9QL8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jep9oRjnKfY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dFZxds0xIU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kS7hbidsDhk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hweYUJcbOXU>

PRINTED MEDIA

5 buenas noticias sobre la lucha contra el cambio climático

<https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-58929801>

<https://www.t13.cl/noticia/tendencias/bbc/cambio-climatico-5-buenas-noticias-sobre-la-lucha-contra-el-calentamiento-global>

<https://elcomercio.pe/mundo/actualidad/cambio-climatico-5-buenas-noticias-sobre-la-lucha-contra-el-calentamiento-global-contadas-por-cientificos-y-expertos-noticia/>

<https://www.pagina12.com.ar/378322-cambio-climatico-las-cinco-buenas-noticias-sobre-la-lucha-co>

Millones de personas migran a causa del cambio climático

<https://www.efeverde.com/noticias/millones-personas-migran-causa-cambio-climatico/>

<https://www.diariolibre.com/actualidad/internacional/r-salazar-undrr-millones-de-personas-migran-a-causa-del-cambio-climatico-DI29304623>

<https://www.portalambiental.com.mx/cambio-climatico/20211013/millones-de-personas-migran-a-causa-del-cambio-climatico-indica-la-undrr>

<https://www.newslocker.com/es-co/region/salazar/ral-salazar-undrr-millones-de-personas-migran-a-causa-del-cambio-climatico-efeverde/>

<https://enespanol24.com/jefe-de-undrr-millones-de-personas-migran-a-causa-del-cambio-climatico/>

<https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2021/10/13/r-salazar-undrr-millones-de-personas-migran-a-causa-del-cambio-climatico/>

La VII Plataforma Regional para la Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres alza el telón en Jamaica

<https://news.un.org/es/story/2021/11/1499432>

COVID-19 Causing Shift in Socio-Economic Profiles of Caribbean States-CDEMA

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/COVID-19_causing_shift_in_socio-economic_profiles_of_Caribbean_states_CDEMA?profile=0

<https://jis.gov.jm/covid-19-causing-shift-in-socio-economic-profiles-of-caribbean-states-cdema/>

<https://caribbeannewsservice.com/covid-19-causing-shift-in-socio-economic-profiles-of-caribbean-states-cdema/>

<https://twnews.nl/jm-news/covid-19-causing-shift-in-socio-economic-profiles-of-caribbean-states-cdema>

<https://antiguabreakingnews.com/regional-news/covid-19-causing-shift-in-socio-economic-profiles-of-caribbean-states-cdema/>

<https://noovell.com/en/similar/75223421>

Jamaica Now Has a National Tsunami Response Plan

<https://jis.gov.jm/jamaica-now-has-a-national-tsunami-response-plan/>

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20211105/jamaica-now-has-national-tsunami-response-plan>

<https://flipboard.com/topic/tsunami/jamaica-now-has-a-national-tsunami-response-plan/f-08f86cf428%2Fjamaica-gleaner.com>

Jamaica Now Has a National Tsunami Response Plan and Standing Order Procedure

<https://our.today/jamaica-now-has-national-tsunami-response-plan-and-standing-order-procedure/>

Tufton Highlights Lessons Learned from COVID-19 in Managing Disaster Risks

<https://jis.gov.jm/features/dr-tufton-highlights-lessons-learned-from-covid-19-in-managing-disasters-risks/>

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/Tufton_highlights_lessons_learned_from_COVID-19_in_managing_disaster_risks

PIOJ Director General Says Lessons from Pandemic Can Aid Preparedness for Future Occurrences

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/PIOJ_Director_General_says_lessons_from_pandemic_can_aid_preparedness_for_future_occurrences

Lessons from Pandemic Can Aid Preparedness for Future Occurrences

<https://jis.gov.jm/lessons-from-pandemic-can-aid-preparedness-for-future-occurrences-dr-henry/>

Jamaica to Host Major International Disaster Risk Conference

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/jamaica-to-host-major-international-disaster-risk-conference_169876&template=MobileArticle

<https://www.washingtoninformer.com/jamaica-to-host-international-disaster-risk-conference/>

Jamaica to Host Historic Disaster Risk Conference Next Year

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20191218/jamaica-host-historic-disaster-risk-conference-next-year>

Councillors to Attend Regional Confab on Disaster Risk Reduction

<https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/article/20191018/ARTICLE/191019696&template=MobileArticle>

Growth & Jobs: Building resilience in Agriculture Critical to Economic Prosperity-Thompson

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20211130/growth-jobs-building-resilience-agriculture-critical-economic-prosperity>

Jamaica on Track for Successful Regional Platform-UN Official

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/jamaica-on-track-for-successful-regional-platform-un-official_178096?profile=103

Youth Forum To Be Included in Future Regional Platforms of UNDRR

<https://jis.gov.jm/youth-forum-to-be-included-in-future-regional-platforms-of-undrr/>

Youth Forum to Be Part of Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

<https://mckoysnews.com/youth-forum-to-be-part-of-regional-platform-for-disaster-risk-reduction/>

Youth Forum To Be Added to Disaster Risk Conference Set for July

<https://jamaica.loopnews.com/content/youth-forum-regional-platform-disaster-risk-reduction-mckenzie>

Youth To Play Key Role in Staging of 2020 Regional Platform

<https://mckoysnews.com/youth-to-play-key-role-in-staging-of-2020-regional-platform/>

Regional Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction Postponed

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/regional-forum-on-disaster-risk-reduction-postponed_193238?profile=134

McKenzie Emphasises Importance of Int'l Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction

https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/McKenzie_emphasises_importance_of_intl_cooperation_in_disaster_risk_reduction

La reducción del riesgo de desastres: Acción fundamental para el sector salud de las Américas

<https://www.paho.org/es/noticias/13-10-2021-reduccion-riesgo-desastres-accion-fundamental-para-sector-salud-americas>

UN official: Youth should have more say in climate debate

<https://www.nationnews.com/2021/10/29/un-official-youth-say-climate-debate/>

UNDRR helping countries integrate health into disaster risk reduction strategies

<https://jis.gov.jm/undrr-helping-countries-integrate-health-into-disaster-risk-reduction-strategies/>

UNDRR calls member countries to integrate health into disaster risk reduction strategies

<https://associatetimes.com/undrr-calls-member-countries-to-integrate-health-into-disaster-risk-reduction-strategies/>

UN agency helping countries to integrate health into disaster risk reduction strategies

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20211103/un-agency-helping-countries-integrate-health-disaster-risk-reduction>

Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction promises to be dynamic and exciting

<https://jis.gov.jm/regional-platform-for-disaster-risk-reduction-promises-to-be-dynamic-and-exciting/>

Minister emphasizes importance of international cooperation in disaster risk reduction

<https://jis.gov.jm/minister-emphasises-importance-of-intl-cooperation-in-disaster-risk-reduction/>

Discussions on for construction of energy-efficient buildings

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20211102/discussions-construction-energy-efficient-buildings>

Jamaica looking to cut fuel bill with energy-efficient buildings

<https://jamaica.loopnews.com/content/jamaica-looking-cut-fuel-bill-energy-efficient-buildings>

Education State Minister says youth must have a voice in disaster mitigation

<https://jis.gov.jm/education-state-minister-says-youth-must-have-a-voice-in-disaster-mitigation/>

Youth voices needed in battling climate change

<https://jis.gov.jm/youth-voices-needed-in-battling-climate-change/>

Panamá reafirma su compromiso de reducir los riesgos de desastres

<https://www.laestrella.com.pa/nacional/211103/panama-reafirma-compromiso-reducir-riesgo-desastres>

Youth Forum to be included in future regional platforms of UNDRR

<https://jis.gov.jm/youth-forum-to-be-included-in-future-regional-platforms-of-undrr/>

Regional countries adopt revised Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction

<https://jis.gov.jm/regional-countries-adopt-revised-action-plan-on-disaster-risk-reduction/>

COVID-19 embraced in planning and execution of Regional Platform

<https://jis.gov.jm/covid-19-embraced-in-planning-and-execution-of-regional-platform/>

Minister McKenzie urges regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction

<https://jis.gov.jm/minister-mckenzie-urges-regional-cooperation-on-disaster-risk-reduction/>

Climate change and disaster resilience architecture hope

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/focus/20211107/patricia-green-climate-change-and-disaster-resilience-architecture-hope>

Science & Technology month feature – 5 November 2021

https://jis.gov.jm/radio_programs/science-technology-month-feature-november-5-2021/

RD y países de Centroamérica acuerdan hoja de ruta en Carta de Punta

<https://elnuevodiario.com.do/rd-y-paises-de-centroamerica-acuerdan-hoja-de-ruta-en-carta-de-punta/>

RADIO

Radio Epicentro – Entrevista a Saskia Carusi PR21

https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=924655581496002&_rdr

OTHERS

La prevención de desastres requiere de alianzas internacionales

<https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2021/10/12/capital/la-prevencion-de-desastres-requiere-de-alianzas-internacionales-urzua/>

Desde RD, países centroamericanos promueven alianzas para reducir el riesgo de desastres en la región

<https://www.diariolibre.com/actualidad/desde-rd-paises-centroamericanos-promueven-alianzas-para-reducir-el-riesgo-de-desastres-en-la-region-NJ29645585>

¿Cómo se vería tu casa en el apocalipsis? Sitio te permite ver lugares 'destruidos' por cambio climático

<https://www.reporteindigo.com/piensa/como-se-veria-tu-casa-en-el-apocalipsis-sitio-te-permite-ver-lugares-destruidos-por-cambio-climatico/>

El mayor desafío del cambio climático está en América Latina y el Caribe

<https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2021/10/12/sociedad/el-mayor-desafio-del-cambio-climatico-esta-en-al-y-el-caribe-onu/>

Harvard Humanitarian Initiative panel discusses resilience against disasters

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2021/10/12/humanitarian-panel-resilience/>

Emergencia climática y compromiso individual

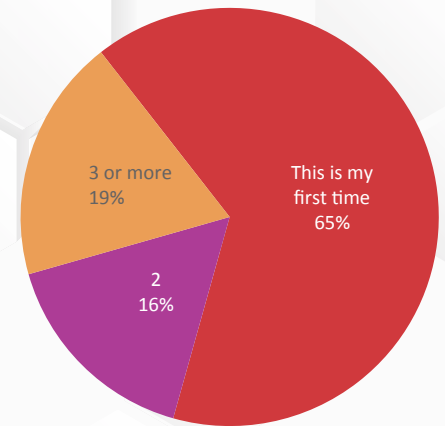
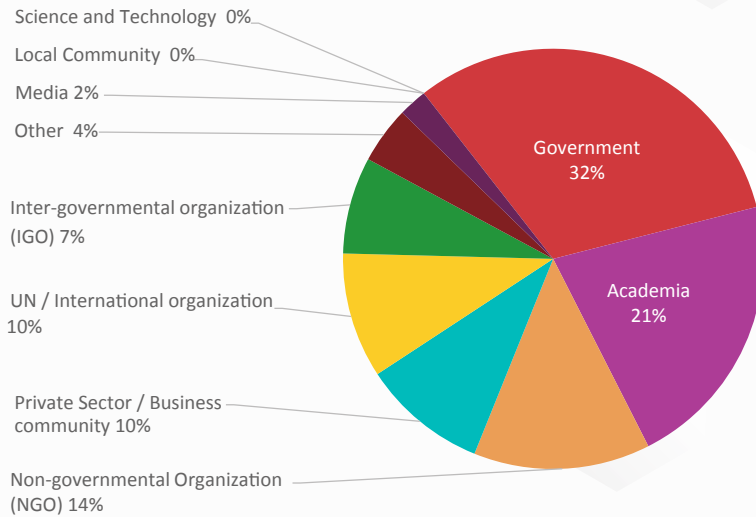
<https://www.miciudadreal.es/2021/11/17/emergencia-climatica-y-compromiso-individual/>

Desde RD países centroamericanos promueven alianzas para reducir el riesgo de desastres en la región

<https://www.diariolibre.com/actualidad/desde-rd-paises-centroamericanos-promueven-alianzas-para-reducir-el-riesgo-de-desastres-en-la-region-NJ29645585>

Annex 7: Survey Results

Are you a member or representative of:

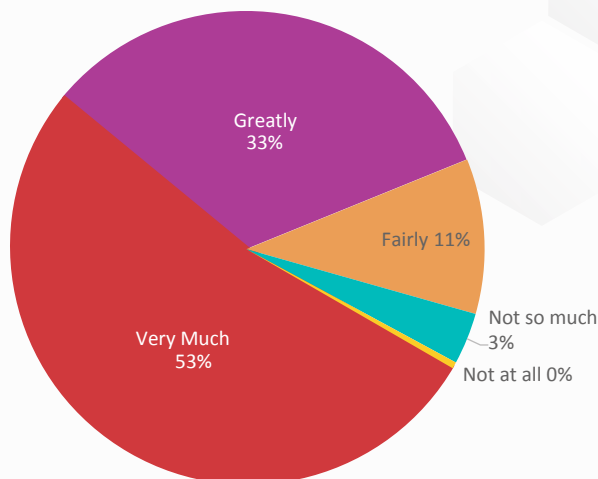


The data collected under this seems unreliable

- Ranking was requested instead of selecting the reasons, therefore every option received a vote from every respondent
- Most respondents ranked the options in the same order that they appeared on the list skewing the data so 1st option is ranked #1, 2nd #2, etc.

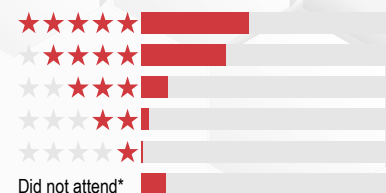


Did the event meet your expectations?



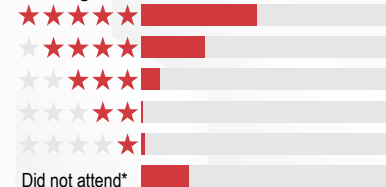
Opening Ceremony Rating
Average

3.85



Opening Ceremony Rating
Average

3.57

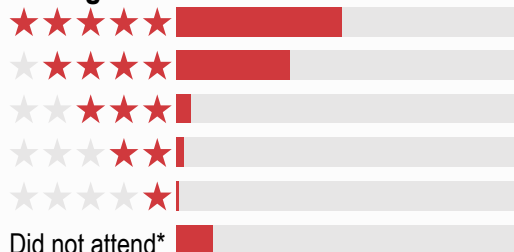


* Did not attend was assigned a score of 0

How would you rate the High-Level Sessions?

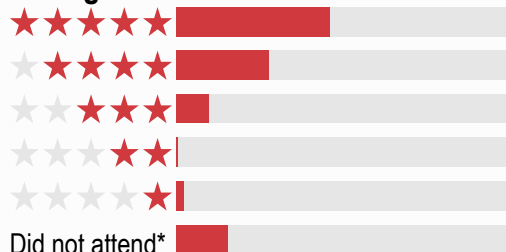
Day 1: Americas & Caribbean: the resilience-building challenge for the next decades:

Average 3.95



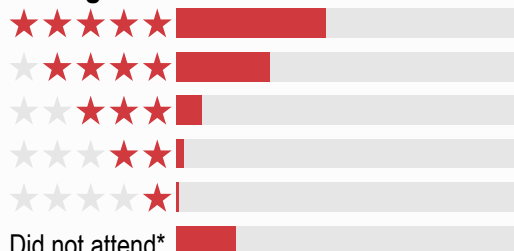
Day 2: Building resilient economies: building back, better and greener, leaving no one behind

Average 3.68



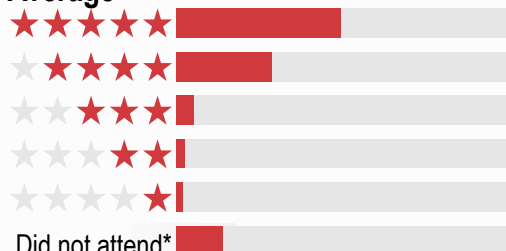
Day 3: Social protection and inclusion to strengthen community resilience

Average 3.59



Day 4: Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance: Lessons from COVID-19

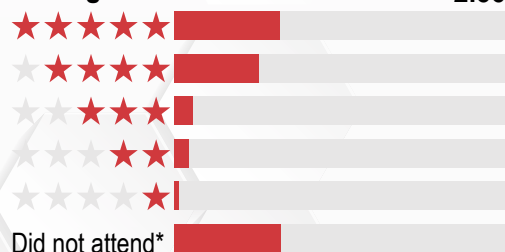
Average 3.78



How would you rate the Parallel Sessions?

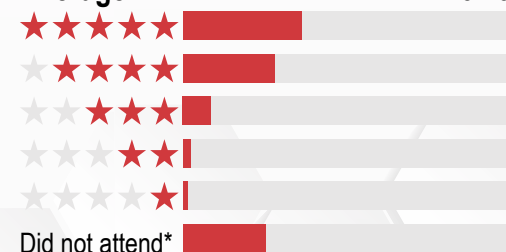
Day 3: Using social protection mechanisms to address inequalities in preparedness, response ...

Average 2.85



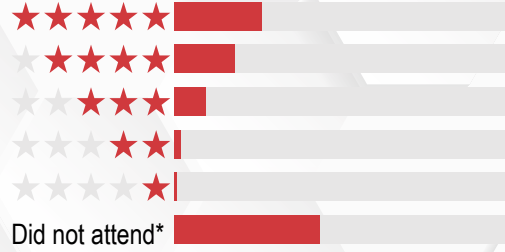
Day 3: Local governments, environmental management and disaster risk reduction: addressing ...

Average 3.19



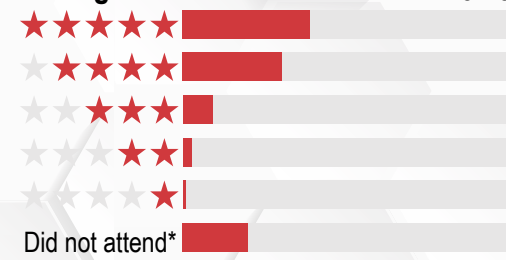
Day 3: Anticipatory Financing

Average 2.36



Day 4: Understanding systemic risk and promoting people-centred sustainable development

Average 3.43



Everything—the studio, the virtual booths, the content of the sessions—everything was great! In the virtual world, small mishaps are bound to happen, and none of that took away from the quality of the event!

The virtual platform was easy to use, and the hosts / moderators were fantastic. Very upbeat and fun to listen to!

The speakers were very passionate about their topics and were able to answer questions in a very comprehensible manner.

La posibilidad de escuchar a tantos expositores y el intercambio entre participantes

The platform worked really great although was not able to use all the tools. Agenda was well thought out, taking into consideration the challenges of virtual engagement. I was able to attend, probably had it not been virtual, it would not have been possible. I enjoyed the learning labs.

The opportunity to select which sessions to attend.

"I liked the event and the capabilities of the Hopin platform. I hope that I have access to the archives of the various days events and the expo innovation section of the platform. I would want to take a look at the presentations etc. I did not see."

The breadth of the topics and the knowledge of the presenters were excellent. The media training sessions were a huge plus!

The organization of the event, the selection of the speakers was very successful, the time of participation, the topics.

The development of all the events or conferences were of great interest and approached by very well-trained people.

Great selection of presenters and the range of presentations well done thoroughly enjoyed this and I will be back next year. Can we hold a regional one every year?

I liked the informative and very educational sessions that took place. There was a lot that was learnt.

Very diverse, thought provoking and instrumental.

El temario por día era fácil de encontrar y se podía identificar las sesiones disponibles. Los temas fueron variados.

Me gusto el poder escuchar el pensar de cada uno de los espectadores y que nos compartan su enseñanza como se maneja la gdr en diferentes países.

Me encantó la facilidad de entrar y salir a los escenarios y sesiones.

Very informative and diverse sessions

I liked the event and the capabilities of the Hopin platform. I hope that I have access to the archives of the event and the innovations section of the platform. I would want to take a look at the presentations etc.

"Hopin interface was great. I could do speed networking and visit virtual booths, Slido polls etc. Wonderful! Sessions were informative with very learned and capable speakers."

The excellent level of the speakers and the fact that the topics were approached from different dimensions.

Different topics were spoken, even about inclusion of People with Disabilities.

Me gustó que se mostraron muchos ejemplos de trabajos desarrollados en la región, y diferentes perspectivas del cambio.

The technical system was very high quality and it provided very detailed and varied topics.

There was a wealth of information to be shared on the platform before and during the event.

Se ha ido generando nuevos escenarios de dialogo, de encuentro, inclusivos, donde presentar o elevar por ejemplo la voz de las ODC (GNDR), para compartir y reafirmar nuestro compromiso en la RRD desde la base, con las comunidades en sus territorios. El poder interactuar con pares temáticos, socios, con tomadores de decisiones, con actores institucionales etc.

Excelente intercambio, interesantes conferencias, paneles, expo, excelente el stand suizo. Evento enfocado a los esfuerzos que se orientan a la gestión de la reducción de riesgo de desastres y la resiliencia en todo desarrollo económico y social con el llamado a la alianza y la cooperación regional. Interesantes y compartidas las experiencias de organismos e instituciones con la aplicación de metodologías que refuerzan la reducción de riesgo de desastres, con una gestión inclusiva y el desarrollo sostenible, Importante sugerencia de incluir al ciclo de inversiones, la gestión de reducción de riesgo inclusiva y la aplicación de metodologías para la realización de estudios de riesgo inclusiva y la aplicación de metodologías para la realización de estudios de riesgo en territorios donde se efectúan las inversiones. Me resultó muy interesante todo de lo que me fue posible disfrutar. Gracias.

Se cumplieron los objetivos de mi asistencia, la Plataforma otorgó más herramientas de las imaginadas.

The speakers were well informed and imparted their knowledge of the respective area of expertise.

I was able to hear best practices and lessons learned from other countries and understand the challenges that they face.

It was a great opportunity to learn more about disaster risk reduction and explore the role the media can play in saving lives.

Estuvo muy completa, se tocaron temas muy pertinentes.

Se han presentado la situación actual en cuanto a la implementación, además de los avances de los países y regiones en la temática.

Pude escuchar distintos ponentes nacionales e internacionales. Me interesa la incubadora de proyectos.

Hubo temas novedosos y de interés. La plataforma facilitó ir de una sesión a otra fácilmente, y escoger la indicada.

Sessions were really interesting and a place for exchange and communicate with colleagues.

La buena organización, la accesibilidad a las plataformas virtuales y a la interacción existente en la misma.

Rich and diverse content with some very good interventions and speakers. Multiple fora and booths.

Admirable the effort to carry out the Regional Platform in a virtual way, the effort of the moderators and the charisma of the representatives of the Government of Jamaica. Thank you very much.

Conocer experiencias en el desarrollo e implementación de los Sistemas de Alerta Temprana Multi-amenazas en la región del Caribe es importante para la implementación de los SAT en el Ecuador.

It gives an idea on how a network is working and what are their plans for addressing the SDGs.

Excellent speakers and technical knowledge with the everyday reality we find in the field.

Es importante concienciar sobre lo que podemos hacer para contribuir a la reducción del riesgo de desastres.

All the topics were relevant to know the effects of climate change and its connections with the environment.

Tratar el tema de reducción de riesgos es muy transversal a distintas disciplinas que se debe ir aprendiendo e implementar para lograr ciudades resilientes y el ser humano es la amenaza y la oportunidad de poder lograr ese desarrollo de las ciudades.

Amplia la expectativa de mis conocimientos en materia de riesgos.

It was very comprehensive, as it relates to Disaster risk management.

It takes a lot to manage daily responsibilities and be fully engaged in the session. There were many sessions that were good but also a lot to consume.

Es relevante la información sobre los nuevos hallazgos e investigaciones en el campo de la gestión de desastres, que nos permita trabajar de manera concatenada a escala global para alcanzar los objetivos de minimizar los mismos, aumentar la resiliencia en las comunidades y proteger a las poblaciones más vulnerables, aprendiendo y enseñando a vivir con el riesgo.

Los oradores contaban con la experiencia en los temas expuestos, fueron claros con sus ideas, aportaron a mi conocimiento con conceptos actuales, mostraron una actitud participativa y respetuosa. La organización de la plataforma fue excelente, el contar con la traducción de los oradores fue crucial para el aprovechamiento de cada una de las conferencias.

Reafirmó los conocimientos y propuestas de trabajo para hacer frente a los riesgos y catástrofes en la población animal, respecto a las gestiones de riesgo.

Porque permitió conocer los nuevos retos y desafíos por los que venimos avanzando en un contexto diferente por la COVID-19.

Gained knowledge and networked with other partners.

Porque nos ofreció orientaciones con herramientas importantísimas para seguir avanzando en la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres y la Mitigación y Adaptación al Cambio Climático.

Muy clara la información, precisa y actual.

Presentations were on point and in line with UN principles. Also same objectives as COP.

The presentations were educational, interesting and current. I had a challenge with interpretation the first two days but thereafter I found the interpretation icon.

Organizar un evento de esta magnitud en tiempos normales es un desafío. Pero en tiempos de pandemia es una verdadera hazaña. Luego de ver y leer las Declaraciones Oficiales de países, me queda la sensación que se avanza, lento, pero se avanza y en ello creo que el plan Sendai 7 ha sido clave y lo otro la ratificación del Plan de acción Regional que nos debe guiar al 2030 Felicitaciones desde Chile.

Abordaron temas actuales y su articulación con Marco Sendai y Cambio Climático.

Timely references to ongoing issues and challenges; informative about the SENSEI framework and other resources available in the region.

Porque me involucré a distancia cuando de manera presencial hubiera sido imposible asistir.

It was possible to know good practices in DRM in the region specially about governance.

The event was really fluent, platform worked great everything was well.

Very informative, very well organized, very high tech! and very comprehensive.

I now have a better understanding of the experiences of other countries.

Buenos expositores, información clara y precisa, motiva a continuar liderando la GrD.

Se tocaron temas muy importantes relacionados a la gestión del riesgo, que nos ayudan a actualizarnos en la materia y establecer metas viables a nivel nacional.

I was able to learn a lot and in a very short time.

Foi extremamente inovador.

Panel interactions and speakers were very inspiring, moving and thought provoking.

Al asistir a la plataforma por medio virtual, tuve la oportunidad de conectarme a las diferentes sesiones. Tuve la oportunidad de ser moderador en un stand en la Plataforma de Innovación y tenía una expectativa mayor con respecto a la interacción con los usuarios, y como participante tenía una expectativa mayor en referencia al networking.

Derivado de la información que compartieron en las diversas actividades, coincidieron en que la prevención de riesgos es importante, para las diversas regiones del continente, el actualizar información tecnológica y científica y ponerla a disposición de los responsables de el cuidado de la población en general, sector privado, público, ong, osc, gobiernos locales, que tener información actualizada, nos ayudara a la reducción de riesgos de desastres, antes durante y posterior al presentarse, por fenómeno natural o antrópico, y aún con más atención, por los fenómenos naturales, se presentarán con más intensidad, saber administrar y aprovechar en obras de impacto, tanto los recursos humanos como los económicos. Los desastres No tienen Agenda, la Prevención Si, como lo que ustedes han realizado, Felicidades.

Que se estén llevando todas esas iniciativas en el marco de la GRD y cambio climático es esperanzador y que estén trabajando en inclusión de género es un gran avance.

Estos espacios permiten conocer la perspectiva de los expertos y tener la posibilidad de analizar lo que en cada país deberíamos hacer.

The event had a good organization and the participants could use the platform without difficulties.

El foro en sí estuvo muy bien organizado, además de que se incluye el lenguaje de señas, que en estos tiempos es de gran importancia.

It is an excellent platform to get to know the best of other countries and helps us to visualize better goals and objectives to apply in favor of the most vulnerable in society.

Quedaron claros los retos que tenemos que enfrentar como país y la forma en como comunicarnos entre Gobierno-Población en temas de Riesgo de Desastre.

Fue oportunidad de actualización. Fortaleció cursos que imparto como parte del currículo universitario. Identificación de expertos y oportunidades para contar con su asesoría.

I am the National Disaster Coordinator for the islands of Bermuda, part of my duties is to compile a National Risk Register; Climate Change and its associated actions for disaster risk reduction needs to be incorporated with the National Risk Register.

It is always a pleasure to increase knowledge, network and seek funding opportunities.

Las experiencias de la pandemia y la importancia de potenciar los gobiernos locales.

A pesar de ser online se ve que se cuidaron muchos aspectos logísticos lo cual permitió la participación activa y aprovechar cada ponencia.

All discussion sessions were rich in food for thought, good practice and relevant and interesting case.

Wish I had dedicated more time to attend more sessions.

Signing up ahead of time for the learning Lab sessions was inconvenient and made it hard to get into them at times.

The synchwords sometimes went so long in between updates that the top part of the text disappeared from screen before one could read it. Also the synchword translations were quite hit and miss, with examples such as 'data' being translated as 'doubts,' 'transactional' was translated as 'transexual' and 'implementation' was translated as 'certification.'

Too many vital sessions were running concurrently. A lot of needed information was not gathered because of this. Thankfully they can be viewed on Youtube later, but that eliminates the opportunity to have questions addressed by the presenters.

Technical issues for attendees, sometimes the syncwords or Translations were not working. Better is all Power points were available in multiple languages.

Que hubo un poco de confusión para acceder a las traducciones de ingles a español.

It was hard for me not to be able to have Spanish subtitles for the English speaking episodes,...

Instructions for certain events such as time and registration requirement were not very clear.

Un poco la organización de la plataforma digital, muchas veces en el escenario dos decía que estaba vacío pero la mayoría del tiempo había dos pláticas dándose al mismo tiempo y solo daba la opción de escenario 1.

No me gustó la forma en que se auto-manejaban las diapositivas de las presentaciones, estaban desfasadas entre Zoom y Hopin. Tampoco me gustó el audio de las traducciones, se perdían con los audios originales.

The display of information in some events was deficient and the slides were not available prior to the presentations, because the time for presentation was sometimes very limited.

Unfortunately for work it was difficult to be in important exhibitions. Will the platform remain with recorded exhibitions? Thank you so much.

It was my first time attending. I would have like if there was more information on the content of some of the space, for example, the Learning Labs and the stands. Some of the questions in the chat were not addressed.

A lot of parallel sessions, IT platform was not very friendly.

It took some time to figure out how to get the interpretation.

Some visual aids were difficult to decipher.

If I had to say anything, glitches in streaming.

The interpretation was not always clear.

Falta poner referencias o lecturas sobre los trabajos de los ponentes.

Please. We need events in Portuguese!!! #LeaveNoOneBehind! We talk Portuguese in Brazil!

I did not enjoy the chosen web platform.

No me pude conectar en algunas sesiones.

There are limitations to knowing the people as it is online. Also, it is hard to do come and go for the sessions if there are few sessions to be interested in the same time slot.

There were interesting expositions; nevertheless, the virtual platform is not very suitable for networking or discussions.

The presentations in part were very interesting, however at times there were too many presenters.

Las exposiciones me aparecieron muy interesantes, sin embargo la reflexión estuvo muy centrada en las experiencias del Covid. Creo que faltó abordar con mayor profundidad el tema del uso de metodologías que se utilizan para evaluar los riesgos de desastres y el impacto que estos generan en el sector educacional.

Not enough international participation... too central to South America and the Caribbean.

Several technical issues and errors hampered the experience and created barriers to learning; particularly, the in-app translation functions were not functioning.

Hubo temas interesantes, sin embargo la traducción simultanea fallaba y no se entendía bien.

Se perdió la interacción entre los asistentes, que siempre fue muy importante, no solo lo formal en las reuniones sino la interacción fuera de las reuniones.

I was unable to participate in all the sessions. Would be good if videos can be shared.

La alta calidad de las ponencias y participantes. Por otro lado, no hubo difusión de los cursos cerrados y asistir a los eventos paralelos se hace difícil en horario laboral.

Internal coordination problems regarding schedules considering the time difference with the host country. The heritage table did not work well.

The networking opportunities are inevitably reduced without being face-to face. There were some technological issues that unfortunately impacted the quality of delivery of some sessions, including some issues with translations. However given the online format it was set-up very well and generally ran smoothly.

Would have liked to see more group sessions with response agencies.

Desafortunadamente, el modelo virtual no permite la visualización de todo el evento, por lo que se termina perdiendo contenido importante.

Pienso que la inclusión de las personas con discapacidad en la Gestión de Riesgos es un tema pendiente de desarrollar.

Si bien la modalidad online es cómoda, creo que para este tipo de evento lo presencial es mejor.

Las fechas fueron completas y no permitieron una participación amplia y productiva.

Al ser un evento en línea, perdió el contacto que se hace en una PR presencial en el entorno a las diversas exposiciones, faltó interacción de ese tipo.

There was a communication limitation as I am not proficient in Spanish.

No pude participar. Me pareció complicado el sistema de registro.

I found the presentations to be informative however the manner in which they were delivered made it very disengaging and at times boring.

The sessions were well organized and with important speakers, however the Hopin platform was not user friendly for all our members.

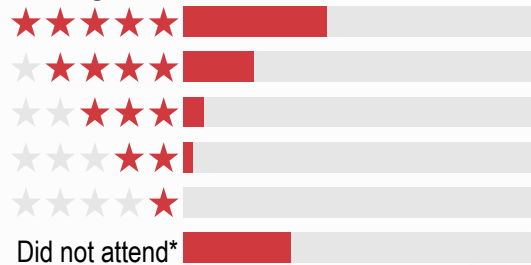
Could have been more specific with detailed immediate and aligned actions to be taken with expected results.

Se debería llegar a la instancia de la reunión para aprobar documentos con borradores ya mayormente consensuados y sin tanta deliberación en cuestiones semánticas y de forma.

How would you rate the Special Sessions?

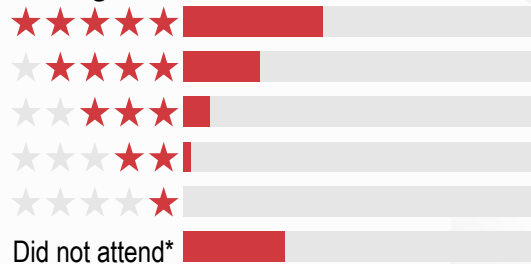
Day 1: Regional Risk Assessment Report 2021 (Regional Risk Landscape): towards integrated, ...

Average 3.07



Day 2: A regional approach to coordination on multi-hazards: 2020 lessons from the Caribbean

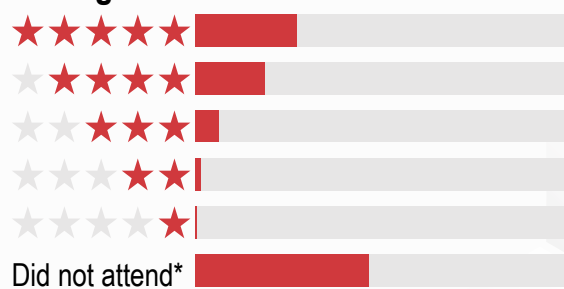
Average 3.12



How would you rate learning labs?

Modelling the impact of disasters

Average 2.32



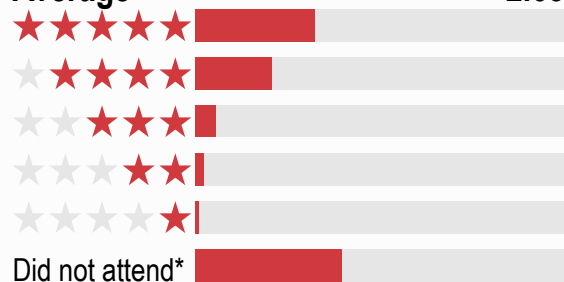
Day 2: Science & Technology for DRR: Post-disaster Forensic Investigation (FORIN)

Average 2.18



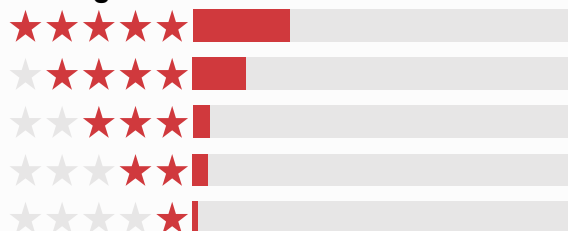
Day 3: "From early warning systems to impact-based prediction: an approach

Average 2.63



Day 4: Heritage Management & DRR

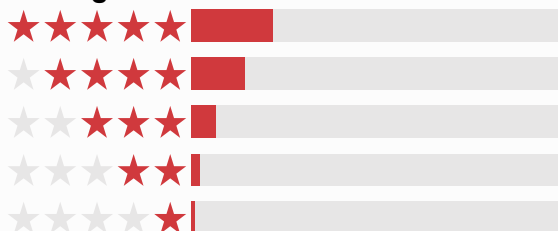
Average 2.08



Did not attend*

Day 4: Lightning and wildfires

Average 1.91



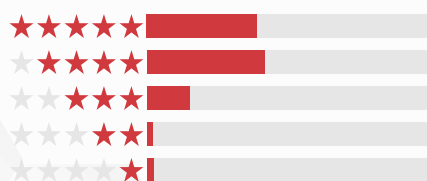
Did not attend*

* Did not attend was assigned a score of 0

Other Ratings?

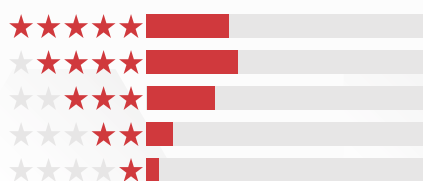
Format of the sessions

Average 4.14



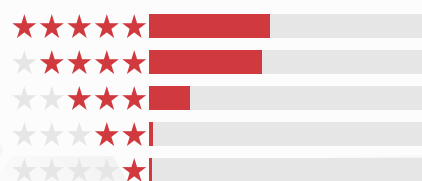
Virtual Interaction with attendees

Average 3.73



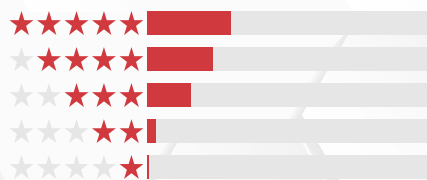
Presentations

Average 4.23



Ideas Incubator

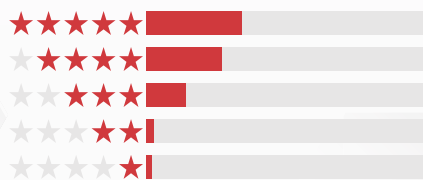
Average 2.94



Did not attend*

Innovation Platform / Expo

Average 3.26



Did not attend*

Side Events

Average 3.50



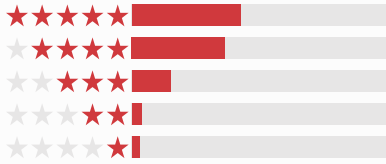
Did not attend*

* Did not attend was assigned a score of 0

Other Ratings?

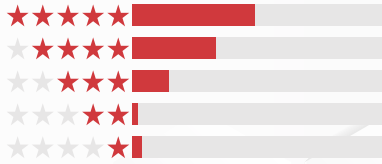
Takeaways
Average

4.11



Virtual Platform
Average

4.19



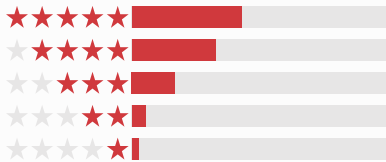
Interpreting
Average

4.11



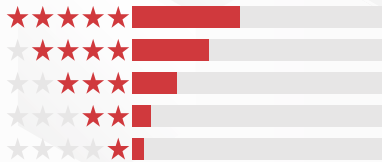
Accessibility
Average

4.07



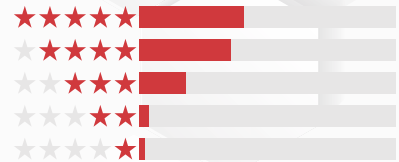
Registration Process
Average

3.97

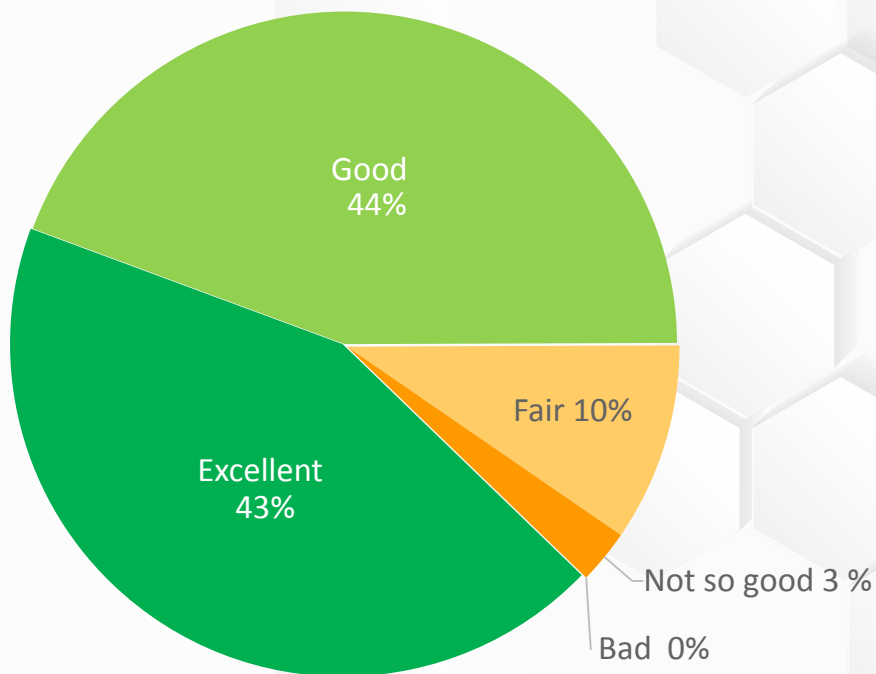


Availability of Information
Average

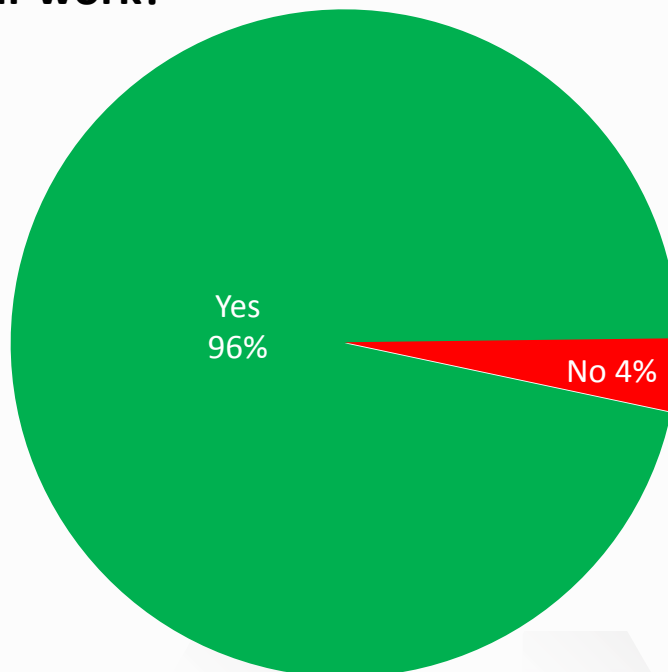
4.09



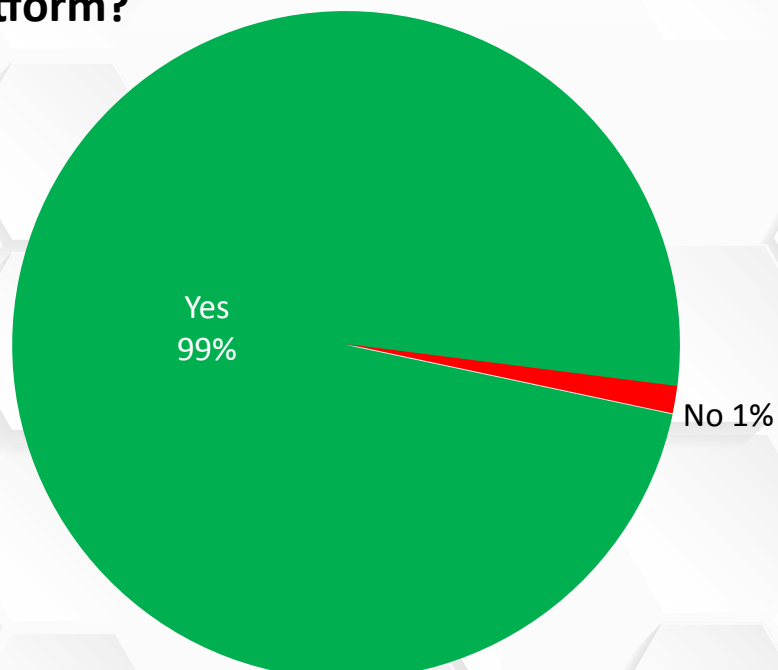
Overall how would you rate your experience at this RP?



Do you consider that attending this RP (or previous RPs) has positively impacted your work?



Would you recommend to others to participate in the next Regional Platform?





VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean (RP21)

*Building Resilient Economies in the
Americas and the Caribbean*

1 to 4 November 2021, Virtual Event



VII REGIONAL PLATFORM #RP21