



AMERICAS+
CARIBBEAN
VIII PLATFORM FOR
DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION

URUGUAY
28 FEB,
1-2 MAR
2023



Statement of Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction within the framework of the VIII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2023

Punta del Este, Uruguay

Active, representative, and continuous diverse youth participation in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) issues has evolved according to the needs and demands of this social group; youth groups from the Americas and the Caribbean have established themselves as primary actors in charge of promoting empathy and awareness in their communities, and influencing public policy.

In 2020, a Youth Committee was established in charge of the Regional Youth Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction. As a preparatory event for the VII Regional Platform on DRR (Jamaica), it culminated in the establishment of the Regional Youth Declaration on DRR. This official document would be publicly presented in October 2021 at the Ministerial Meeting of the VII Regional Platform on DRR.

In July 2022, in close alignment with the commitments agreed in Jamaica, two representatives of local youth were included in the Advisory Committee of the VIII Regional Platform on DRR. It would be through this approach that activities related to inclusion would be promoted, such as the Side Event “*Youth, Technology and Inclusion for DRR*,” the incorporation of youth in plenary sessions and parallel events, and ResilienceTech22. Additionally, the Youth Committee on DRR from the Americas and Caribbean Youth Network Planning Committee to co-lead the creation and development of the network with the technical support of UNDRR, UNICEF, and UNESCO.

This committee was responsible for the engagement of youth across the Americas and the Caribbean, which led to youth from all the subregions meeting virtually to design the structure of the Youth Network. To this end, three virtual meetings have been held with youth from the region, aiming towards a representative process that leads to an organizational structure that guarantees the inclusion of all the contexts inherent to each subregion, and at the same time, unifying the perspectives of young people.



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Based on the sessions carried out among young people in the region, we elaborated the roadmap from the youth for disaster risk reduction 2023-2025, for which we hope to count on your support to generate the different spaces and consider people young people in an integral way in the actions for the reduction of the risk of disasters in our region. This roadmap was based on the Declaration of the Youth of the Americas and the Caribbean on Disaster Risk Reduction. The objective of our 2023-2025 action plan is to integrate capacity development, mutual cooperation, and political advocacy at all levels in disaster management under a gender-inclusive, intercultural, and intersectional approach with the Americas and the Caribbean. For this, as a transversal axis, as youth, we prioritize the establishment of the Youth Network for DRR of the Americas and the Caribbean. This has the purpose of offering an inclusive space to share experiences in Disaster Risk Reduction, accelerate involvement in decision-making, and develop initiatives to establish resilience and reduce disaster risk.

The preparation of the respective operational plan 2023-2025 considers:

1. First, we identify the area of action associated with innovation, science and technology as a priority. In this sense, we call for the continuous development of youth competitions/ events prior to the regional platforms, as well as the promotion with governments of the implementation of our proposals for early warning systems from a perspective that is community-based and sensitive to the vulnerabilities of each country or region.
2. Second, we consider the area of capacity building to be crucial. Young people are a source of innovative technical proposals, solutions and ideas in different fields, which was demonstrated with ResilienceTech. Therefore, we consider it important to continue facilitating spaces for strengthening the capacities of the youth who are part of the group, as well as for community actors, and to develop communication and dissemination strategies on disaster risk management aimed at social actors, promoting the exchange of knowledge, experiences and local practices between communities.
3. The next area of action we identify is inclusion and participation. From the perspective of the region's youth, we advocate for strengthening the participation of young people in decision-making spaces, initially at local and regional government levels, to improve their effectiveness and participation in national and international bodies, their participation and impact on regional and global platforms, and to prioritize the development of content for people with disabilities and/or vulnerable groups.



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4. Finally, the last area of action is investment. From the youth perspective, we consider investment in different sectors of disaster risk reduction to be key. We seek to contribute to the articulation between governments, the private sector and international organizations for investment in disaster risk reduction, considering the proposals developed by young people. We also aim to create alliances with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations and other organized groups.

Knowing the serious effects of climate change on the vulnerable sectors of society, the young people of the region demand:

Nothing about us without us. Let us work collaboratively and meet the objectives that we have set ourselves for the coming years. Let us scale up efforts to build resilient communities, ensure we build back better and greener, make sure no one is left behind, and substantially reduce the losses and damages caused by our own vulnerabilities.

In Mexico, on the now extinct Ayoloco glacier, there is a plaque that reads: “To future generations. The Ayoloco glacier existed here and retreated until it disappeared in 2018. In the coming decades the Mexican glaciers will disappear irretrievably. This plaque is intended as a record that we knew what was happening and what needed to be done. Only you will know if we did it.”

Let us not fail the future generations.

