CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

to join the Caribbean Risk and Disaster Management Youth Platform (CARIDIMA)
1. BACKGROUND

Natural hazards are naturally occurring physical phenomena caused by either the rapid or slow onset of events having atmospheric, geologic and hydrologic origins on solar, global, regional, national or local scales. Disasters often follow natural hazards, and they are a result of the combination of hazards, the conditions of vulnerability and of the insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potentially negative consequences of the hazard. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and reduce the causal factors of disasters. DRR is the policy objective of disaster risk management (DRM), and its goals and objectives are defined in disaster risk reduction strategies and plans.

The risk of disasters caused by natural hazards has been continuously rising in the last century. Climate change, urban pressure and lack of disaster preparedness, are increasingly transforming natural hazards, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or tsunamis into disastrous events causing life and economic losses. Over the last decade, the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have suffered more frequent and severe natural disasters such as storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and droughts. Climate change and global warming further increase the risks of natural disasters. People in coastal communities are especially vulnerable as the rising sea level can flood their houses. Disasters severely affect the natural environment, the economy and livelihoods.

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

Given the above, DRR is increasing its importance in the agenda of the organizations of the United Nations (UN) System. While the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is the roadmap for DRR, other global agendas including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda and the Biodiversity Agenda have targets that cannot be attained without considering DRR.
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been promoting risk awareness, prevention and preparedness across the world. Operating at the interface between the natural and social sciences, education, culture and communication, UNESCO seeks to strengthen the resilience of societies - through capacity building, knowledge sharing and networking, early warning and policy advice, working with governments, civil society, research institutions, other UN agencies and international organizations, and all key actors. Working alone or in collaboration with UN Agencies and other scientific entities, UNESCO has been a catalyst for international, inter-disciplinary cooperation in many aspects of DRR and mitigation.

In particular, UNESCO supports its Member States in a wide range of thematic areas, including:

1) Post-Disaster Response;
2) Risk Governance and Social Resilience;
3) the Built Environment;
4) Schools’ and Educational Systems’ Safety;
5) Early Warning Systems (EWS);
6) Environment and Ecosystem-Based DRR;
7) Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for Resilience;
8) DRR for Culture and UNESCO-Designated Sites.

The work of UNESCO is being developed and implemented through its different Sectors, in collaboration with its Field Offices, Designated and Affiliated Sites, Category I and II Centers, UNESCO Chairs and Networks. Therefore, UNESCO has been widely and consistently recognized as a world leader for the mainstreaming of DRR in sustainable development plans and strategies, and for its unique expertise in promoting trans- and multi-disciplinarity with all the relevant stakeholders.

2. UNESCO’S ENGAGEMENT IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)
UNESCO’s approach to DRR is multi-disciplinary, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder, and recognizes youth as key actors for promoting DRR. In this regard, young professionals in the Caribbean can play an essential role in building and improving overall resilience to climate change and related disasters, and in promoting community-based mobilization and action. Therefore, since 2020, the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean has worked to design and establish a multidisciplinary platform of young professionals working on disaster risk management (DRM), climate change and related risk reduction in Caribbean SIDS.

The Caribbean Risk and Disaster Management Youth Platform (CARIDIMA) is the first UNESCO-supported Caribbean platform for young volunteer professionals engaged in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) / Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Following the first Call for Expressions of Interest, which was open from December 2020 to February 2021, and after the selection of the eligible applicants, CARIDIMA was established at the end of March 2021, in collaboration with the UNESCO Haiti Office, and with institutional support from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). Shortly after, CARIDIMA members created its own governance structure, website, and social media channels. CARIDIMA has engaged, so far, as its registered members, more than 130 young professionals from Haiti and 12 Caribbean English and Dutch-speaking SIDS, including teachers, researchers, entrepreneurs, government officers and leaders of civil society organizations. CARIDIMA has also exchanged knowledge with similar youth networks established by UNESCO in Asia-Pacific (U-Inspire) and in Africa (AYAB).

CARIDIMA aims at providing technical support and advocating for DRM across the Caribbean sub-region, mainly dealing with relevant government agencies, regional and international organisations and youth organisations. Its goal is to assist the Caribbean to become a climate-change resilient region, with laws, policy and procedures which leave no one behind, by preparing citizens to respond effectively to weather and geo-related hazards.

In 2021, key members of CARIDIMA’s Executive Board, with the support of the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean, actively engaged in some of the most important events of the region, being even represented by two members of the youth steering committee from the 2021 to 2023 Youth Forum for DRR for the Americas and the Caribbean, held in hybrid modality in Jamaica, in Uruguay and also represented by one person at High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Midterm Review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (HLM) in New York, USA. In 2022, CARIDIMA has officially registered as a non-profit organisation in Haiti, serving both as a regional hub and a national chapter. Building on this important achievement, CARIDIMA will establish other national chapters across the wider Caribbean, linked with the regional hub in Haiti (such as for the UNESCO-supported U-Inspire network in Asia and the Pacific).

In the short term, UNESCO will further support CARIDIMA, including by: a) strengthening its cooperation with CDEMA (especially through the establishment and implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding which will support specific activities)); b) training key CARIDIMA members on resource mobilization for DRM; c) engaging CARIDIMA members in regional projects supported by UNESCO, such as the web platform #ResiLAC (conceived by the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean, and implemented in partnership with the Regional Science Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Montevideo, Uruguay). The #ResiLAC web platform will enable all the relevant stakeholders to freely access and share DRM-relevant open data, information, knowledge products and good practices, while providing a range of related paid and in-kind advisory and consulting services for individuals, as well as public and private organisations.
4. PURPOSE AND TARGET GROUP FOR THIS CALL

One year after the first UNESCO Call for Expressions of Interest, and after an internal review which recently led to the establishment of two task forces (one only for the work in Haiti; the other for the regional activities), with this second Call for Expressions of Interest, UNESCO aims at expanding CARIDIMA's membership to all the Caribbean SIDS, including all the French and Spanish-speaking ones. This will enable CARIDIMA to engage with UNESCO and other partners in several joint national and regional activities, such as Adaptation Fund projects – including an ongoing one led by the Haiti Office; and a proposed one by the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean.

The purpose of this second Call for Expression of Interest is, therefore, to strengthen and consolidate the CARIDIMA youth platform, by:

i) substantially increasing the number and diversity of its members, especially in terms of academic background, professional experience and expertise;

ii.) expanding its membership to all the Caribbean SIDS, including those that are not yet represented, and those which are represented by a small number of members;

iii) enabling current and future members to improve CARIDIMA's governance structure.

As it has been so far, CARIDIMA has is open to young professionals of any academic background, professional experience and field of expertise, who are interested in, available and committed to work on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) / Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) / Climate Resilience and related areas in the primary benefit of the Caribbean SIDS and their populations. In the coming years, CARIDIMA, with the support of UNESCO, will keep engaging its members in several initiatives to share their knowledge, practices and experiences on DRM, as well as to openly discuss their views and take relevant and coordinated actions, in the form of physical (on-the-ground) or digital (online/offline) initiatives.
Develop operational strategies and action plans to keep the platform and its members actively engaged in promoting DRR in the Caribbean.

Collaboration with other similar platforms and networks worldwide, to learn about best practices that can be replicated in the Caribbean.

Engagement in post-disaster response activities, especially with the most vulnerable population groups.

Design of demonstrative activities (such as evacuation exercises) to raise the awareness of local communities about disasters and support their mobilization and empowerment.

Contribution to the UNESCO #ResiLAC Web Portal, providing volunteer and/or remunerated services.

Monthly meetings and webinars with a focus on sharing DRM knowledge and practices – mainly through the analysis of real case studies.

Design of coordinated actions, projects, events and other initiatives, aimed at improving DRM in the Caribbean SIDS, with a focus on raising public awareness and developing the disaster preparedness and response capacities of key stakeholders.

Online discussions with national, regional and international stakeholders who are working on DRM, including national government authorities, regional inter-governmental bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private companies, professional associations, universities, research institutes and specialized agencies, among others.
5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To join the CARIDIMA Youth Platform, interested young professionals should fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

5.1 GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

(a) Citizenship of at least one of the following Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands and U.S. Virgin Islands.

(b) Professional proficiency in English – noting that the oral and written discussions held by the Regional CARIDIMA Youth Platform will be, generally, held in English only, unless translation and simultaneous interpretation services and equipment will be made available by the CARIDIMA members. However, within the National CARIDIMA chapters, other languages can be regularly used, if most of the members decides so.

(c) Age between 23 and 35 years (to be proven with personal ID documents). Exceptionally, some younger and older members will also be accepted, as long as their qualifications are particularly outstanding and unique within the group; (d) Proven residence in one of the Caribbean SIDS listed under item (a) above.

5.2 EDUCATION

Required:

Hold at least a bachelor’s degree (BSc, BA, etc), in any field of knowledge.
Desirable:

Hold a bachelor's degree in a DRR-related graduation course (such as those within the faculties of Natural Sciences, Technology and Civil Engineering), from an academic institution based in one or more of the eligible Caribbean SIDS and recognized for its contribution to DRR in the Caribbean (such as the University of the West Indies – UWI).

Hold a Master's and/or PhD degree or higher, in any field of knowledge.

Attendance of DRM/DRR post-graduate courses

5.3 WORK EXPERIENCE

Required:

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

Desirable:

Current employment in an institution/organization/company that works on DRM/DRR at the national and/or regional and global level.

Previous/ongoing experience with youth groups/organizations, preferably in one or more of the eligible Caribbean SIDS.

DRM/DRR-related work experience with Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and/or Community-based Associations, preferably in one or more of the eligible Caribbean SIDS

5.4 INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT AND RESOURCES

Required:

Dispose of at least two (2) hours a week to work with/for the CARIDIMA Youth Platform and meet online and/or physically with other CARIDIMA members. In this regard, elected applicants will be also required to sign a relevant term of commitment/rules of engagement.

Regular availability of good and stable internet connection and adequate electronic equipment (mobile phones, computers, tablets etc) to engage in the online activities carried out through the platform.
6. HOW TO APPLY

- To submit your application please complete this online form by clicking this link: [click here]

- **Deadline:** July 27, 2023, 11:59 a.m. (Jamaican time).

- Please note that you will need to upload your CV (preferably in PDF format, maximum 2 pages). All your information will be treated as strictly confidential.

- If you have any questions or problems completing the form, please email caridima.org@gmail.com