

Regional Forum: Catalysing innovation & partnerships to build local disaster resilience in Caribbean communities

July 23, 2020
9:30 am – 12:00 pm (Eastern Caribbean time)

Under the project:

CSOs for Disaster Resilience - Empowering civil society and local communities to build resilience to hurricanes and climate extremes in the Eastern Caribbean

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Hurricane Dorian in 2019 and Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 highlight the devastating impacts and vulnerabilities of Caribbean small island developing states to climate extremes and disasters. For example, a post-disaster needs assessment in Dominica after Hurricane Maria noted total damages in the amount of EC\$2.51 billion (US\$931 million) and losses of EC\$1.03 billion (US\$382 million), amounting to 226 percent of the island's 2016 gross domestic product (GDP). Building the resilience of local communities, livelihoods and the natural ecosystems they depend on is critical to reduce the impacts from hurricanes and climate extremes and speed up recovery.

Recognising the need for more effective engagement of local communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) in disaster risk reduction and building resilience, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is implementing the three-year (2019-2022) project [CSOs for Disaster Resilience: Empowering civil society and local communities to build resilience to hurricanes and climate extremes in the Eastern Caribbean](#) with support from the Inter-American Foundation (IAF). The project aims to improve resilience for local communities, associated livelihoods and ecosystems to hurricanes and climate extremes in the Eastern Caribbean through implementing community-based and ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR/ Eco-DRR). The focus is on engaging at-risk communities in decision-making, and on conservation, sustainable management and restoration of natural ecosystems, to reduce disaster risk and help people and systems adapt. The project specifically targets Antigua and Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica and Grenada.

The project is working with leading CSOs and community stakeholders in six high-risk communities across the target countries to build their resilience through: capacity building; mobilising local knowledge and partnerships; and supporting practical CBDRR and Eco-DRR actions on the ground. As part of the work to enhance knowledge mobilisation and partnerships, the project will also engage policy makers, practitioners and other stakeholders from across the Eastern Caribbean countries and the wider region in dialogue on common concerns and priorities for building disaster resilience and create a community of practice to support learning and action. CANARI is hosting this virtual regional forum to initiate stakeholder dialogue.

Purpose

The virtual regional forum will initiate knowledge sharing on experiences and priorities to support and empower at-risk communities to build their disaster resilience using community-based and ecosystem-based approaches, focusing on the role of civil society in building resilience alongside the public and private sector.



The event will also be used as an opportunity to introduce and launch the regional Community Resilience Action Learning Group (ALG). This ALG will be established to further dialogue on community resilience and will facilitate peer learning and exchange on addressing key vulnerabilities and promoting CBDRR and Eco-DRR solutions among civil society, practitioners, policy makers, academia/researchers and development partners.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the virtual forum are to:

- share priorities for supporting and empowering local communities to build resilience to hurricanes and other climate extremes;
- facilitate knowledge sharing on building community resilience in the Caribbean, focusing on community-based and ecosystem-based approaches and the role of civil society in building community resilience in partnership with the public and private sector; and
- introduce and launch the regional Community Resilience Action Learning Group.

Event Format

The event will be held as a virtual forum on Thursday, July 23, 2020 from 9:30am to 12:00 pm (Eastern Caribbean time). It will be hosted using Zoom Webinar technology.

Target Group

This event will target participants from civil society, national and local government, the private sector, academia and regional agencies involved in disaster risk reduction and management, climate change adaptation, environmental/natural resources management, community development and sustainable livelihoods in the Eastern Caribbean and wider region, including:

- CSOs for Disaster Resilience project partners – the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) in Antigua, WildDominique in Dominica and the Grenada Education and Development Programme (GRENED) in Grenada;
- national and regional CSOs, including non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, national Red Cross Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) – Caribbean Office;
- national disaster management authorities and other relevant ministries and state agencies and local government;
- key regional bodies such as the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC); and
- experts from research institutions and universities.

In order to facilitate knowledge sharing from other initiatives (including others supported by IAF), participants from all Caribbean countries and territories will be invited to attend.

Approach

The virtual forum will include:

- **introductory presentations**
- **a moderated panel discussion**



- **an interactive session for engagement of participants** which will build on the presentations by panellists and seek to facilitate more in-depth discussion and gather inputs of participants via Q&A and utilising online voting or polls to determine priority needs and actions

The outcomes of discussions, and particularly the priorities identified, will be used to shape an agenda and work programme for the ALG.

Draft Agenda

9:30am	Welcome & Introductions Overview of the CSOs for Disaster Resilience project
9:40am	Presentation: Building local resilience with nature and communities
9:50am	Presentation: Hurricane season 2020 – lessons and plans for addressing community risk and resilience
10:10am	Panel Discussion: “How can we catalyse, support and empower Caribbean civil society and communities to build resilience to hurricanes and other climate extremes?” - What are the priority needs and key actions being taken? (Moderator – CANARI)
11:00am	Interactive Q&A session
11:45am	Introduction to the regional Community Resilience Action Learning Group
11:55am	Closing remarks & thanks
12 noon	End of forum

Key Outputs

The virtual forum will contribute to the following outputs:

- Report produced on key priorities, innovations and partnerships for empowering Caribbean civil society and communities to build disaster resilience, which will feed into an action learning agenda for the Community Resilience Action Learning Group

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