



**YEAC MEMBERS IN ST LUCIA PREPARING FOOD PACKAGES AT NEMO'S WAREHOUSE  
AFTER THE CHRISTMAS EVE TROUGH**

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<b>Sector Name:</b>	Risk Management Policy and Practice
<b>Sub-sector Name:</b>	Capacity Building and Training; Building Community Awareness/Mobilization
<b>Objective:</b>	Strengthen regional emergency response capacity and the network of Youth Emergency Action Committees (YEACs) in the Caribbean

## I. Introduction

This is the first quarterly report for the “Youth Emergency Action Committees (YEAC) III: Caribbean Emergency Response Network”, covering the period of October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), with support from USAID/OFDA and in partnership with Caritas, is implementing the Youth Emergency Action Committees (YEAC) III project in vulnerable communities in St. Lucia, Grenada, and the Dominican Republic. YEAC III has been designed to strengthen the regional emergency response capacity and the network of YEACs in the Caribbean. This will be achieved by consolidating and reinforcing capacity building accomplishments the previous phase of the project and to create a regional emergency response network to ensure greater sustainability, while documenting the experience so that others may also benefit from the work and replicate it as appropriate.

## II. Summary

The first quarter of the YEAC III project focused on ensuring that all participants had a thorough understanding of all deliverables to be achieved over the six (6) months period. A significant amount of energy was placed into the strengthening of relationships with national DRR agencies and exploring where the YEACs fit in the larger DRR network. Additionally, the formation, training and certification of response brigades were prioritized. The specific accomplishments of each island are described below:

### In the Dominican Republic:

- Five (5) mini workshops to strengthen YEACs were conducted.
- Seventy seven (77) youth were trained in the response areas of Selection of Beneficiaries, Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis.
- YEAC members participated in a workshop on earthquake preparedness and community mapping organized by UNDP.
- Networking meetings and selection of representatives for the YEAC Regional Workshop were completed.
- Six (6) meetings with institutions related to Local Emergency and Disaster Risk Reduction were convened.
- Community meetings to assess early warning systems were completed in each project neighborhood.
- Home visits days were hosted in each community to share information on DRR and inform members about the use of early warning system.
- Planning meetings in the community for emergency drills were carried out and some drills have been implemented in schools and the wider community.
- Youth were exposed to a technical course in Savings and Loans.

#### In Grenada:

- Three response brigades were formed comprising of fourteen (14) youth each from the communities of Mont Tout, Gouyave, and Victoria.
- The relationship between the YEACs and the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) continues to strengthen. NADMA has agreed to continue its partnership with the YEACs and provide all the brigade trainings, assist with the implementation of the early warning systems and emergency drills.
- A baseline survey was completed to ascertain the present reality in the project areas.
- Twenty Eight (28) youth were trained and certified in Shelter Management, First Aid and Initial Damage Assessment during the months of November and December.

#### In St. Lucia:

- From December 13 – 17, 2013 a comprehensive training symposium was held with the aim of completing all the brigade trainings and providing an opportunity for the YEACs to continue bonding as a team.
- Twenty One (21) youth and two (2) members of staff were trained and certified. An additional three (3) participants were exposed to some aspects of the training but need an additional session to fully complete the course.
- Dialogue with National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) and other DRR agencies continues.
- YEAC members supported NEMO after the Christmas Eve Trough (heavy rains). Youth on Christmas Day and beyond assisted in the packaging and distribution of food items to persons affected by the heavy rains. The group selflessly rendered aid to their fellow countrymen which demonstrated the true spirit of YEAC and the Christmas season.

### III. Report on Advances Toward Indicators and Targets

Indicator	Project Target	Accomplishments	% of target reached	Explanation
1. Number of people trained in disaster preparedness, mitigation, and management, by sex	SL - 29	21	72.41%	All islands have created specialized response brigades and trained youth in selected response skills. Make up sessions are pending in order to achieve the project targets.
	GR - 42	28	66.67%	
	DR – 102	77	75.49%	
	Total - 173	126	72.83%	
2. Number of trainings conducted	SL - 6	5	83.33%	In St. Lucia it was advised by the local DRR authority (NEMO) that they forego the training in incident command systems as it
	GR - 4	3	75%	
	DR – 8	3	37.5%	
	Total- 18	11	61.11%	

				was too advanced for the participants.
3. Number of people passing final exams or receiving certificates, by sex	SL – 26	21	80.77%	In St. Lucia and Grenada all participants who completed the entire training was tested and certified. However, the presentation of the certificates is pending.
	GR - 37	28	75.68%	
	DR - 92	0	0%	
	Total - 155	49	31.61%	
4. Percentage of people trained who retain skills and knowledge after two months.	SL - 26			This activity is being planned for February 2014.
	GR - 37			
	DR - 92			
	Total - 155			
5. Number of YEAC members participating in the regional YEAC gathering, by sex	SL - 5			This activity is slated for February 19 – 21, 2014 in the Dominican Republic.
	GR - 5			
	DR - 5			
	JM - 5			
	Total - 20			
6. Virtual YEAC platform created for information sharing and social networking	YES/NO			Feedback from the YEAC members across the region has been solicited and a consultant has been identified to create the virtual platform
7. Number of institutional meetings held for the integration of YEACs into local DRR decision-making forums	SL - 3	3	100%	All countries continue to make progress in integrating the YEACs into their local DRR network.
	GR - 2	1	50%	
	DR - 4	6	150%	
	Total - 9	10	111.11%	
8. Number of YEACs formally recognized by Civil Defense or the national emergency management agency	SL - 3			In St. Lucia and Grenada applications have been made for the YEACs to join the Welfare and Social Committee of their local disaster management authority. This deliverable will be achieved in the second
	GR - 2			
	DR - 4			
	Total - 9			

				quarter.
9. Percentage of attendees at joint planning meetings who are from the local community	SL – 95%	0%		In the DR, 2907 persons from the target communities have been reached through home visits during the coordination of simulations and trainings
	GR – 95%	0%		
	DR – 95%	47%		
	Total – 95%			
10. Early warning system in targeted community is in place for all major hazards with appropriate outreach to communities	YES/NO			Planning for this activity is ongoing and is slated for implementation in the second quarter.
11. Percentage of community members who received at least one early warning message from at least one source prior to a disaster occurring	SL – 90%			No major disaster has occurred.
	GR – 90%			
	DR – 90%			
	Total – 90%			
12. Number of emergency drills conducted	SL - 9	0	0%	In the DR, simulations have been coordinated with the schools in each community.
	GR - 6	0	0%	
	DR - 12	6	50%	
	Total - 27	6	22.22%	

#### IV. Report on Advance of Activities

##### **Activity 1: Formation of YEAC members into response brigades**

##### **Dominican Republic**

Specialized trainings for brigades in Beneficiary Selection, Shelter Management, and EDAN with facilitators from the Civil Defense were conducted. The capacities of YEAC members to respond in the event of disasters and emergencies were strengthened. Participants showed great enthusiasm and expressed their willingness to serve their communities. There were seventy-seven (77) youth participants trained; twenty-six (26) females and fifty-one (51) males.

In addition to the response skills training, five (5) mini capacity building workshops were conducted on topics such as Mission, Vision, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and

threats) analysis, and community leadership. The first mini workshop was held for Community Promoters and the President of each of the YEACs. The other workshops were delivered by the Promoters to members of their committees in which fifty-eight (58) youth; 30 females and 28 males participated.

In order to provide additional tools to the YEACs and as an added value for the project, youth were exposed to a workshop on Savings and Loans techniques. This was well received and twenty-five (25) youth, 12 females and 13 males, have committed to forming their savings groups.



*YEAC members in the DR engaged in training*

## **Grenada**

Discussions were held with the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) and members of the YEACs to decide on the most useful response skills for the project communities in light of the hazards they are prone to. After much conversation and analysis the areas of First Aid, Shelter Management, and Initial Damage Assessment were agreed upon. To date, twenty-eight (28) youth have been trained – nine (9) in Shelter Management, twelve (12) in First Aid, and seven (7) in Initial Damage Assessment. All twenty eight (28) youth excelled in the final examination and will receive their formal certificate subsequently. To reach the target for this indicator an additional training session is being planned to accommodate those youth who were unable to complete the full training program due to conflicting commitments.

It is noteworthy to mention that a female community member expressed such a strong interest in the response training that she was allowed to participate in the training activities.



*Members of the First Aid Brigade in Grenada engaged in training*

## **St. Lucia**

YEAC members were assigned to one of three response brigades based on their location, skills and retention ability. The response training areas of First Aid, Shelter Management, and DANA were decided on after discussions with the local DRR stakeholders and an analysis of the needs of the project communities. During the period December 13 – 17, 2013 youth were trained in a menu of Capacity Strengthening and Disaster Risk Reduction related topics. This is inclusive of:

- a) Public Relations Training
- b) Secretary-Documenting Minutes
- c) Leadership
- d) Teambuilding
- e) CPR & First Aid
- f) DANA
- g) Shelter Management
- h) Legal Frame Work
- i) Types of Disasters/ Overview of Disaster Risk Management

It is important to note that the training scheduled for Incident Command Systems was not implemented on the recommendation of the NEMO representative, as its content is targeted for an audience with higher technical skills and capacity.

There were twenty-one (21) youth and two (2) staff members who participated in the series of training. Of the youth trained, eleven (11) are females and ten (10) are males. Three (3) additional youth received some training. However, due to other commitments they were unable to complete the full course and plans are being made to offer make up sessions to these participants in order for them to receive certification.

## **Activity 2: Formation of a YEAC Network**

YEAC members in all countries have expressed strong interest in the formation of the YEAC network. Youth have been consulted about what they would like to see included in both the virtual

platform and the regional meeting. The implementation of this activity will be done in the subsequent quarter.

### **Activity 3: Integration of the YEAC Framework into the local DRR Network**

#### **Dominican Republic**

Efforts to integrate the YEACs in the local decision-making platform are underway. Visits have been made to each of the local institutions related to DRR and emergencies, including the Civil Defense, the Red Cross, the Fire Department and the City Council. Additionally, the YEAC team has been coordinating with Amber Rescue and UNDP who are developing a local project in the area of DRR.

#### **Grenada**

The leadership of the YEAC has made significant progress in establishing good relationships with local DRR stakeholders and remains committed to becoming better integrated in this network. Several discussions have been held with staff members and the leadership of NADMA. It's from these discussions that the recommendation was made that the YEACs become a member of NADMA's Welfare and Social Committee. Acting on this guidance, an official letter of application was sent on October 29<sup>th</sup> to Mr. Terrence Walters (Acting Director General of NADMA) seeking membership within the Welfare and Social Committee. Once this request is approved, this will allow the YEAC to become more recognized and share more in the DRR network both locally and regionally.

In addition to the ongoing dialogue, one formal meeting was held with NADMA in December where the assurance of continued support in planning and implementation of trainings, meetings, and emergency drills were reiterated. Additionally, six (6) youth have been identified to participate in NADMA's district disaster committees.

#### **St. Lucia**

In November, the CRS Program Manager for the English-speaking Caribbean visited the Lesser Antilles. This opportunity was used to meet with local DRR stakeholders to discuss the integration of the YEACs into the local DRR network. At a meeting held on November 26<sup>th</sup> with the Director General of NEMO, Dawn French, the merging of the YEACs into decision making platforms was discussed and the potential deployment of youth to provide assistance in an emergency both locally and regionally was explored. It was agreed that the YEACs will work closely with the District Disaster Committees and take their directives from this committee in the event of an emergency. Youth will also complete volunteer registration forms so that they can be included in NEMO's volunteer database.

During this visit, meetings were also held with Saint Lucia Red Cross and National Solid Waste. A subsequent meeting with Saint Lucia Red Cross has been scheduled for January 14, 2014.

It is noteworthy to mention that on December 20, 2013, YEAC members and a local business LUCELEC collaborated under the theme *"This Christmas make disaster preparedness number one on your wish list"*. Members were allowed to use the LUCELEC customer service area to talk to customers about the group and distribute flyers about disaster preparedness. Customers paying their electricity bill on that day were given the opportunity to dip for sponsored prizes.



#### **Activity 4: Early Warning Signals**

##### **Dominican Republic**

Although thankfully no disaster has occurred, the targeted neighborhoods have responded well in conversations about early warning signals and emergency drills. The YEAC members have developed a series of talks in schools to review instructions on performing school drills.



*A school drill in progress*

##### **Grenada and St. Lucia**

In the Lesser Antilles, planning for this activity is in progress. As a part of the integration meetings support have been garnered from other DRR agencies to assist with the implementation of this activity.

#### **Activity 5: Practice of Emergency Drills**

##### **Dominican Republic**

The Home Visit days in each of the communities continues and this has helped to strengthen the process of sensitization and training of neighborhoods and families regarding family/community plans and emergency drills.

##### **My story: Emmanuel Brito: The YEAC -- Padre Granero**



*“For me personally, the project is very important because I can share experiences with my friends more, I have learned many skills and they help me in relating with my family (father, mother, and siblings), with my other family members, and in all of my other relationships. I never imagined doing this type of work in my community but it is necessary and I feel very satisfied when we visit homes and the people welcome us and accept our suggestions—we have developed excellent communication as we have delivered clear messages to those we have visited. I want to continue to be part of the committee and work for the betterment of my community.”*

## **Grenada and St. Lucia**

In the Lesser Antilles, planning for the practicing of emergency drills is in progress.

### **Highlights**

The YEAC in St. Lucia having recently completed their series of response trainings was placed in a real situation where they had to draw upon some of the skills they learnt. On December 24, 2013, the island was affected by a weather trough. The trough now known as the “Christmas Eve Trough” brought with it high levels of rain, thunder, and lightning. There was widespread damage that unfortunately resulted in the deaths of six (6) people. This under-estimated weather phenomenon devastated parts of the island causing areas to be impassable.

The YEAC mechanism was engaged on Christmas Day once it was safe to do so. Youth investigated in each community to see who were affected and if there were any immediate need for First Aid skills. Reports of loss of personal effects and landslides in areas such as Ti Rocher and Marchand were forwarded to NEMO. YEAC members then travelled to NEMO’s headquarters and assisted with administrative tasks, kitchen duty, but predominantly warehousing and maintenance. Some members packed items for distribution, while others were deployed to the affected areas to assist with bringing water and food supplies to the persons there. Any firsthand experience of the realities on the ground was then relayed to NEMO.

Although it has been over a month since this event, YEAC members continue to provide assistance to NEMO and will continue to do so until St. Lucia returns to some state of normalcy.



*St. Lucia YEAC Members assisting with food packaging*

## **V. Report on Challenges Encountered**

Some of the challenges encountered in this quarter were:

- The attendance of youth continues to be significantly affected due to competing interest. For example in Grenada, several of the YEAC members have become engaged in a government run employment program. While the youth remain interested in the group, their realities is such that they have to prioritize income earning activities to be better able to provide for themselves.
- The lack of facilitators available from the Civil Defense to deliver the specialized First Aid course. In St. Lucia, the availability of facilitators also delayed the implementation of the trainings.
- The Christmas Eve Trough in St. Lucia resulted in energies being shifted from the direct project activities to more urgent response tasks. This has resulted in a delay in the completion of some planned activities.