



ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM

Regional Breakout Session: Caribbean Wednesday 16 April, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

IDENTIFICATION	
Session/plenary title	Caribbean regional breakout session
Session/plenary focus (SDG, region or topic)	Caribbean Region
Session/plenary UN co-lead UN 1	ECLAC Caribbean
Session/plenary youth co-lead 1	Caribbean Global Focal Point for the United Nations' Major Group for Children and Youth
Session/plenary youth co-lead 2	Commonwealth Youth Council (Caribbean)
Session/plenary UN co-organizers	UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean
	UNFPA Latin America & the Caribbean Regional Office
Session/plenary youth co-organizers	CARICOM Youth Ambassador
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	
<p>The Caribbean has made significant progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in improving the lives of youth, but challenges remain.</p> <p>In terms of SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), advances such as lower infant mortality rates and the reduction of infectious diseases have improved overall health conditions for young people. However, the region faces a growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension due to poor diets and sedentary lifestyles. Mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse, are increasing, especially among youth in marginalized communities. Access to healthcare, including services related to sexual and reproductive health, can be limited due to policy frameworks and societal factors, which may contribute to challenges such as adolescent pregnancies and the transmission of HIV and other infections.</p> <p>SDG 5 (Gender Equality) has seen progress with the development of frameworks like the CARICOM Regional Gender Equality Strategy, aimed at tackling gender disparities. However, gender-based violence remains a major concern, and while women outpace men in tertiary education, they still experience higher unemployment rates</p>	

and are underrepresented in STEM fields and leadership positions. Meanwhile, male underrepresentation in higher education highlights another gender-related challenge.

SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) remains a persistent challenge, as the Caribbean has some of the highest youth unemployment rates globally. The skills gap between education and job-market demands leaves many young people without access to quality employment, leading to a rise in informal and precarious jobs with limited protection. Climate change further threatens key economic sectors such as tourism and agriculture, exacerbating job insecurity.

For **SDG 14 (Life Below Water)**, the Caribbean's marine environment is essential for economic stability, yet it faces severe threats from pollution, overfishing, and climate change. Rising sea temperatures, coral bleaching, and sargassum influxes that negatively affect tourism and fisheries, directly impacting youth employment in coastal communities. Despite their critical role in marine conservation, young people remain largely excluded from decision-making processes.

Finally, **SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)** highlights the importance of collaboration in advancing youth development, but youth-led initiatives continue to face difficulties in securing funding and institutional support. Weak coordination among youth organizations, governments, and the private sector limits progress, yet young people continue to drive innovative solutions to address these challenges. Moving forward, stronger investments in education, skills training, gender equity, and environmental sustainability, along with improved youth participation in policymaking, are necessary to ensure long-term development and prosperity for Caribbean youth.

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION/PLENARY

1. Provide a platform for Caribbean youth to share their perspectives, expertise, and solutions on critical issues, particularly those related to SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17.
2. Showcase the youth engagement processes in preparation for the eighth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and the ECOSOC Youth Forum Caribbean Regional Breakout Session with the 2025 HLPF theme "Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind".
3. Follow up on regional youth consultations and local dialogue efforts towards the implementation and review processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development such as the HLPF, the Beijing+30 Commemoration, the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD-4), the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2), and other relevant high-level meetings.
4. Reflect on the role and progress of National Youth Policies as potential accelerators of the SDGs during the Decade of Action, emphasizing the contributions of youth, youth authorities, and organizations, along with other key partners, in strengthening youth participation mechanisms.
5. Provide Caribbean youth with a high-level platform to connect Member States and other youth organizations for further dialogue and collaboration. This platform should facilitate engagement with youth authority representatives, promote cooperation, and ensure meaningful youth participation in the review, implementation, and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

Session for the Caribbean, moderated by Jemiah Prince (Commonwealth Youth Council) & Esquire Henry (CARICOM Youth Ambassador)

Time	Activity	Presenters
5 mins	Welcome and introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jemiah Prince, Youth Moderator, Commonwealth Youth Council - Esquire Henry, Youth Co-Moderator, CARICOM Youth Ambassador
50 mins	<p>Panel</p> <p>Navigating our Future: Empowering Caribbean Youth to advance sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Moderated by Jemiah Prince, Commonwealth Youth Council & Esquire Henry, CARICOM Youth Ambassador</p> <p>Presentation: “The Caribbean Youth perspective on advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amber Turner, Youth Ambassador to the United Nations on behalf of The Bahamas <p>Interactive Discussion (15 mins) Based on the previous presentation, this segment would be an interactive session and would focus on delegates’ key recommendations and inputs for the SDGs under review</p> <p>Interventions from the floor by Ministers and youth representatives (30 mins) During this session, delegates (Member States, UN agencies, National Youth Councils, and Youth NGOs) at the Regional Breakout session would be invited to share their perspective on the previous presentation and contribute further key recommendations.</p>
30 mins	Interactive Session	<p>Moderated by Jemiah Prince, Commonwealth Youth Council & Esquire Henry, CARICOM Youth Ambassador</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What concrete strategies can States, cooperation agencies, the private sector, and civil society implement to meaningfully engage children, adolescents, and youth as partners in advancing SDGs 3, 5, 8, and 14? ii. What successful models or policies have already been implemented, and what measurable impact have they had over time? <p>Interventions from the floor by Ministers and youth representatives</p>

	5 mins	Conclusions	Jemiah Prince, Commonwealth Youth Council & Esquire Henry, CARICOM Youth Ambassador		
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What concrete strategies can States, cooperation agencies, the private sector, and civil society implement to meaningfully engage children, adolescents, and youth as partners in advancing SDGs 3, 5, 8, and 14?
- What successful models or policies have already been implemented, and what measurable impact have they had over time?

NAMES AND TITLES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

MODERATORS:

Ms. Jemiah Prince, Commonwealth Youth Council, Trinidad and Tobago
 Mr. Esquire Henry, CARICOM Youth Ambassador, Antigua and Barbuda

SESSION SPEAKERS:

Ms. Amber Turner, Youth Ambassador to the United Nations on behalf of The Bahamas
 Ms. Arielle Neely, Career Advancement and Program Coordinator, Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture, Turks & Caicos Islands Government
 Ms. Jenna Williams, Caribbean Youth Environment Network, St. Lucia
 Ms. Lenz Wendy Civil, HART'S Community, Haiti
 Ms. Mirthia Julia Brossard Oris, Head of International Affairs of the Youth Organization of Cuba
 Ms. Francesca Basso, UNFPA Latin America & the Caribbean Regional Office
 Ms. Marianela Vega, UNDP Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean

OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

In the Caribbean, a series of Youth Dialogues were held on 26 & 27 March, where young people of the subregion would engage policy makers and experts in examining themes aligned with the SDGs under review via discussions and presentations. The outcomes of the Caribbean Youth Dialogues will be presented at a segment of the Sustainable Development Forum in Santiago in the last week of March.