Major Groups and Organizing Partners

Major Groups

The concept of the nine Major Groups comes from Agenda 21. As will be remembered, the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992 agreed to understand civil society in the context of sustainable development negotiations at the UN as the nine Major Groups. Having made the decision to designate civil society into nine Major Groups, the outline and rationale was explained in detail in Chapter 23 of Agenda 21. The Major Groups as defined by Agenda 21 are:

- Women
- Children and Youth
- Farmers
- Indigenous Peoples
- NGOs
- Trade Unions
- Local Authorities
- Science and Technology
- Business and Industry

The UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/68/211 recognizes the importance of the contributions and participation of all relevant stakeholders, including major groups, at the third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and its preparatory process.

Major Groups can engage in discussions with States, Inter-Governmental Organizations and UN entities in informal and formal spaces. A large number of organizations belonging to different Major Groups share their views in key aspects of disaster risk reduction, distribute information, and coordinate official statements and position papers. This usually translates into statements made by representatives of Major Groups in the context of the official process as well as organization of side events and partnership initiatives during the Preparatory Committee and the Conference itself.

Organizing Partners

Organizing Partners (OPs) support a fluid communication between the Bureau and Conference secretariat, as well as to facilitate its engagement in UN processes on disaster risk reduction.
Organizing Partners are selected among the constituencies of the each of the Major Group sectors and must fulfill the following criteria:

- Be accredited to ECOSOC;
- Have a global outreach; and
- Have close and thorough understanding of UN processes, as well as a deep understanding of the thematic issues on the conference agenda.

Tasks of the Organizing Partners include:
- Facilitate the participation of the major group representatives throughout the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and its preparatory process, working in collaboration with other major group sectors’ representatives present at the World Conference.
- Facilitate the preparation of statements on behalf of the major group to relevant sessions and events, including the plenary, by coordinating and consulting with stakeholders. Oversee a transparent process for the selection of representatives delivering statements on behalf of the major group.
- Act as the main liaison between the major group and the Conference secretariat and Bureau.
- Ensure the major group delegation comprises a range of diverse and representative participants, including from both developed and developing countries from all regions, persons with disability, as well as ensuring a gender balance.
- Oversee a transparent and fair distribution of secondary passes to meetings and events where seating is limited.
- Provide short updates to the Conference secretariat in advance of each meeting of the preparatory committee and the World Conference.

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