

Expert: Mr Sam Johnson

Title of the Session: youth engagement for Disaster Risk Reduction: new visions for new times

Date: 04/08/2014 to 10/08/2014

Summary

Children and youth are agents for future change: they have the capability to innovate, educate and reach out to their direct and extended families, as well as their wider communities, on how to reduce disaster risks and lead resilience.

They are networking self-organizing, and innovating change throughout the world in unprecedented ways. Governments are increasingly exploring youth in DRR.

Context

I am proud to see my peers around the world achieving measurable results and building long lasting partnerships through the implementation of realistic action plans on disaster risk reduction. Despite best intentions however, we seem to be collectively still lacking the best practice and capacity to engage youth in disaster risk reduction and measure the results in a safe and responsible way.

As part of the children and youth mobilization towards Sendai, we are warmly welcoming governments and civil society groups to make a voluntary commitment to strengthen the opportunities that mobilize and inspire action by young people respective countries.

As a network we are interested in exploring how to activate strong youth networks, politicians, policy makers and private partners to co-create a National Plan of Action focused on youth-led disaster reduction and to better identify youth leaders with the dedication and willingness to drive such an initiative locally.

As one of the 'experts' of the week, I am happy on behalf of our team to discuss various youth in disasters programs that are making changes around the world, and explore how to better connect with others working in a similar field.

For me, its certainly a time for mutual learning!

The secrets to our success:

- A. Relentless focus on experience.
- B. Strategic, but often organic, partnerships with authorities and professionals. They supported what we were doing, and how we were operating.

- C. Multilayered approach to media.
- D. Not a team of *'experts'* with *'skills'* - *open/ accessible*.