



Ministerie van
Onderwijs, Cultuur
en Wetenschap



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Info Sheet Caribbean Cultural Emergency Response Hub

Introduction

Heritage institutions in the Caribbean are faced with increased challenges caused by the effects of climate change and natural disasters. In 2018-2019 CARBICA launched the Caribbean Heritage Emergency Network (CHEN) after the devastating hurricane season 2017, to fortify emergency response mechanisms. To reach its objectives, CHEN partnered up with the CER (formerly part of Prince Claus Funds, Netherlands and in 2022 operates as a separate and independent NGO) and launched the Caribbean Cultural Emergency Response Hub to coordinate these efforts. In developing this Regional Hub CARBICA / CHEN aims to enhance resource distribution, training and ensure stronger planning on a regional level.

CER will support the Caribbean Heritage Emergency Network (CHEN), a subsidiary of the Caribbean Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (CARBICA) to establish itself as a CER Regional Hub in the Caribbean region to protect cultural heritage under threat. CHEN is made up of experts in a wide range of heritage fields, including but not limited to documentary heritage, built heritage, museums and collections, intangible heritage, and archaeology.

Purpose Regional Hub

The purpose of the Regional Hub will be to enhance emergency response mechanisms for cultural heritage protection in the Caribbean, a region in which all islands, and particularly those that are low-lying, are highly susceptible to extreme weather events and natural hazards including but not limited to tropical storms, hurricanes, floods, coastal erosion, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. Existing response mechanisms are spread comparatively thinly between islands and states, resources are disparate and often unavailable during emergencies, and jurisdictional boundaries might otherwise prevent fully cohesive cooperative planning.

The Regional Hub will be based in Curaçao, with day-to-day operations managed by a dedicated Secretariat. The Regional Hub's activities will focus on cities and sites, museums, collections, libraries and archives, the latter being the most prominent format of material heritage in the region.

During a 4-year program CARBICA/ CHEN will establish the Caribbean Hub and facilitate the safeguarding of documentary heritage by creating 3-4 sub hubs- strategically spread throughout the region- as safe havens, storage repositories for response and recovery goods, training and expertise centres for preparedness and mitigation. The first phase: organizing an Awareness/ Stakeholders meeting and a Mapping Workshop in Curacao will be held from March 11 to 13, 2024. It is imperative to the success of the Caribbean CER Hub that representatives of the regional cultural heritage sector as well as disaster management agencies participate in the advocacy meeting in order to secure their engagement and commitment to the objectives of the Hub.

Activities

The creation of the Regional Hub comprises of 7 core activities:

1. Establishing a Secretariat – September 2023;
2. Conducting regional advocacy- March 2024;
3. Promoting risk and mapping preparedness- March 2024;
4. Designing organizational blueprints for 4 'sub-hubs' to sustain the Regional Hub's work in the Caribbean's 4 existing sub-regions;
5. Building regional cultural first aid capacity via (i) train-the-trainers and (ii) create a regional field school/ training mechanism;
6. Developing and delivering a 'mobile lab' for emergency deployment and training;
7. Designing a 'Command Team' mechanism for emergency deployment.