



Saint Lucia To Seek Funding to Strengthen Climate Resilience in the Health Sector



Castries, St Lucia, 11 October 2023 (PAHO/WHO) - Saint Lucia has completed its Health National Adaptation Plan (H-NAP) and has moved to the development of a concept note for submission to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to secure funding to strengthen climate resilience in the health sector.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) recently convened a multistakeholder meeting aimed at providing an overview of the priorities that emanated from the Health National Adaptation Plan (H-NAP) for Climate Change; and development of a concept note on, **“Creating a Low-Carbon and More Resilient Health Sector in Saint Lucia”**.

According to Acting Health Planner, Ministry of Health, Wellness and Elderly Affairs, Tamara Lionel, this work was critical to build resilience in the health sector. “Raising public awareness of the health risks associated with climate change and investing in climate-resilient health infrastructure is pivotal to safeguarding human health and well-being. The draft GCF concept note, “Creating a Low-Carbon and More Resilient

Health Sector in Saint Lucia” will support the country’s efforts in adapting to adverse climatic events,” Mrs Lionel emphasized.

Project Development Specialist at the CCCCC, Ahnivar Peralta, noted that the development of the concept note would address the national health needs and the priorities articulated in the H-NAP. “This is a transformative investment which is geared towards building climate resilience in Saint Lucia’s Health Sector to adapt to the negative climate change impacts associated with the increased intensity of climate-induced disasters and risks in line with the national health needs and priorities.... This concept note is expected to have a national impact by ensuring that there is strong country buy-in and country ownership,” Mr Peralta said.

He outlined the three key areas from the H-NAP to be included in the concept note as the enhancement of climate resilient health facilities; strengthening the climate risk management and surveillance of climate sensitive diseases to enhance health systems and service delivery; and enhancing the institutional capacity and national health awareness of stakeholders for enhanced service delivery and sustainable operations of health care facilities.

Mr Peralta added, “through the development of this concept note, Saint Lucia is maximizing its efforts towards accessing and mobilizing climate finance, contributing to its low emission development goals and building climate resilience to ensure that the country can build climate smart health care facilities that are safe, reliable and environmentally friendly.”

Subregional Program Director of the PAHO Caribbean Subregional Program Coordination Office, Dean Chambliss, congratulated the government of Saint Lucia for completing the comprehensive H-NAP and their strides towards accessing climate and health financing. He pointed out that Caribbean citizens are currently seeing the effects of climate change and are aware of some of the significant public health challenges posed.

“It is therefore critical to ensure health is included in national adaptation planning. Health National Adaptation Planning has been a critical component of the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) from the beginning [article 4 para 1.f]. By identifying the most significant risks and vulnerabilities, countries can prioritize adaptation actions and allocate resources effectively. This ensures that limited resources are used where they are most needed. It is hoped that this will result in the development of policies, strategies, and regulations that integrate climate resilience into various sectors, including agriculture, infrastructure, and disaster management,” Mr Chambliss emphasized.

Programme Manager, Climate Change at the Delegation of the European Union, Donna Gittens, underlined that the partnerships created under the project reflect the commitments renewed during EU-CELAC summit. “It is significant that in the final resolutions coming out of this summit, health was highlighted among the key areas of common interest and priority...The next steps clearly signal determination to advance real action. Setting the stage to support countries in their efforts to access the necessary resources for the implementation of priority areas from the HNAPs. This is evidence-based action at its core ensuring that actions are well justified, widely reviewed and agreed. As

a result, outcomes will have significant and tangible national impact. The EU is honored to partner with you in these efforts,” Ms Gittens remarked.

The meeting participants included personnel from the Saint Lucia Ministries of Health, Environment and Sustainable Development. The development of the H-NAPS is just one aspect of the EU Climate Change and Health [project](#).

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world’s oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system.

The PAHO Subregional Program is responsible for providing subregional technical cooperation and to strengthen PAHO’s engagement with the Caribbean Subregional integration mechanisms, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its various bodies and organs; and to build synergistic partnerships with the subregional institutions such as the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the University of the West Indies (UWI), among others. PAHO’s subregional technical cooperation specifically focuses on public health issues which would benefit from economies of scale and for which agreement on proposed collective responses and actions would produce a far greater impact rather than individual country responses. The Subregional Program also plays a role in coordinating among the different PAHO country offices.