



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Remarks

**OF DEPUTY RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED
NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, MRS. LARA BLANCO**

TO BE DELIVERED AT

The launch of the CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION FUND

November 14th , 2014 - Flamboyant Hotel, Grand Anse, St. George's

Under the idea of building empowered lives and resilient nations, UNDP has been actively pursuing a better understanding of the meaning of human development. UNDP's objective is to ensure that the countries we serve have the capacity to create conditions and opportunities for people within their territories, but also, that people -notwithstanding age, gender, ethnicity, place of birth- are in command of their own lives and live truly human lives. Lives that are worth living.

The growing understanding of Climate Change as a major threat to development efforts is the reason that has led our organization to invest heavily in building an understanding of the notion of resilience and resilience-building efforts. Through our work we have sought to create knowledge about the phenomenon and its impact. We have supported global efforts to bring awareness about the pervasiveness of a problem that calls for immediate decisions and we are supporting countries, regions and groupings of countries such as the SIDS gather the evidence and develop the arguments to persuade the international community and key actors to move beyond paralysis and inaction, or what Stephen Gardiner has called "the perfect moral storm".

The recently adopted Fifth Assessment Synthesis Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, hailed by many as the most in-depth publication on the macro-environmental status of the world provides a good understanding of the consequences.

The report clearly states that the islands are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events, ocean acidification and sea level rise. Effective mitigation and adaptation strategies are identified by the document as the adequate way forward, but it warns about the need for an increased, accelerated and sustained effort, particularly to give a timely and effective response to the situation of islands around the globe. The international community has failed to agree on parameters and mechanisms that will safeguard "life as we know it in the islands".

The prediction of the IPCC should capture our attention and the world's attention. The document reports that the rise in ocean waters will proceed at

a faster rate than we have experienced over the past 40 years. Global mean sea level rise for 2081–2100, the document says, is projected to be between 26cm (at the low end) and 82cm (at the high end), depending on the greenhouse emissions path this century.

The ICCAS project and the launch of the Adaptation Fund are not marginal pieces in the efforts to build awareness around the topics raised by the IPCC. Not only is the ICCAS project uniquely placed to provide insights to the international community about how to establish adaptation measures, but also, the project emphasizes the importance of communication, awareness raising and advocacy to build a critical mass of countries and citizens supporting the kind of measures that the world requires. We know the difficulties of keeping media momentum for climate change and its consequences. As some have rightly put it: “slow climate violence gets ignored because the way news is packaged”. But we do need to ensure that the long term injustices that climate change pose to people and the planet are not invisible. In our communication efforts we should work towards reaching out to people beyond Grenada and the Caribbean to show the world the threats, the losses associated with climate change.

But the ICCAS project has even greater potential. By engaging with communities, community-based organizations and NGOs we will be able to develop an on-the-ground knowledge of the problems and the potential measures that we can take to protect livelihoods against climate change.

The launch of the Climate Change Adaptation Fund marks a significant juncture in the Programme for Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Strategies. The Fund is the kind of people-centered initiative that our approach to development advocates for.

For the design of the Fund and in advance of today’s launch, the UNDP ICCAS team has conducted a series of preliminary site visits in Grenada, Carriacou, Petite Martinique and Isle De Rhonde, followed by more than 15 community meetings to date since the month of October. This engagement on the ground has guided the criteria and structure of the Fund, making it more relevant for the Grenadian context.

The structure of the fund has been completed. The community outreach activities are ongoing and will intensify for 2015 under the Awareness component

The UNDP stands prepared to make this, 'the first project of its kind in Grenada' a successful template of guidance for other similar adaptation initiatives across the region. I am very optimistic that this fund will add to the capacity of the communities to absorb and even combat the social, economic and environmental shocks caused by the impacts of climate change.

At UNDP we also recognize the usefulness of creating and reinforcing linkages between our initiatives and those of other closely aligned organizations. Therefore, our ability to deliver on this fund to as wide a population of qualified applicants as possible, depends largely on synergies we can utilize within our expansive local, regional and international network to ensure that every opportunity to exploit the collective benefits of this fund is taken. (GEF SGP, UNEP, GIZ)

I also want to congratulate the Ministry for the leadership in this effort. The work done so far is an example of how we are meant to work with our national counterparts towards the achievement of common objectives.

On behalf of the UNDP Barbados and OECS, I want to thank you all for joining us today on this occasion and I look forward to many key follow up discussions in the months ahead regarding the successes of the Climate Change Adaptation Fund.

Let me close by quoting the words of our Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the People's Climate March: "there is no Plan B because we do not have a Planet B".

Many thanks.