

ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA
16-17 OCTOBER 2018

SUMMARY

Health leaders of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) provided strong arguments indicating their special needs regarding climate change and health to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. In response, WHO established "health impacts of climate and environmental change" as one of its four health priorities, and "addressing health effects of climate change in small island states and vulnerable settings" as a flagship programme in the WHO Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019-2023.

The WHO Special Initiative on Climate Change and Health in SIDS aims to protect the health of SIDS populations from the adverse effects of climate variability and change; increase awareness and mainstream funding opportunities to support countries in the development of resilient health systems to climate-related impacts; and focus on mitigation through intersectoral actions.

During the Seventy-first World Health Assembly held in Geneva in May 2018, Member States welcomed the WHO SIDS Initiative and expressed their need for capacity building to respond to threats posed by climate change.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The III Global Conference on Health and Climate Change: Special Focus on SIDS, will initiate implementation of the WHO SIDS Initiative in the Caribbean. Specifically, ministers and delegates will discuss and identify actions and indicators for a Regional Action Plan. Similar conferences were held by other WHO Regional Offices in March 2018 (in Fiji for the Western Pacific Region; in Mauritius for the African and South-East Asian Regions). The outputs of these three conferences will form the base for a Global Action Plan to be presented to the Seventy-second World Health Assembly in May 2019.

THE WHO SIDS INITIATIVE: VISION AND KEY ELEMENTS

The vision of the WHO SIDS Initiative is to ensure that by 2030, all health systems in SIDS are resilient to climate variability and change; but this must happen in parallel while countries around the world are reducing carbon emissions both to protect the most vulnerable from climate risks, and to gain the health co-benefits of mitigation policies.

Key elements of the WHO SIDS Initiative include:

 **Empowerment:** supporting health leadership in SIDS to engage nationally and internationally.

 **Evidence:** building the business case for investment.

 **Implementation:** preparedness for climate risks and health promoting mitigation policies.

 **Resources:** facilitating access to climate and health finance.