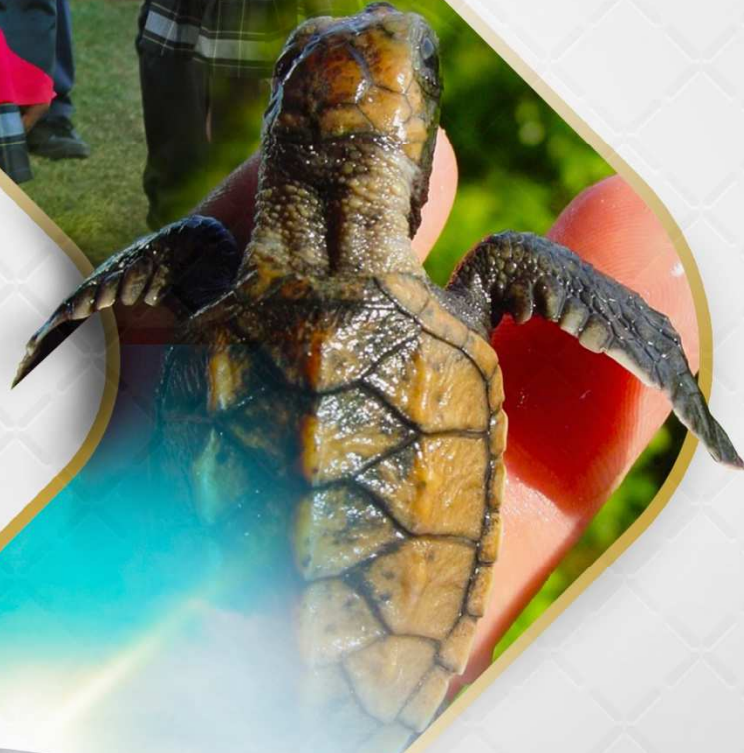




GOVERNMENT OF  
ANTIGUA BARBUDA

# 2021 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**

- 1 NO POVERTY
- 2 ZERO HUNGER
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
- 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
- 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 13 CLIMATE ACTION
- 14 LIFE BELOW WATER
- 15 LIFE ON LAND
- 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
- 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

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# Statement from the Hon. E. P Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs



## ***“Antigua and Barbuda Builds Resilience to Tackle the SDGs”***

Antigua and Barbuda, along with the rest of the global community, has had to address the devastating socio-economic impacts meted out by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The pandemic has exacerbated the unique and intrinsic vulnerabilities that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) continue to grapple with in uncertain times.

Against the backdrop in the middle of a protracted viral pandemic, Antigua and Barbuda continues to face a host of external threats which threaten to undermine developmental gains, such as unilateral economic blacklisting, loss of corresponding banking relations, and the adverse effects of climate change, including the intensification of natural disasters. Addressing these multi-faceted challenges requires a collective and concerted global effort. However, our efforts continue to be stymied by the undermining of the rules-based multilateral trading system.

In our case, the US is yet to comply with the rulings and recommendations of the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organisation in Antigua and Barbuda’s favour relating to measures affecting the cross-border supply of gaming and betting services some 13 years after judgement.

The issue of graduation poses challenges for Antigua and Barbuda, and other SIDS. We are highly susceptible to exogenous shocks but are unable to access concessionary finance. Ultimately, these restrictions will continue to substantially erode our development achievements and efforts toward the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite daunting setbacks, my Government and the People of Antigua and Barbuda remain resolute in building back better post-pandemic, and in the implementation of the SDGs. Resilience will continue to be at the forefront of formulating a comprehensive and inclusive recovery plan. A plan that considers the pillars of sustainable development, bridging the digital divide and accelerating the implementation and financing of the SDGs.

As we build forward stronger to minimize any adverse impacts from current and future threats, our immediate attention concerns equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

We need to forge partnerships towards the goals/diplomacy, accessing new sources of finance to fund implementation and we need impactful fiscal and trade related policy responses and properly aligning our medium-term development strategy to the SDGs.

Additionally, we intend to intensify our lobbying efforts for an internationally accepted alternative matrix to income which incorporates the vulnerabilities that the economy of Antigua and Barbuda and other SIDS face.

In closing, let me extend appreciation on behalf of the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda to the Economic Commission for the Caribbean and Latin America (ECLAC) for their unwavering and quality assistance given to “Team Antigua and Barbuda” during this VNR exercise. We look forward to continuing and deepening our valued partnership as my nation engages further in pursuit of achieving the SDGs.

# About the VNR

In September 2015, Antigua and Barbuda joined 192 other Member States of the United Nations (UN) to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, which are the underpinning framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, consist of 17 Goals and 169 targets. In setting up these Goals and targets, world leaders, among other things, “envisaged a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We envisaged a world free of fear and violence. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured.”<sup>1</sup> In adopting the 2030 agenda, Antigua and Barbuda aligns with this vision and is implementing a transformative development agenda that puts the country on a path that is more sustainable and resilient where ‘no one will be left behind’. Antigua and Barbuda has over the years put people first and at the centre of its development and recognizes that in achieving the SDGs it must engage all stakeholders – governments, businesses, civil society, academia, children and youth as participants in defining the country’s development process and as beneficiaries of development gains.

Antigua and Barbuda is presenting its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2021 in the same year that it celebrates 40 years of independence. The presentation of the VNR reflects and reaffirms the country’s commitment to advance the global agenda. The VNR is structured around the 5Ps – People, Peace, Planet, Prosperity and Partnership - showcasing as a country the journey travelled, lessons learned along the way, how Antigua and Barbuda is localizing the SDGs and how the country plans to map its future with a view to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Whilst as a small island developing State (SIDS) the island-nation can boast of many development gains, the VNR serves as a platform to review challenges, consider trade-offs and identify gaps in implementation and financing towards proposing possible solutions. The VNR is evidence – and data-based and structured to be analytical.

The VNR has been prepared consistent with the theme of this year’s High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development which is *“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”* and illustrates how as a country we have levelled up and pivoted in the face of COVID-19 on one hand and on the other hand how the global pandemic has further exposed the challenges that Antigua and Barbuda and other SIDS face and the volatile global environment that they must oftentimes manoeuvre to

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 7, Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1.



survive. To this end we have identified recommendations and actions to advance Antigua and Barbuda’s achievement of the SDGs that could be applicable to other small island developing States.

The VNR has been prepared whilst we are still living in a “new normal” where social distancing and virtual meetings have become the norm. Notwithstanding, we strove to ensure that the VNR reflects broad viewpoints and experiences of citizens using inclusive and participatory approaches that included stakeholder consultation through meetings and the distribution of “SDG/VNR” questionnaires to stakeholders to ensure that their inputs were reflected in the VNR. The consultations and feedback from the questionnaires provided rich information that informed this report. The Government also engaged stakeholders in an online review of the draft VNR to solicit feedback and ensure that there was consensus of what the country presents in its first voluntary reporting and at the HLPF.



*A Cross Section of Stakeholders at the Civil Society Consultation in April 2021*

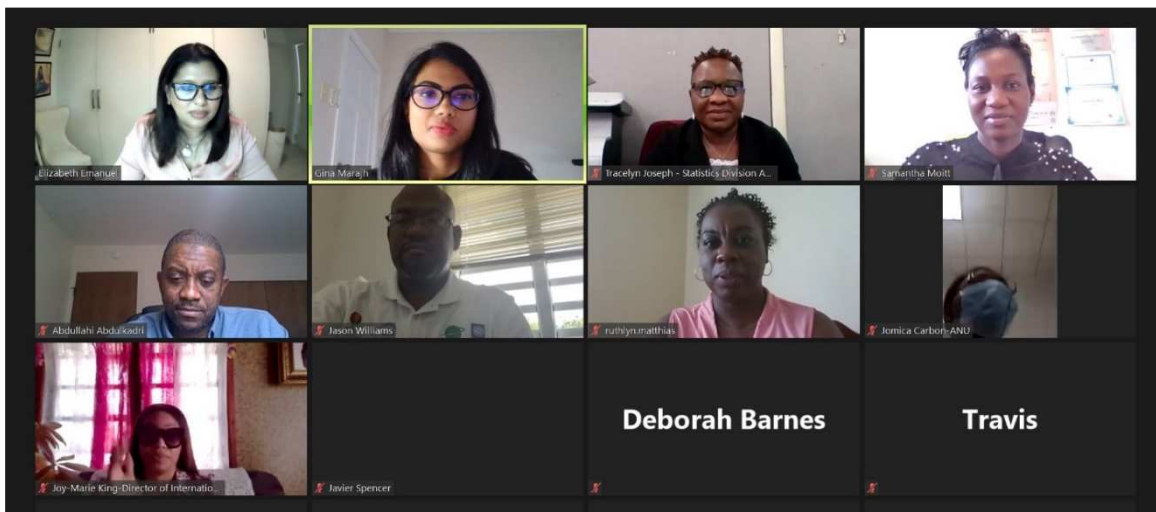
When the SDGs came into force in January 2016, we commenced the implementation of our Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2016-2020 which defines the strategic pathway to lead our country to realizing our vision of “A harmonious, prosperous, and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents.” As we stay true to this vision our citizens will have a high standard of living as Antigua and Barbuda becomes the economic powerhouse of the region.

The MTDS is underpinned by a sustainable development framework with clearly define goals and targets to be achieved over the period 2015-2030. It also presents the strategic programme, 2016-2020, to advance our development efforts over the medium term. Our development aspirations and guiding principles are broadly aligned the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. We are currently engaged in a process to build and strengthen this platform through the development of a new

national development plan which will further deepen the localization/integration of the SDGs in national development efforts towards accelerating progress to achieve our national development goals and the SDGs.

Our thrust towards the localization of the SDGs, especially through the preparation of a new national development plan illustrates how national processes are critical to shaping the advancement of the SDGs. Localization also will include the strengthening of our national statistical system and our national statistical office so that we are better able to establish monitoring, reporting, and evaluation systems to track progress towards the achievement of the SDG targets. The preparation of the VNR at the time of a global pandemic emphasizes how not only current vulnerabilities but also new and emerging global issues can suddenly impact the development trajectory of countries, and further highlights the challenges and opportunities that must be considered in development planning.

Antigua and Barbuda is committed to the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind”. In our development pathway we have always placed strategic focus on reducing poverty and narrowing income inequalities whilst investing more in education and skills training so that our citizens benefit from the growing opportunities and higher paying jobs that our economy continues to generate. We have taken steps to identify and better understand marginalized groups and how as a government we must address their needs first since many of these groups are furthest behind on the development pathway. As a country we welcome the blueprint provided by the 2030 Agenda to enable us to base our development thrusts around the five principles of the Agenda (the 5Ps) which gives equal focus to people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, helping us to build a sustainable society and advance sustainability prosperity for all Antiguan and Barbudans for this and future generations.



*Some of the stakeholders at one of the Public Sector Consultation in April 2021*



# Opening Statements

## **Antigua and Barbuda's Development Thrust within the Context of Agenda 2030**

Today, citizens of Antigua and Barbuda enjoy relatively high incomes, allowing them to live better, longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives. We have been classified by the United Nations as a high-income country with a human development value of 0.778—positioning us in the high human development category and enabling us to rank 78 out of 189 countries and territories. Our ranking on the HDI – which is one of the highest in the Caribbean region – is not by chance but based on the deliberate efforts of advancing the economic and social transformation of our country; putting people first and ensuring that those furthest behind are planned for first and embracing equality of opportunity.

We continue to place strategic focus on reducing poverty and narrowing income inequalities whilst at the same time investing more in education and skills training so that our citizens benefit from the growing opportunities and higher paying jobs that our economy continues to roll out. Coupled with this, is our thrust to support our private sector to ensure that they are internationally competitive and innovative. We are a small island, surrounded by water, that represents for us another economy – that is not only blue, but one that has abundant resources and an untapped potential for development that needs to be sustainably managed for current and future generations.

This is an opportune time for us to advance the global agenda and realize the enhanced development gains that can be achieved by adopting and adapting the 2030 Agenda. We are pleased to announce that we will be preparing a new national development plan, which would be more closely aligned with the SDGs and will be designed to be more adaptive and responsive to exogenous shocks given our most recent experiences with Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 and now COVID-19. We cannot continue to lose our development gains due to shocks!

Cabinet has already established a national SDG Committee to guide Antigua's advancement of the SDG; and is desirous in developing a comprehensive communications and stakeholder engagement strategy for advancing a more inclusive and participatory pathway to our development. We have also reached out to the UN system to support a Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) Mission to help us evaluate how we are advancing with the alignment of the SDGs across policies, plans and programmes and to provide guidance on accelerators that we must adopt to realize our development prospects and shared aspirations.

Our thrust post-COVID is to “build forward stronger”, similar to how we are approaching the recovery of Barbuda which was devastated by Hurricane Irma in 2017. Today, we are amongst the

few countries in the world with a low rate of death, a low rate of infections, a high rate of recovery, and no known community spread from COVID-19 and more than 50 per cent of our population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Notwithstanding, our efforts to contain the virus have also resulted in many disruptions to our economy and citizen welfare. Our recovery will be dependent on access to vaccines to achieve herd immunity and on how other countries around the world control the spread of the virus.

While we have been able to accomplish much, even in the face of challenges that may seem at times insurmountable, we cannot forget that we are a small vulnerable economy amid an oftentimes volatile global environment that we must manoeuvre to survive. We are not without challenges – we continue to be severely impacted by the changing climate, the increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases which continue to diminish the quality of life of many of our citizens, limited access to concessionary financing, among others. As we move forward to 2030, we therefore need to place much emphasis on addressing the next set of causes of inequalities such as those related to technology, higher education, climate change and financing for development. We therefore call on our development partners and developed countries to work with us to advance our development prospects and achieve the SDGs by:

- Removing from the criteria for access to concessional loans and grants our status as a high-income developing country, which is making us ineligible for development finance despite our many vulnerabilities. To ensure liquidity, we need access financial assistance, concessional funding and debt relief as borrowing is not an option due to our inability to service debt payments in the current circumstances
- Making available new and innovative financing instruments such as debt swap initiatives and climate resilience funds
- Supporting a programme of debt forgiveness and debt rescheduling
- Calling on high level polluting countries to take immediate action to cut greenhouse gas emissions
- Providing technical assistance for the development of strategies to support building back better post-COVID to transform the current development model of Caribbean SIDS – to include developing comprehensive welfare/social protection systems that are accessible to all, creating a fair taxation system, promoting decent jobs, strengthening environmental sustainability
- Access to funding from developed countries to compensate for damage from emissions to help reconstruct our economies and funding to acquire decarbonized technologies to assist in building resilience

We are motivated, determined and committed to achieving the SDGs in Antigua and Barbuda, towards making our country a good place to live, where everyone is accounted for equitably.

# Background and Introduction – The Economic, Social and Environmental Context

*"A harmonious, prosperous and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents".*

Antigua and Barbuda are partly volcanic in origin and located in the middle of the Leeward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean, roughly 17 degrees north of the equator. To the south are the islands of Montserrat and Guadeloupe, and to the north and west are Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Barts, and St. Martin. Antigua is the largest of the English-speaking Leeward Islands and is about 14 miles long and 11 miles wide, encompassing 108 square miles. Its highest point is Boggy Peak (1319 ft., 402 metres). Known as the 'Land of 365 Beaches', the island nation has the fourth smallest population in the world. Barbuda, (once known as Dulcina), is a flat coral island with an area of only 62 square miles and lies approximately 30 miles due north. The island nation also includes the tiny (0.6 square mile) uninhabited island of Redonda, now a nature reserve. Its capital is St. John's which is on the island of Antigua. In addition to Antigua, Barbuda and Redonda, the exclusive economic zone has over 50 other offshore islands, which are havens for migratory and resident bird populations. The current population of the island nation is approximately 100,000, with the island of Antigua being home to approximately 97 percent of the population.

The 2020 Human Development Report (HDR) ranked Antigua and Barbuda 74th out of 189 countries and territories, placing the nation in the high human development category<sup>2</sup>. The Report indicated that between 2005 and 2019, Antigua and Barbuda's Human Development Index (HDI) value increased from 0.773 to 0.778, an increase of 0.5 per cent. Antigua and Barbuda's HDI of 0.778 is above the average of 0.750 for countries in the high human development group and above the average of 0.759 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The only other country in the Caribbean ranked above Antigua and Barbuda is The Bahamas which is ranked at 60. Between 1990 and 2018, Antigua and Barbuda's life expectancy at birth increased by 5.4 years and mean years of schooling increased by 2.2 years. Also, the country's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita increased by about 41.0 per cent between 1990 and 2018.

The analysis from the Human Development Report is consistent with the country's own analysis which shows that the gap in living standards is narrowing, with many people in the country

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2019: Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century.

escaping poverty, hunger, and low educational outcomes. Notwithstanding these accomplishments, the Government continues to put much emphasis on the next generation of inequalities such as those related to technology, higher education, climate change and financing for development.

Like other countries around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic is having historic negative effects in the economic, productive and social spheres, of the country, signaling negative medium-term effects on growth which can wipe out recent development gains and even lead to increases in inequality, poverty and unemployment. The Government considers its management of COVID-19 as the singular most important accomplishment in 2020 as Antigua and Barbuda remains one of the few countries in the world with a low rate of death, a low rate of infections, a high rate of recovery, and no known community spread from COVID-19.

The Government Implemented a series of measures to respond to the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19 including:

- An increase in health- sector expenditure equivalent to 0.5% of GDP
- A 20 per cent reduction in electricity costs to the public and fuel costs to fisherfolk for 90 days
- A one-year investment incentive framework for home renovation and construction
- Suspension of the common external tariff on food imports and all new tax measures announced in the 2020 budget
- Expansion of social safety net programmes

Prior to the global pandemic, Antigua and Barbuda has been navigating many challenges, including a rather hostile global architecture (financial and trading) including: black listing; de-risking and threats to corresponding banking relations; limited access to concessionary finance and grants; the impact of climate change as evidenced most recently by the impacts of Hurricane Irma in 2017 and other excess rainfall events; high levels of indebtedness; a protracted unresolved gaming trade dispute with the United States; susceptibility to devastating and increased occurrence of natural hazards; and, a range of other exogenous shocks.

This VNR has been prepared against the backdrop of the varying issues and challenges that have emerged since the global pandemic, adding to the already existing issues and challenges. Antigua and Barbuda is cognizant of its vulnerabilities and challenges in implementing the SDGs, particularly as it relates to our ability to access financing for development, our statistical capacity as well as the required monitoring and evaluation systems. The section below will provide an overview of the economic, social and environmental contexts pre-COVID-19 and within the context of the pandemic.

## **The Economic Context**

Antigua and Barbuda is the second largest economy in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union behind Saint Lucia. Over the period 2016 – 2020, the country’s strategic imperatives were based on the recognition that the country was in the efficiency-driven stage of development. This stage requires focus on optimizing the benefit to be harnessed from higher education and training, market efficiency (goods, services and financial), technological readiness and market access towards attaining higher levels of competitiveness. Based on our development experience to date, emphasis was placed on strengthening and expanding economic infrastructure as this provided impetus to previous economic successes in the country’s history.

Calendar year 2020, marked the end of the implementation period of the Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS). The nation’s economic results up to the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, showed improvements in economic outcomes evidenced by consecutive years of growth, stable inflation levels, and reduction in public debt. The improvement in the macroeconomy translated into improvements in labour market conditions and steady foreign direct investment inflows into the country. These development results are against the background of recovery efforts from the impacts of Hurricane Irma in 2017, which caused unprecedented damage and loss. Following the damage and loss caused by Hurricane Irma in 2017, there was significant uptick in construction related to the recovery efforts. In 2018, the combined expansion of the construction and tourism industries led to an overall growth of 7 per cent<sup>3</sup>. Growth over this period was therefore largely driven by the performances of the tourism and construction sectors.

Prior to the devastating impact of Irma, Antigua and Barbuda had begun to show stable and predictable macroeconomic indicators evidenced by relatively low and stable levels of inflation, reduction in public debt and economic growth. Efforts to restore pre-disaster 2017 output levels resulted in an uptick in the construction sector which combined with the tourism industry contributed to growth of 6.95 per cent in 2018 following growth of 3.1 per cent in 2017.

For 2019, the country continued to experience increases in economic output with growth of 3.4 per cent. In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda’s economy plummeted by 16.2 per cent. This decline follows annual average growth of about 5 per cent over the preceding five years. Much of this could be attributed primarily to the strategies employed to stem the spread of the COVID-19 as well as devastation caused by the pandemic on all the country’s major source markets which also were impacted by COVID-19. This also created fiscal pressures as revenues declined and there was increased spending on programmes related to COVID-19 as well as on imports of medicines and

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<sup>3</sup> World Bank 2018



medical equipment. The economic and social disruption has and is expected to, inter alia, place downward pressure on economic output, increase unemployment, widen the fiscal imbalance, delay critical development projects and increase the vulnerability of many, particularly the poor.

The country's debt-to-GDP ratio at the end of 2020 was 89 per cent, compared to 67 per cent at the end of 2019. Reducing the debt-to-GDP ratio is one of the key thrusts of the Government in pursuit of debt and fiscal sustainability. Based on International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates, the economy is projected to decline by 3 per cent for 2021<sup>4</sup>. The fiscal deficit also is expected to increase to 9 per cent and the rate of unemployment is projected to be over 30 per cent. Given the high dependence on tourism, the impact of COVID-19 is expected to be significant.

Like many of the small, open economies of the Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda's economy is heavily dependent on the services sector, especially international tourism. Tourism accounts for about 47 per cent of annual output and is the key driver of growth, investment and income generation, including a major contributor to government revenues and employment. As a result of the global pandemic and restrictions on international travel, Antigua and Barbuda saw a 62.5 per cent reduction in total visitor arrivals from 1.05 million visitors recorded in 2019 to 395,647 in 2020. Of this number, cruise visitor arrivals contracted by 64 per cent from 753,076 to 270,327 and stay-over visitors dropped by 58 per cent from 301,019 in 2019 to 125,320 in 2020. The decline in visitor numbers, combined with shutdowns, restrictions on air travel, implementation of curfews and social distancing measures, resulted in a 63.6 per cent contraction of the hotel and restaurant sector in 2020 as compared to growth of 7.7 per cent in 2019. Over the years, the tourism sector has been adversely affected by natural disasters such as hurricanes. Notwithstanding, the industry, remains the dominant sector and it continues to drive growth in the construction and telecommunications sectors.

The financial services sector is relatively strong and is the second largest banking sector in the Easter Caribbean Region, accounting for one fifth of the region's deposits, assets, and loans. The offshore jurisdiction was created in 1982 with the passing of the International Business Corporation (IBC) Act, resulting in over twenty (20) years' experience in offshore banking, insurance, international business corporations (IBCs), internet gaming and trust services.

The manufacturing industry is fairly small and only concentrates on light manufacturing. Local manufacturers have some access to the United States (US), European, and Caribbean markets. The agricultural sector over the years has experienced a steep decline in productivity and

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<sup>4</sup> World Bank, World Economic Outlook Database. Available at <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/April>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

competitiveness and contributes less than three per cent to GDP. The deep-water harbour located in the capital St John's is the main transit point for trade and handles all the imported cargo. Other sectors such as Construction, Transport, Storage and Communication and the Wholesale and Retail sector also declined in 2020. The decline of the various economic sectors also impacted employment.

Prior to 2020, the country's unemployment rate was 8.7 per cent<sup>5</sup>. The improvements were consistent with the expansion in output in recent years. Unemployment was, however, more prevalent among women (9.9%) than men (7.3%). Notwithstanding, when absolute numbers are considered, there were more employed women than men as women comprise a larger share of the working age population. The overall employment to population ratio stood at 65.9 per cent with females having a lower ratio (62.1 %) than males (70.5 %). By the end of 2020, there were about 11,000 fewer employed persons than at the start of the year. More than 70 per cent of these persons were employed in the hotel accommodation and hospitality sectors which have been significantly impacted by COVID-19.

One of the areas that the country is working towards making significant improvements is in the ease of doing business. The 2020 World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report ranked Antigua and Barbuda at 113 among 190 economies with a score of 60.3<sup>6</sup>. While the country has done relatively well in areas such as starting a business and getting electricity, we acknowledge the need for reforms related to resolving insolvency and access to credit, among others.

Remittances also are an important source of income and foreign exchange revenue, reflecting the close ties that the Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora in the USA and Canada have with their families back home. Remittances over the years have also played a key role in shoring up the foreign exchange position in the currency union and provide critical sources of income for the most vulnerable, supporting basic consumption, education costs for children and medical care.

A critical issue faced by Antigua and Barbuda is its inability to access concessional funding or grants from the international financial institutions due to its relatively good economic performance and its designation by the UN as a high-income country. The island nation has been denied loans from the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) because of the skewed per capita income criterion applied by these institutions' policy-making boards. This was particularly troubling during 2020 and at the heights of the COVID-19 pandemic when the country needed assistance. Apart from a line of credit from the Inter-American Development Bank, Antigua and Barbuda did not receive

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<sup>5</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Labour Force Survey 2018

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, Doing Business 2020: Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies, (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2020). Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/688761571934946384/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies.pdf>

much support from IFIs to assist with the enormous challenges faced, challenges which caused some developed countries to ‘buckle’. Notwithstanding, the Government was able to assess some funding from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the Regional Government Securities Market, and other institutions such as the Caribbean Development Bank, the Abu Dhabi Fund, and the country’s domestic bank.

The country supports and facilitates foreign direct invest (FDI), particularly in key growth sectors. Foreign direct investment inflows increased from US\$97 million in 2016 to US\$139 million in 2019. As a percentage of GDP foreign direct investment increased to 8.4 per cent for 2019, up from 6.8 per cent in 2016<sup>7</sup>.

## **The Social Context**

The United Nations Human Development Index has classified Antigua and Barbuda as a high-income country with a HDI value of 0.778—positioning the country in the high human development category, with a ranking of 78 out of 189 countries and territories. The country’s ranking is one of the highest among Latin America and Caribbean countries. Most citizens of Antigua and Barbuda enjoy relatively high incomes, allowing them to live better, longer, healthier and fulfilling lives. The government reiterates that this ranking is not by chance but based on the deliberate efforts of advancing the economic and social transformation of the country and putting people first in development planning and ensuring that those furthest behind are planned for first.

Notwithstanding, the last poverty assessment undertaken in 2006 estimated that 18 per cent of the population could be classified as poor, with 3.7 per cent of this considered indigent. The assessment also indicated that in addition to those considered poor, a further 10 per cent of the population was considered vulnerable and could be impacted quite significantly by downturns in the economy or exogenous shocks such as those associated with climate change or the COVID-19 pandemic. The fiscal constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant social dislocation and has the potential to push unemployment back into double digit figures, and increase social vulnerabilities, even as the Government struggles to ensure that no one is left behind. This is happening against a background of already low levels of spending on social services which in 2018 accounted for 10 percent of total expenditures.

Antigua and Barbuda continues to make many positive strides in health, especially in the areas of life expectancy, immunization coverage, maternal mortality and infant mortality. Prior to COVID-19, the island’s main health challenges were in relation to non-communicable diseases as well as

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<sup>7</sup> World Bank, “Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP) - Antigua and Barbuda”, World Bank Open Data. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.WD.GD.ZS?locations=AG> (accessed on June 6, 2021).

vector-borne diseases such as dengue and leptospirosis. There also is a very high incidence of diseases of the circulatory system such as cardiovascular disease. It is estimated that 37 per cent of persons has diabetes mellitus and 69 per cent suffer from hypertension. Infant mortality is relatively low, falling from 24 per 1,000 deaths in 1990 to 6 per 1,000 deaths in 2015. The country's health system is particularly challenged in the area of primary health care. There are critical staff shortages in relation to nursing, laboratory personnel, radiology as well as environmental health. Antigua and Barbuda remains one of the few countries in the world with a low rate of death, a low rate of infections, a high rate of recovery, and no known community spread from COVID-19.

Education in Antigua and Barbuda is free and compulsory for all children between five and 16 years of age and, since 2013, universal secondary education has been introduced. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda places high priority on education and usually allocates the largest share of the Government budget to education, recognizing that education is not only key to the advancement of its people and human capital development but also to the overall competitiveness of the island nation. Ninety-nine per cent of all citizens 15 years and older have completed at least five years of formal education and are functionally literate.

In 2012, the gross enrolment rate for tertiary education was 23.5. More males than females currently graduate from tertiary education programmes. To increase the number of tertiary education graduates generally in Antigua and Barbuda, the Government, in partnership with The University of the West Indies (The UWI), established the Five Islands campus of The UWI in Antigua and Barbuda in 2019, to meet the needs of the nation but also that of other OECS countries since the post-secondary education participation rate of students of the OECS sub-region is significantly below that of the countries with landed campuses such as Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago

Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in all spheres of life remains a priority of the government. The Government continues to place emphasis on providing opportunities for women to access low-income housing, work experience training, direct cash transfers for single mothers (through the People's Benefit Programme), school support to single mothers (through the Board of Governor's Programme) and a provision through the Medical Benefits Scheme to support women who stay at home to raise children or take care of other family without formal employment, or unemployed women.

Through comprehensive social protection reform, the Government has introduced various measures to address gender inequalities that contribute to poverty among women. There is a paradigm shift in Antigua and Barbuda which is considering the need for gender-responsive

integrated social protection systems, and the need for investment in public services and infrastructure to support the implementation of these systems.

## **The Environmental Context**

Sustainable management of the natural environment and use of natural resources has always been one of the country's key development priorities. Some of the environmental issues and challenges that affect the nation include high per capita generation of waste, land-based sources of pollution that continue to negatively impact the marine environment as well as reefs, land degradation among others. The Government has been putting in place a range of policies, strategies and interventions to support the protection of the natural environment. The promulgation of the Environmental Protection and Management Act (2019) brings much opportunity to ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources and ecosystems.

Recognizing the need to diversify its economy and the potential of the blue economy to sustainable development, the Government established the Department of the Blue Economy and approved the country's first Maritime Blue Economy Plan (MBEP). The MBEP sets out priorities and actions to broaden economic opportunities in sustainable ways towards enhancing economic resilience, improving socioeconomic standards, and creating opportunities for climate adaptation and reducing vulnerabilities.

Antigua is party to several international conventions including those related to Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands, Whaling. Whilst these have been signed, they have not yet been ratified. In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda signed and ratified the Escazu Agreement, the first international environmental agreement with guarantees civil society organizations (CSOs) the right to access information, public participation and access to justice to reduce conflicts since it provides mechanisms for contributions to decision making. The Government has indicated that CSOs must be continually empowered and be engaged in environmental, social and governance issues to enhance the notion of leaving no one behind and to also avoid conflicts.

As a SIDS, Antigua and Barbuda is highly vulnerable to climate change and its associated impacts, including extreme weather events, more frequent and severe tropical cyclones, sea level rise, increasing temperatures and changing precipitation patterns. Human health and well-being are also threatened by climate change, with particular threats including water insecurity (due to saltwater intrusion of freshwater aquifers as a result of sea level rise and drought); heat stress; spread of vector borne, waterborne and foodborne diseases; and injury and death from extreme



weather events. Climate change also has other socioeconomic impacts including threats to the tourism and agriculture sectors as well as housing and other critical infrastructure.

The country is a member and current Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. Accordingly, the Government has been investing in resilience building, disaster preparedness and activities that would reduce the vulnerability of people and infrastructure. The country also continues to take deliberate actions to reduce budget volatility as a result of natural disasters and since 2007, has been purchasing on an annual basis of catastrophe risk insurance for tropical cyclones (storms and hurricanes), excess rainfall and earthquake parametric insurance policies from CCRIF SPC (formerly the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility). In 2017, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, Antigua and Barbuda received US\$ US\$6.79 million from CCRIF within 14 days of the event.

There are many competing development and economic growth priorities, and the Government recognizes that spending on climate change adaptation, risk mitigation and loss and damage response to climate change and other natural hazards is constrained by the country's high levels of debt and its high-income status, with the latter resulting in its inability to access international grants and concessional public finance to meet its needs. Recognizing these issues, and knowing that the costs of not acting to adapt to climate change are likely to be high, the Government has taken the proactive step and established a national fund, the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund). This Fund serve as the primary channel for environmental, climate mitigation and adaptation funding from international and domestic sources. The SIRF Fund established as a Special Fund under the Finance Administration Act (2006) enables Antigua and Barbuda to earmark income from a range of sources to achieve its environmental and climate change goals. The Fund also provides financial resources to assist the vulnerable communities and civil society organizations to build their resilience to climate change.

## Antigua and Barbuda in Figures 2018/2019/2020

Indicator	Data (Reference period)
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	
Nominal GDP (EC million)	4487
Real GDP growth rate (%)	3.4 (2019)
GDP per Capita	US\$15,703.03
Debt-to-GDP	87% (2020)
Inflation rate (%)	1.0 (2020)
Total Merchandise exports (EC million)	58.8 (EC\$M) (2020)
Merchandise imports (EC million)	1,139 (EC\$M)
Agriculture Contribution to GDP	≤3%
Tourism Contribution to GDP	47%
Exchange Rate (EC/US\$)	ECD 2.7 to USD 1
Labour Force Composition	51,931 (2018)
• Male	• 47.2
• Female	• 52.8
National Unemployment Rate (%)	8.7 (2018)
• Men	• 9.9
• Women	• 7.3
Youth Unemployment (15 - 24)	25.7%
Ease of Doing Business Index	113 (2020)
Internet Speed	2739.30 KBps (2019)
Statistical Capacity	44.5 (2020)
<b>SOCIAL</b>	
Total Population	100,000
Urban Population	24.5%
Human Development Index	0.778 (2019)
Human Capital Index	0.60
Gini Coefficient	0.49
Life Expectancy at Birth (in completed years):	77 (2018)
Male	74.00 (2018)
Female	78.9 (2018)
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births	6 per 1000 live births
Child Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births	7.0
Still Births (count)	14 (2020)
Total Fertility Rate	1.4 (2018)
Adolescent Birth Rate	27.7 per 1,000 ages 15 – 19
Immunization Coverage in infants less than 1 year (2020)	
DPT (%)	95%

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data (Reference period)</b>
MMR 1 (%)	93%
Doctors Per 1,000 Population	3.0
Age Dependency Ratio	44.7
Adult Obesity Rate	18.9%
Proportion of Deaths from Non-Communicable Diseases	85%
Poverty Rate (sex disaggregated including child poverty) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Children</li> </ul>	18.4 (2005/2006) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15.6</li> <li>• 24.3</li> </ul>
Access to Basis Goods of Services (% of population)	95%
Government Spending on Education	10% of Total Expenditures
Functional Literacy Rate	99%
Enrolment Rate in Secondary Education	88.8%
Gross Enrolment Rate in Tertiary Education	23.5%
Education Index	0.66
Global Health Security Index	147/195 countries – Index score - 29
Suicide mortality rate (%)	0.4%
Coronavirus COVID-19 Cases	1,263 (June 8, 2021)
Coronavirus COVID-19 Vaccination (First Dose)	55,578 first doses
Coronavirus COVID-19 Vaccination (Complete)	21,494 (22.3% of population)
Coronavirus COVID-19 Recovered	1,214 Persons
Coronavirus COVID-19 Deaths	42 Persons
Access to Electricity (Population)	100%
Households Owning a Computer (%)	59%
Households with Internet Access (%)	58%
Females in Managerial Positions	45.1%
Parliamentary Representation by Women	11%
Crime Rate	3/100,000
Voice and Accountability Index	0.76
Rule of Law	0.4
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Environmental Performance Index	63 rank; 48.5 score (2020)
Renewable Energy Target	100% by 2030
% of Renewables in the Energy Mix	3%
Access to Drinking Water	97%
Access to Sanitation Services	88%
People practicing open defecation (% of population)	0.26% (2017)
Access to Waste Management Services	95%
Waste Generation per Capita	5.5Kg/person/day

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Data (Reference period)</b>
Population with Access to Shelter	~95%
Population Exposed to 2 or more Hazards	100%
Natural Hazard Risk to GDP	80.4%
# of Persons Affected by Natural Disasters 2000 – 2019	32,000 (32%)
Chance of at least 1 Hurricane in Every 3 Years	33%
Damage and Loss as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria (2017)	US\$ 136.1 million (damage) US\$189 million (losses)
Payout from CCRIF SPC following Hurricane Irma	US\$6.79 million
Exclusive Economic Zone	200 times more than land space
% of Population Living on Coastline	60%
Area of Marine Protected Areas	12,687 ha
Watershed Areas as % of Land Area	43%

# The Policy and Enabling Environment for Localizing and Achieving the SDGs

## Ensuing Ownership of the SDGs

On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by world leaders, including Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister, in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit, officially came into force. This landmark agreement envisions the creation of a better world that is free of poverty and underpinned by universal peace and where 'no one is left behind'. It is an agenda to advance - People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership (5Ps). The SDGs are interlinked, integrated and indivisible and as such, are universally applicable and therefore for each country, it requires synchronized efforts across all dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and by all stakeholders.

## Integrating the SDGs into National Frameworks

Antigua and Barbuda's Medium-Term Strategic Development Strategy (MTDS) highlights the strategic development priorities for the country for the period 2015-2020. This Plan established the linkages with the SDGs. The Plan includes four Sustainable Development Dimensions (SDD):

1. Optimal Generation of National Wealth
2. Enhanced Social Cohesion
3. Improved Health of the Natural Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets
4. Enhanced Citizen Security

And Seven Flagship Priorities:

1. Adequate Infrastructure
2. Strong Tourism Industry as an Economic Anchor
3. Transform Barbuda into a Green, Low Density, High-End Tourism Destination
4. Better Utilization of our Marine Space
5. Export of Non-Tourism Services
6. Reducing the Cost of Energy and Improving Energy Security
7. Better Access to Adequate Housing

These dimensions and priorities guide the rest of goals and actions contained in the Plan. Within each dimension there are Necessary Conditions (NC) that must be fulfilled to achieve the ultimate national goals.

The alignment of the MTDS and specifically the sustainable development dimensions of the Plan and the SDGs are presented below:





Further implementation of the SDGs in Antigua and Barbuda will be undertaken through the development of a new long-term national development plan which is expected to cover beyond 2030 and be more long term in its scope and ambition. The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are shaping the development of the island nation’s new national development plan. In the plan development process, an SDG mapping exercise will be undertaken to allow for the identification of those SDG indicators that are most applicable for the country.

The development of a new national development plan provides tremendous opportunity for Antigua and Barbuda as it would help to better localize the SDGs and take into account new and emerging issues and challenges, placing greater emphasis on issues that have the potential to impact the country’s developmental prospects. Key issues and developmental areas that would be critically examined in the development of the country’s new development plan would include exogenous shocks, shock responsive and adaptive social protection, climate action, cyber security and disruptive technologies, loss of correspondent banking relationships, increasing environmental health issues including antibiotic resistance, leaving no one behind, the opportunities that abound from the green, blue, orange, purple and circular economies, innovating to zero in wastes and emissions and importantly financing for development.

Consequently, a new development plan will enable Antigua and Barbuda to adopt lessons learned from the implementation of the MTDS, country experiences with the 2030 Agenda and the global economic environment. The global Agenda and its accompanying measures will be key to assist Antigua and Barbuda to advance to the next stage of development.

### **Integration of the 3 dimensions of Sustainable Development**

Antigua and Barbuda over the years has been guided by a strong development planning and implementation framework that is complemented by the free market mechanism. The Government uses a sustainable development framework to develop and implement actions towards achieving the country’s national vision. The country adopted and adapted Agenda 2030 in its Medium-Term Development Strategy in 2015.

### **Leaving no one behind**



Stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda identified through the consultations those groups that are at risk of being left behind, including people living in extreme poverty, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, marginalized children and youth, older persons, persons in prisons, deviant young males and females who are institutionalized and migrants. The table below positions each vulnerable group within the context of an SDG goal, the current situation of the groups as well as the country’s commitment through national policies and strategies to make these groups resilient.

<b>Sustainable Development Goal</b>	<b>Example of Vulnerable Groups at Risk of being left behind</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Examples of Antigua and Barbuda’s Commitment to ‘Leaving no one behind’</b>
GOAL 1: No Poverty	Women and children in poverty	National Poverty Rate: 18.4%	Social Protection Act 2020 Board of Guardians Scheme Peoples Benefit Programme

<b>Sustainable Development Goal</b>	<b>Example of Vulnerable Groups at Risk of being left behind</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Examples of Antigua and Barbuda’s Commitment to ‘Leaving no one behind’</b>
		Children in poverty – 24.3%	Social Security Scheme
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being	Persons with NCDs Persons with disabilities The Elderly (65+)	Diabetes prevalence rate – 13.1% (% of population ages 20 – 79) Hypertension prevalence rate 69% Obesity – 18.9% Old-age (65 and older) dependency ratio (per 100 people ages 15-64) – 8.1%	National Policy and Action Plan for Prevention and Control of NCDs  National Policy and Plan of Action on Healthy Ageing 2017- 2027  “Antigua and Barbuda Moves”
GOAL 4: Quality Education	Teenage mothers Youth Deviant Youth	Youth Unemployment (15 - 24) – 25.7%  Adolescent Birth Rate - 27.7 per 1,000 ages 15 – 19	Universal access to primary and secondary education One-Stop Employment Centre (OSEC) The Financial Inclusion and Empowerment Centre
GOAL 5: Gender Equality	Women and girls	Total unemployment rate (female to male ratio) – 7.3	Social Protection Act 2020 Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Unemployed Unemployed youth Women	Unemployment total – 8.7%  Youth unemployment 25.7%	The Financial Inclusion and Empowerment Centre Training Opportunities for Youth

In operationalizing the notion of leaving no one behind, Antigua and Barbuda will place emphasis on:

- Integration of the principle into strategic and operational plans of government entities, ensuring the those furthest behind are considered first
- Ensuring that government sectoral policies factor in the principle of leaving no one behind and that there is policy coherence and that no policy promulgated – for example economic policies undermine efforts to enhance equality and equality of opportunity

- Adequately financing the country's new development plan which will have an emphasis on the principle of leaving no one behind
- Ensuring that official development assistance and support from development partners as well as development partner country programmes take into account the most vulnerable in society and prioritize those currently furthest behind in development
- Improving monitoring and evaluation (M & E) frameworks, so that there is more focused analysis of development results and that corrective action can be taken along the development pathway when needed
- Establishing transparent, inclusive, timely and participatory monitoring and accountability processes to assess progress
- Strengthening the country's national statistics system, increasing the disaggregation of development data so that the country is better able to identify the groups that are at risk of being left behind
- Developing and implementing new initiatives to promote social protection and inclusive development as a means of ending extreme poverty, reducing inequalities, and addressing discriminatory behaviours

### **Institutional Mechanisms**

The Government's main institutional mechanism for overseeing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additionally, all government ministries and agencies are responsible for the alignment of government policies and key programmes with the global Agenda to facilitate not only implementation but also more effective monitoring and evaluation.

A key consideration in advancing the 2030 Agenda, is to build on existing frameworks and mechanisms to allow for better harmonization and coordination. A key part of the process would be to ensure continuous engagement of all stakeholders to participate in current and future medium-term and long-term planning.

The Statistics Division, as the country's National Statistics Office is the agency responsible for the compilation of Official Statistics which some of the SDG indicators fall under. As repository of official statistics, the Division plays a vital role in the coordination and generation of these statistics in accordance with international standards that govern official statistics and guidelines for the compilation of SDG indicators.

Currently, the country's Statistical Office is leading the process of creating mechanisms for data mining for the SDG indicators deemed applicable to the country's monitoring and evaluation framework for SDG implementation. The Statistical Office will work collaboratively with other

government ministries and agencies as well as development partners and civil society organizations to:

- Complete an assessment of SDG data availability in the twin-island nation
- Work with ministries and agencies for specific SDG targets and indicators to produce the indicators
- Populate SDG indicator templates with data obtained from various sources

Antigua and Barbuda recognizes that its statistical capacity needs to be strengthened so that the Statistics Division and the national statistical system are better able to collect, analyze, and disseminate high-quality data on development parameters. In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda scored 44.4 on the World Bank’s rating of the country’s Overall Level of Statistical Capacity, reflecting a relatively low capacity and signaling the need for improvements through technical cooperation, investment in the national statistical system and other related support.

Cabinet established a national SDG Committee whose membership is representative of the three pillars of sustainable development and is chaired by the Director of International Trade who in turn reports to a Cabinet Subcommittee on the Sustainable Development Goals which is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Committee guides Antigua and Barbuda’s advancement of the SDGs. The SDG Committee has also been tasked with developing and implementing a comprehensive communications and stakeholder engagement strategy for advancing a more inclusive and participatory pathway to the nation’s development.

### **Systemic Issues and Transformative Actions**

To truly achieve the SDGs, there are several system issues that we will need to be addressed and many transformative actions that would need to be implemented. These are presented below:

Systemic Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst localization of Agenda 2030 is critical to advancing the global agenda and having a long-term national development plan in place is key to the implementation of the SDGs locally, there also is need for a robust monitoring and evaluation framework which will allow for effective tracking.</li> <li>• Insufficient financing and delays in development aid flows could hinder the pace of implementation of the needed reforms, programmes and projects</li> <li>• There is need for a coordination body underpinned by multi-stakeholder groups that would allow for higher levels of stakeholder participation in the implementation of the agenda.</li> <li>• Collaboration among stakeholders is critical to ensuring sustainability. It is important that there are high levels of</li> </ul>
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	<p>stakeholder engagement to engender national ownership of initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antigua and Barbuda has reached out to the UN system to support a Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) Mission to help us evaluate how the country is advancing with the alignment of the SDGs across policies, plans and programmes and to provide guidance on accelerators that we must adopt to realize our development prospects and shared aspirations.</li> <li>• Antigua and Barbuda is also interested in receiving support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assess its readiness to implement the 2030 Agenda and has already requested assistance for a Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) to be undertaken. This will assist the country to understand more fulsomely how the 2030 Agenda can be mainstreamed into national and local plans to ascertain if the approach being used to implement and localize the SDGs is optimal. The RIA methodology will allow for a more in-depth review of the country’s national development plan as well as other national policies and relevant sector strategies and provide an indicative overview of the level of alignment between the plans/strategies and SDG targets. The RIA also will guide the country on the institutional framework for SDG implementation as well as stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Support for the development of a Communication and Participatory Strategy for stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>
<p>Transformative Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a long-term national development plan</li> <li>• The country’s statistical capacity needs to be enhanced and strong data systems will need to be developed and implemented for undertaking the robust analysis required by the global Agenda. The VNR highlights many of the data gaps that currently exist</li> <li>• There is need for financing, including concessionary financing to accelerate the achievement of the goals and support for accessing some of the new and innovative financing mechanisms that are becoming increasingly available.</li> <li>• Need to better plan for the myriad of exogenous shocks that the country can potentially be exposed to and which have the potential to stall development progress</li> <li>• Need to build capacity to address socio-economic inequalities including those that are gender-based</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development and Implementation of a Recovery and Resilience Building Initiative towards implementation of the SDGs post COVID-19</li></ul>
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Achieving the SDGs is a priority for Antigua and Barbuda as it resonates with the Government’s thrust for people centered development as well as pursuing a developmental pathway that is sustainable and in which no one is left behind.

# Progress under the 5 Ps – Antigua and Barbuda’s Progress in Achieving the SDGs

This year, 2021, Antigua and Barbuda celebrates 40 years of independence. It has been forty years of nation building premised on the principles of putting people at the centre of development focused on upholding human rights, recognizing the importance of protecting the natural environment, the importance of good governance and rule of law. This first VNR of Antigua and Barbuda will allow the nation to present its journey travelled thus far, take stock, present the current developmental pathway and propose solutions and proposals for mapping its future. Antigua and Barbuda recognizes that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are key to helping shape its future developmental prospects and accelerating its national development goals.

The implementation of the SDGs is key to the country’s future development. The VNR Report has some good stories to tell but also speaks of challenges that we are experiencing now and can potentially arise in the near future. The VNR for Antigua and Barbuda will be presented around the 5Ps.



The assessment of the 17 SDGs for Antigua and Barbuda contained in the VNR is based on country’s development results covering the period 2015–2019 on a range of social, economic, and environmental indicators. Progress on the goals and targets will be presented according to the 5Ps – People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership and Planet and will be structured to share Antigua

and Barbuda’s progress to advance the Agenda, showcase best practices, challenges, gaps and trade-offs.

The assessment of the country’s performance using the 5Ps also led to the preparation of a dashboard of SDG targets and a self-assessment of progress realized under each of these targets. The matrix presented at the end of each of the 5Ps presents a rough measurement or mapping of the country’s progress across all goals based on the SDG targets based on current data, interventions being implemented and the pace of implementation. This SDG self-assessment provides a snapshot of progress under each of the 5Ps and is based on the following core criteria:

	The SDG target has been met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
	Fair progress but acceleration is needed (the enabling policy and legal framework in place, resources are allocated, implementation of initiatives.
	Limited or no progress
	Moving away from the target/target at risk of not being met by 2030/strategic intervention needed urgently
	No trend data available/insufficient data/not applicable

The 2030 Agenda and the experiences and lessons learned from other countries in the localization and implementation of the Agenda present an exciting opportunity for the country to further advance its commitment to a sustainable future.

Antigua and Barbuda views the VNR as an important tool that will allow its development partners to quickly identify areas that as a country, we need support in as well as align these areas with their own development priorities and country work programmes.



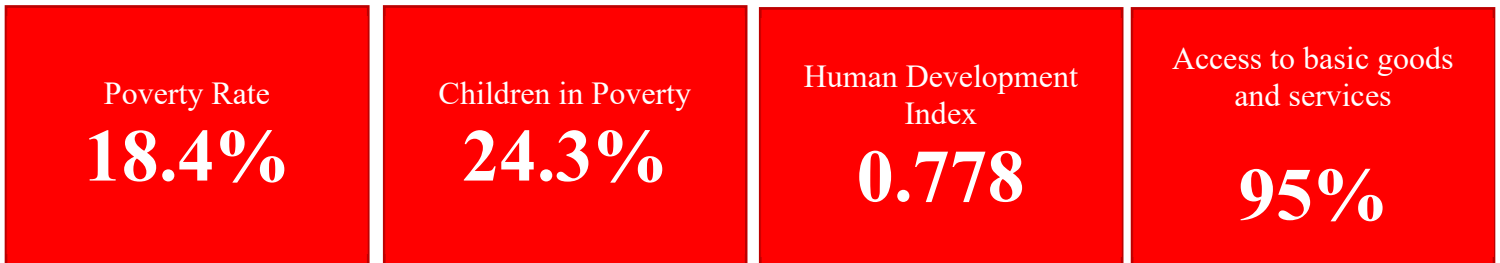
AGENDA 2030 - THEME I  
**PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST**



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**

## SDG 1: No Poverty

End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere



Antigua and Barbuda has made progress on SDG 1, although the overall results have been mixed. The country has achieved one of the SDG indicators related to the implementation of appropriate social protection systems. The Medium-Term Development Strategy has as its core improving the quality of life of all citizens. Antigua and Barbuda has been classified by the UN as a high-income country with a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.778 — positioning the twin island nation in the high human development category, ranking it 78 out of 189 countries and territories. Over the years, the country has seen significant improvements in the standard of living and expansion of opportunities for its citizens due in part to improved macroeconomic management and deliberate efforts to advance the economic and social transformation of the country; putting people first and ensuring that those furthest behind are considered first.

Over 95 per cent of the population has access to basic services such as electricity, potable water, sanitation services, and shelter. Access to health care and education also remains favourable. In 2017, the government promulgated the Disabilities and Equal Opportunities Act. The Act has been developed to expound the principles of equality and nondiscrimination in relation to persons with disabilities by highlighting and enforcing the rights of such persons in accordance with those stated in the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

The Government recognizes that poverty still prevails, and some groups are at greater risk of falling into poverty such as persons with disabilities and recognizes that ending poverty is critical. The Government prioritizes poverty reduction by developing and advancing a comprehensive range of programmes to improve the life chances and outcomes of poor and vulnerable groups. The national poverty rate in Antigua and Barbuda is 18.4 per cent. Children in poverty are about 24.3 per cent. In addition to those considered poor, a further 10 per cent of the population are considered to be vulnerable if there are downturns in the economy or exogenous shocks such as

those experienced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The most vulnerable groups are children and those living in rural areas.

Poverty is viewed by the Government as a multidimensional phenomenon and not just limited to income and expenditure but linked to multiple dimensions of human development including education and health, access to housing and other social services as well as gender-related disparities. As such, strategic focus on reducing poverty and narrowing income inequalities continue to be a focus and more resources are being invested in education and skills training so that all citizens can benefit from the growing opportunities and higher paying jobs that the economy continues to roll out. Focus is also placed on providing persons with disabilities with equal opportunities that would allow them to achieve their fullest potential.

Poverty reduction strategies are pursued with a 'pro-poor' focus that prioritizes social inclusion, the empowerment of people, poverty eradication and social protection. To fulfil this priority, the Government has been increasing the budget allocation over the years for its multidimensional approach to poverty eradication through social protection and assistance programmes, establishment of institutional frameworks to ensure more efficient and effective delivery programmes and better targeting to vulnerable groups such as children, women and girls, the elderly and poor households. Additionally, issues of access to health care by all, access to education and lifelong learning, social housing and the promotion of decent wages and work conditions that espouses human dignity and provides wages that support an acceptable quality of life are being pursued.

The Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development, Youth & Gender Affairs is responsible for providing services and programmes aimed at improving standards of living. Poverty reduction strategies and actions are guided by the National Economic and Social Council Act of Antigua and Barbuda which promotes economic growth and development, as well as citizen participation in the process of decision-making related to the economy and social development programs. Other Ministries and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) also implement poverty reduction programmes and services which help to reduce poverty and hence, help to break the cycles of exclusion and inequality.

In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda promulgated its Social Protection Act to deliver more effective social development services and provide a more robust institutional and administrative framework to deliver services to those most in need. The Government also has drafted a new Social Protection Policy, Action Plan and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. A newly appointed Social Protection Board and Social Protection Commission have been established, with clear roles and responsibilities for strengthened coordination of social protection programmes.

There are currently three main social protection mechanisms available in Antigua and Barbuda: The Board of Guardians Scheme; Peoples Benefit Programme; and, the Social Security Scheme. The Board of Guardians Division provides direct income support to vulnerable families. In 2019 there were 59,016 beneficiaries of the Board of Guardians programme; approximately 42 per cent of beneficiaries were children, with females accounting for 53 per cent of all beneficiaries. The Peoples Benefit Programme targets vulnerable families, persons with a monthly income below US\$300 and persons with disabilities. In 2018, 2,028 persons/families benefited from the programme, each receiving about US\$80 per month to supplement their existing income. The Social Security Scheme targets a broader range of beneficiaries, namely persons who have retired from the workforce. These individuals receive payments in the range of US\$130 to US\$1,200 per month. One area of social protection that has been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic is the absence of unemployment insurance. Persons that became unemployed had to rely on savings or on one of the other social development services to meet their needs.

*The 3 main social protection mechanisms in Antigua and Barbuda target specific vulnerable populations, including children, vulnerable women and men, youth, elderly and persons with disabilities and provide various short-term benefits (maternity, sickness, etc.*

The COVID-19 pandemic led to some challenges as it relates to the operations and implementation of social programmes. There also was the issue of reduced resources and in-person contacts as most of the budgeted expenditure/funding had to be re-assigned to the Ministry of Health and the national COVID-19 efforts. In-person field visits and assessments, client sessions contacts were impacted by measures put in place to control the speed of the virus such as curfews and social distancing. Notwithstanding, clients/beneficiaries and student out-reach in some instances were conducted using alternative means such as telephone, online, and other social media platforms. In some instances, individuals and households who were significantly impacted by financial constraints were provided with short term cash transfers and relief packages.

The Government also continues to place focus on economic diversification and creating the enabling environment to expand industries and create additional jobs, including for women and youth.

### **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

#### **The Financial Inclusion and Empowerment Centre**

The Financial Inclusion and Empowerment Centre (FEC) is geared towards fostering financial independence for residents living at or below the poverty line. This programme's main objective



is to assist financially vulnerable persons in society to become more self-reliant through the provision of free financial coaching or counselling.

### Training Opportunities for Youth

The Ministry of Labour offers employment and training opportunities to unemployed youths. The One-Stop Employment Centre (OSEC) offers services ranging from job placements, training and referrals and an active Labour Market Programme which prepares young people for the workforce.

### The Home Advancement Programme for the Indigent

The Home Advancement Programme for the Indigent (HAPI) started in 2016 and focuses on repairing homes of indigent or poor households. The main objective of the programme is to help the indigent population to have better access to decent and safe housing.



Antigua Barbuda Association for Persons with Disabilities' community solar demonstration project. Source: [www.ecpamerica.org/news/Default.aspx?id=1234&archive=1](http://www.ecpamerica.org/news/Default.aspx?id=1234&archive=1)

### Soup Kitchen

The Soup Kitchen was opened in February 2019 in the capital city of St. John's and serves to provide daily hot and healthy meals for the homeless or needy persons.

### Substance –Use Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation Centre (SPARC)

This centre assists vulnerable persons who also are substance abuse addicts and their families to access drug-specific counseling services and education programs. The centre was established to

reduce demand and use of drugs and provides drug-specific counseling services, psychosocial support, referrals, and drug education programs.

### **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 1**

- Promulgate the National Social Protection Policy, Action Plan (draft) and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
- Investigate the feasibility of unemployment insurance as part of the social protection architecture.
- Development and implementation of shock responsive and adaptive social protection strategies within the context of a revised social protection policy and strategy. While the current policy framework targets specific vulnerable populations, including children, vulnerable women and men, youth, elderly and persons with disabilities and provide various short-term benefits (maternity, sickness, etc.), there is currently no contributory system in place that provides direct cash payments triggered by unemployment due to exogenous shocks, leaving a critical gap in coverage for those that lose their livelihoods as a result of these shocks or other similar circumstances.
- Undertake a poverty assessment to enable the country to have a better sense of the extent of poverty and therefore be in a position to promulgate policy and strategies that are better targeted to serve the poor and achieve the targets as set out in SDG 1. This assessment will help determine the characteristics, extent, geographical concentration, severity and causes of poverty in the country.
- Pursue the path to a green and blue economy as key to eradicating poverty, increasing employment, enhancing food security, managing water resources, and increasing energy conservation and efficiency.
- Fostering greater collaboration among public policy makers, civil society, private sector and academics to develop appropriate solutions to effectively address poverty as well as to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with the opportunities that would allow them to achieve their fullest potential.
- With respect to persons with disabilities more specific emphasis needs to be placed on: access to adequate healthcare to ensure that persons with disabilities are aware of their health conditions and have access to quality free or affordable healthcare and rehabilitation services, access to accessible education by investing in additional support services including teacher training and transport services, employment in mainstream jobs ensuring that PWDs are provided with adaptive equipment and training so that they can be better aligned with the needs of the labour market.

## SDG 2: Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



Agriculture Labour Force

1.8%

Contribution to GDP

≤3%

Adult Obesity Rate

29%

Childhood Under-Nutrition

2.9%

The agriculture industry is recognized as important for food security, social protection, sustainable entrepreneurship, livelihoods and promoting and supporting good health. The agricultural sector over the years has seen a steep decline in productivity and competitiveness and contributes less than three per cent to GDP with 79 per cent of food being imported.

Antigua and Barbuda's population is affected by the double burden of malnutrition, given that the population suffers from both obesity (18.9 per cent of the adult population) and hunger (20.5 per cent of the total population)<sup>8</sup>. In 2014, childhood under-nutrition was reported at 2.9 per cent among children 0-4 years attending public clinics. Notwithstanding, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) data shows that the percentage of the population considered to be undernourished has continued to decline, decreasing from 9.1 per cent in 2004 - 2006 to 5.7 per cent in 2016 - 2018. In 2019, the government introduced a tax on sugary beverages to reduce childhood obesity and issues related to overweight. Currently, 29 per cent of the adult male population is overweight and 30 per cent of the adult female population is overweight.

To address the issues related to under and over nutrition in children and recognizing that these issues can begin very early after birth, the Government in 2020 approved the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Policy to among other things, increase mothers/families' access to information and skilled support, increase public awareness of the importance and benefits of optimal infant and young child feeding practices, increase knowledge and skills capacity of all involved in maternal and child health services, build capacity within relevant agencies for the protection, promotion and support of optimal feeding practices in emergencies and other special circumstances and to reduce the inappropriate promotion of breast-milk substitutes and unhealthy commercial foods/beverages for infants and young children

<sup>8</sup>

[https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/corrected\\_july\\_2020\\_antigua\\_and\\_barbuda\\_country\\_profile\\_power\\_point\\_infographic\\_pdf.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/corrected_july_2020_antigua_and_barbuda_country_profile_power_point_infographic_pdf.pdf)

There is increasing concerns about the link between nutrition and the various lifestyle diseases or non-communicable diseases. Poverty exacerbates these issues and creates barriers to food security, with the poorest quintiles spending more on food (40.6 per cent of total household expenditure) compared to the national average.

The agriculture sector represents about 1.8 per cent of the total employed labour force. The industry largely comprises subsistence farming or small-scale commercial farming primarily for the domestic market. Women participate in farming activities to fulfil the basic needs of their families and while there is limited sex-disaggregated data on land ownership, women participate more extensively in agricultural production than men. However, the actual participation of women in farming and agriculture may be underestimated (CDB, 2014). Currently, fishing contributes about half of the value added from the agriculture and fishing sector. The main agriculture products are bananas, coconuts, cucumbers, mangoes, sugarcane and pineapples. There is also an active trade in livestock with production of cattle, pigs, chickens and goat meat.

The decrease to the contribution of the agriculture sector to the economy, has been due to the loss of preferential trading arrangements for bananas, currency devaluation in the main export markets, high labour cost and unavailability of labour for agriculture, diseases and pests and a series of damaging weather events which affected output. Following the passage of Hurricane Irma in 2017, which devastated the agriculture sector, there is now renewed focus on improving the resilience of the sector to the impact natural disasters. Following Hurricane Irma not only was Barbuda destroyed and 1,407 persons were made homeless but the agriculture sector on that island was completely ruined - crops, livestock, bees, the fishing industry, infrastructure, machinery and equipment were either totally destroyed or significantly damaged.

New challenges have emerged including changes to the agro-food system stemming from increase demand for imported food and food products which continues to put pressure on domestic markets.

To address these challenges, agriculture (including fisheries) has emerged as a strategic priority of the Government as it is recognized that the sector is key in advancing food and nutrition security, livelihoods, environmental protection and rural economic and social development - including health. There is an opportunity to improve the contribution of the industry to economic development through, inter alia, targeting specific crops with growth potential, greater use of technology and the provision external services which meets the needs of the agricultural community.

The development of the agriculture sector is guided by the National Food and Nutrition Policy (2012) and the related National Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan which are closely aligned to the OECS Action Plan on Agriculture (2012-2022), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM's) Regional Food Security Plan 2011-2025 and the CARICOM Agriculture Policy. The long-term goal is to achieve sustainable food and nutrition security and to eliminate all forms of malnutrition in order to have a well-nourished and healthy population.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Barbuda's "Green Island Concept"**

Following Hurricane Irma in 2017, Barbuda has adopted a 'green island concept' with alternative energy, particularly solar and wind, organic agriculture and compliance with food safety requirements as the main features. Protected agriculture and specially designed smart greenhouses are the pillars on which resilience, readiness and sustainability will be built. The concept also utilizes appropriate innovations and production technologies such as rational mechanization, selected germplasm, efficient use of water resources and intensive systems for small ruminants. The concept will ensure that zoning and land use practices will not compromise the integrity of the natural environment. Value-added will be achieved through processing and packaging of products such as jams, juices, preserves, coconut oil and animal feed. The new approach also will focus on transportation to target markets to capitalize on the development of new air and seaports. Barbuda's programme is to establish, over the next five years, an "agro-industrial complex of production, processing, storage, packaging and marketing". Funding for the programme will be drawn from the Barbuda recovery fund, private investors, bilateral assistance, development partners and donor agencies.

### **Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity – Antigua Moves**

Antigua and Barbuda, in 2020, launched a national initiative – Antigua Barbuda Moves geared towards reducing the number of persons with non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. Using the key pillars of physical activity, nutrition and early detection (screenings) residents are being mobilized towards making positive lifestyle changes to secure BETTER LIVING, BETTER LIFE! JOIN US! This initiative is aligned to Caribbean Moves.

### **The Dynamism of the Civil Society Organizations**

The Barbuda Community Development Agricultural Group, under the slogan "Food for Life", developed a 2-acre garden on the River Road which was completed devastated by hurricane Irma in 2017. Before the devastation, some of the highlights under the project included the building of infrastructure including greenhouse and marketing sheds; planting and harvesting of crops using sustainable agricultural techniques.

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 2**

- Establish integrated agricultural and public health innovations to address the high burden of non-communicable diseases, including improving access to healthier diets.
- Create an enabling environment to support investments in the agriculture sector as well as public-private partnerships that would lead to increased research and development towards increasing outputs and enhancing productivity.
- Ensure adequate plant protection efforts; enhanced sanitary and Phyto-sanitary systems.
- Strengthen child nutrition screening and intervention to reduce the incidence of under-nutrition.

- Enhance sanitary and phyto-sanitary systems.
- Upgrade irrigation, drainage and road infrastructure to support the agriculture sector.
- Strengthen marketing infrastructure and support systems.
- Undertake strategic planning exercises to ensure that the sector can withstand exogenous shocks and that internal food supply systems can be always in a state of readiness to supply food and nutrition to the population should food import availability become compromised.
- Establish mechanisms through strong public policy to stimulate investments and create formal linkages between and among agriculture, tourism and other industries.
- Reintroduce the Zero Hunger Challenge and Backyard Gardening Programme which focuses on addressing food and nutrition security at the national level.
- Implement strategies to facilitate resilience building of the agriculture sector due to climate change and the preparation of an associated national adaptation plan for agriculture and one for water security.
- Undertake long range planning exercises to ensure that the sector can withstand crises such as those posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic and other possible exogenous shocks.
- Establish mechanisms through strong public policy to stimulate investments and create formal linkages between and among agriculture, tourism and other service industries.



### SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Antigua and Barbuda continues to make many positive strides in health particularly around mortality indicators such as life expectancy at birth for females and males (2017), survival to age 65 for females and males (2017) and under age 5 mortality rate (2017). The death rate in Antigua and Barbuda is one of the lowest among CARICOM Member States, The country’s immunization coverage against preventable childhood illnesses has achieved a near perfect score, maternal deaths are very low, environmental health risks have been reduced, and credible gains have been recorded in building core capacities to implement international health regulations.

Indicator	2017	Close to, Better than or Worse than LAC Countries Average
Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)	78.9 years	Close to LAC
Life Expectancy at Birth (Male)	74 years	Better than LAC
Survival to Age 65 % (Female)	85.1	Close to LAC
Survival to Age 65 % (Male)	78.6	Better than LAC
Under Age 5 Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	7.0	Better than LAC

Source: *Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020*

Health services are delivered at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels within the public and private sectors. Free health care is provided by the Government. At the primary level, Antigua is divided into six medical districts with a network of 25 public health clinics plus one clinic in Barbuda. Clinics are located within 3.2 km of every major community. The health team at the primary level provides services such as medical clinics, maternal and child health, community mental health, dental care, screening for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), and prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Government expenditure on health in 2018 was estimated at 5.23 per cent of GDP which is consistent with other Caribbean countries but below the average of developed countries. The

health system is financed primarily through public taxation and levies in support of the Medical Benefits Scheme. The Scheme is funded by a payroll tax of 7 per cent that provides a dedicated revenue source for primary and secondary care. This programme affords citizens free health care. The government has taken preparatory steps to transition the Medical Benefits Scheme into a national health insurance program. Approximately 15,000 residents have private health insurance, largely provided through their employers.

Secondary and tertiary health services are provided at the Mount St. John’s Medical Centre, a 187-bed facility in Antigua, and an 8-bed facility in Barbuda. All citizens have access to care in Antigua and Barbuda. Adequate access to health care is a function of a number of indicators including medical infrastructure availability (number of hospital beds per 1,000 population), human resources availability (doctors per 1,000 population, nurses per 1,000 population, psychiatrists per 100,000 population and coverage for maternal and child health services (mothers receiving at least four antenatal visits during pregnancy). Antigua and Barbuda’s progress under these indicators is highlighted in the table below.

Indicator	2017	Close to, Better than or Worse than LAC Countries Average
Hospital beds per 1,000 population	3.8	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Doctors per 1,000 population	3.0	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Nurses per 1,000 population	4.5	<i>Better than LAC</i>
Psychiatrists per 100,000 population	1.0	<i>Worse than LAC</i>
Mothers receiving at least four antenatal visits during pregnancy (%)	83	<i>Close to LAC</i>

*Source: Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020*

Whilst there has been notable progress, there however remains challenges that need to be addressed such as the increasing incidence of chronic non-communicable diseases, HIV infections pharmaceutical supplies management, policy and legislation, human resources for health and infrastructural and plant maintenance. The sector also suffers from critical staff shortages in relation to nursing, laboratory personnel, radiology as well as environmental health personnel.

The overall strategic direction of the health sector is guided by the National Strategic Plan for Health (2016-2020) which is the instrument creating a world-class health care system in Antigua and Barbuda, towards achieving a healthy population. The core principles underlying the Plan are equity, shared responsibility, and good governance. The Plan is geared towards ensuring higher levels of national investment in health and wellness that will empower individuals and families to manage their own health, strengthening the health system and community mechanisms, and expanding strategic partnerships to advance the nation’s health care system.



The nation's main health challenges are in relation to NCDs as well as vector-borne diseases such as dengue and leptospirosis. The Government is particularly concerned about the morbidity and mortality associated with chronic NCDs attributed to tobacco use, limited physical inactivity, unhealthy diets, and the harmful use of alcohol as some of the main lifestyle factors that are driving the upsurge of NCDs. The consumption of alcohol is about 7 litres per capita and similar to the consumption pattern of countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region but above the world average of 5.8 litres per capita<sup>9</sup>.

Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) account for more than 85 per cent of all deaths. The highest-ranking causes of years lost due to premature deaths are ischemic heart disease, diabetes mellitus and cerebrovascular disease. It is estimated that 37 per cent of persons suffer from diabetes mellitus and 69 per cent from hypertension. Diabetes continues to be the leading cause of disability-adjusted life years (DALY) in Antigua and Barbuda. To address the increasing incidence of NCDs, in 2016 the Government launched the National Policy and Action Plan for Prevention and Control of NCDs. This Plan defines a multi-sectoral approach to reduce preventable morbidity and premature mortality due to NCDs, as well as to control the risk factors attributed to these diseases.

The Plan targets five areas: reinforcing the coordination and management of NCD prevention and control, strengthening the approach to NCDs and risk factors throughout the health system, identifying NCD risk factors and protective factors, building healthy and active communities through multi-sectoral policies and partnerships, and increasing surveillance, research, information availability, and education. A Wellness Committee has been established to coordinate the implementation of the Plan.

NCDs and disabilities present the most pressing challenge to health and social wellbeing of the elderly. In 2016, the Government promulgated the National Policy and Plan of Action on Healthy Ageing 2017- 2027 which has as its policy goal to allow more people to live longer in good health, to remain active for longer, and to counteract growing inequalities in old age.

Infectious diseases, including HIV and AIDS, and accidental and intentional injuries are among the ten leading causes of mortality in Antigua and Barbuda. The National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS was developed by the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the AIDS Secretariat, and civil society organizations. In Antigua & Barbuda, the transmission of HIV is linked to gender inequality in relations including heterosexual sex, unprotected tourism sex, commercial and transactional sex. Women and girls are often at an economic disadvantage, which leads them to enter transactional relationships to enhance their incomes, thus increasing their risk of becoming infected with HIV.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO>

The Government continues to focus on adolescent pregnancy, which is showing signs of decreasing. The adolescent birth rate is 27.7 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 as of 2018, down from 28.8 per 1,000 in 2017<sup>10</sup>.

Antigua and Barbuda remains one of the few countries in the world with a low rate of death, a low rate of infections, a high rate of recovery, and no known community spread from COVID-19. Issues however remain with respect to access to vaccines to support herd immunity and getting the country back to a state of normalcy.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **“Antigua and Barbuda Moves”**

In 2020, the Government launched the programme “Antigua and Barbuda Moves”, geared towards reducing the number of persons with non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. Using the key pillars of physical activity, nutrition and early detection (screenings) citizens are being encouraged to make positive lifestyle changes to secure “BETTER LIVING, BETTER LIFE!”

### **Tax on Sugary Beverages**

In 2019, the government introduced a tax on sugary beverages to reduce childhood obesity and issues related to overweight.

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 3**

- Adequate financing of the health sector within the guidelines of the international benchmark of 5 to 6 percent of GDP to enable them to better address current and future needs.
- Improve health literacy as a key tool for reducing the incidence of both communicable and NCDs.
- Strengthen legislation to prevent discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS
- Integrate human resources management of the health sector.
- Provide resources and capacity to adequately implement key policies and strategies such as the National Policy and Action Plan for Prevention and Control of NCDs.
- Develop and implement a national health insurance scheme.
- Rehabilitate existing health infrastructure and accelerate a health infrastructure modernization programme.
- Greater emphasis to be placed on mental health services.
- Development and roll out of a standardized and effective national health information system capable of providing comprehensive and consistent data for planning and programming in the sector.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://data.unwomen.org/country/antigua-and-barbuda>

- Build strategic partnerships – between the public and private sector, public and civil society organizations, and the public sector and development partners to deliver health care and advance the performance of the health sector.
- Development and roll out of reporting, monitoring and evaluation systems for the health sector.
- Prioritize the national health research agenda towards strengthening national capacity for surveillance and research on NCDs and other diseases.
- Strengthen the governance, management and operations for pharmaceuticals.
- Develop a National Sport and Physical Activity Policy and action plan to support the healthy lifestyles towards reducing the incidence of NCDs.

## SDG 4: Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



Functional Literacy Rate

**99%**

Education Index

**0.66%**

Enrolment Rate in  
Secondary Education

**88.8%**

Gross Enrolment Rate in  
Tertiary Education

**23.5%**

Education transforms societies, creating opportunities for all. Education in Antigua and Barbuda is free and compulsory for all children between five and 16 years of age and, since 2013, universal secondary education has been introduced. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda places high priority on education and usually allocates the largest share of the Government's budget to education, recognizing that education is not only key to the advancement of its people and human capital development but also to the overall competitiveness of the island nation. To ensure access to free education up to the secondary level, the government places a levy on all basic wages and these funds are allocated to costs of supplies, transportation, and school infrastructure maintenance as well as the provision of tertiary level scholarships. Since 2016, much focus has been placed on - the completion of the expansion of several schools to allow for the accommodation of additional students and teachers making the environment more conducive for instruction and learning. The Government therefore continues to emphasize the centrality of education as a primary driver to the island nation's development.

The Human Development Report 2020, places Antigua and Barbuda at 107 out of 189 countries on the Education Index with a score of 0.66. The Education Index is measured by the adult literacy rate (with two-thirds weighting) and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrollment ratio (with one-third weighting). The adult literacy rate gives an indication of the ability to read and write, while the gross enrollment rate provides an indication of the level of education from kindergarten to postgraduate education. The closer the index is to 1 the higher the human development.

Approximately 21,000 children (21 per cent of the population) are enrolled in school with about 3,400 attending pre-school (ages 3 – 4), 9,771 and 7,838 attending primary (5-11 years) and secondary (12-16 years) schools respectively. These figures are very similar to the population estimates for the same age groups implying that most school age children are attending school. Children with disabilities are facilitated in mainstream schools and facilities to cater to them are

included in these schools. Teachers often receive additional training to be able to cater to their educational requirements. There is one specific school for children with disabilities and special needs in the capital.

Notwithstanding, inequality has become more obvious and, in some areas, the most disadvantaged economically and socially may not be enjoying the benefits of the education system. Inadequate access at the pre-primary and tertiary levels exists and gender disparities in performance are evident at all levels.

The focus of education has been on creating an educational system that would adequately develop the capacity for critical thinking and innovation and produce young people who could take full advantage of the knowledge economy of the 21st century. To this end, emphasis has been placed on revising the curricula to one that is more STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) based.

*99 per cent of all citizens 15 years and older have completed at least five years of formal education and are functionally literate. 48 per cent of heads of households possess some level of formal educational certification*

The Education Act of 2008 provides the regulatory system for the delivery of educational services in Antigua and Barbuda whilst, the Education Sector Plan, outlines the education strategies and priorities for Antigua and Barbuda to pursue its educational outcomes. Over the years, the country has shown a strong commitment to improve access to quality education and has achieved universal access to primary education, but there is room for improvement for children living in poverty, boys and children with special education needs.

The education sector also is guided by the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) education strategy which provides a framework for Member States to align their national strategies and plans. The ICT in Education Policy for Antigua and Barbuda (2013) and other national policies are consistent with the broader OECS regional education policy.

To respond to many of the issues and challenges experienced by parents, students and teachers, the Government has implemented a range of programmes and projects to support the educational sector. Some of these programmes are geared to reducing inequalities. Some examples of the programmes include:

- School Uniform Grant which provides uniforms to students in school across the country
- A grant is provided for all students in schools across the country to enhance equality in access to education in the country
- School Meals Program which focuses on providing a hot, nutritious meal to all primary school students across the country, towards aiding students' ability to stay focused and

engaged in the classroom by eradicating hunger, thereby enhancing students' performance that might have been affected by hunger

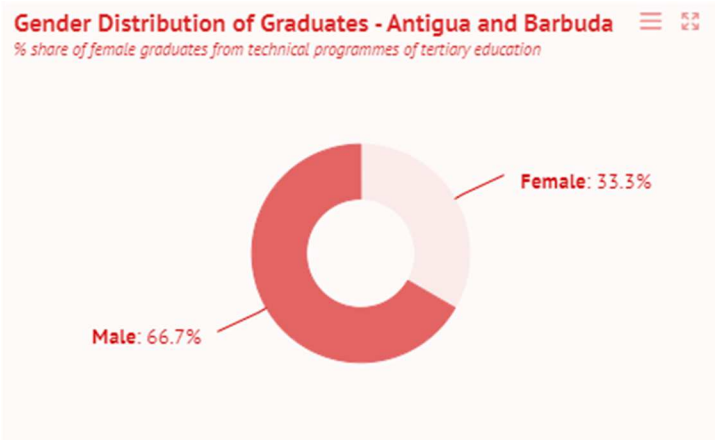
- Psychosocial Support in Schools Programme to ensure that the psychological health of the students is cared for. Teachers have been trained and provided with tools to enable them to provide support to students in need
- Book Loan Scheme geared towards providing books for all students at both the primary and secondary levels to ensure that students' learning is not affected by the lack of resources (books) and to ensure equity in the learning process in schools through the provision of textbooks for all subject areas
- Provision of technological devices (furnished with content) to students and teachers to support the implementation of the curriculum in a digitized format and enhance research capabilities as well as to provide infinite access to resources to students and teachers through the world wide web
- Provision of internet access in schools across the island to further encourage diversification of the teaching and learning process
- Behaviour Management Programme which has been designed to ensure that a safe environment for is provided for students physically, socially, mentally etc.

School children of all ages have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, primarily from the closure of schools in March 2020, resulting both direct and indirect impacts. The direct impact has been the disruption to children's education. To mitigate this and to ensure that students remained engaged in learning, the mass media was used to prepare students for upcoming examinations through the Homeschool 101 Program. Other virtual platforms also were used to engage students who did not return to face-to-face instructions during the period.

Indirect impacts of school closures have been in relation to the huge increase in time that children have been required spend at home, given that school closures were also accompanied by restrictions on socializing with family members and friends outside the home, leading to several psychosocial issues as children may have found it more difficult to adapt to these sudden changes resulting in frustration, anger, anxiety and depression. During the lockdowns, students from low-income households that were accustomed to receiving meals at school continued to be provided with these.

Vocational training is a strategic focus of the education sector and is delivered and is under control of the national training agency that is responsible for setting and maintaining national standards. The Antigua State College delivers courses in office management, home management, agriculture, electronics and refrigeration among others.

In 2012, the gross enrolment rate for tertiary education was 23.5. More males than females currently graduate from tertiary education institutions. To increase the number of tertiary education graduates, the Government approached The University of the West Indies (The UWI) in 2018 to partner with them to establish a university in Antigua and Barbuda, to meet the needs of the nation but



also that of other OECS countries since the post-secondary education participation rate of students of in the OECS sub-region is significantly below that of the countries with landed campuses such as Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago.

### **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

#### **The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus**

The University at Five Islands in Antigua was officially opened in 2019. The Five Islands Campus of The UWI is expected to broaden tertiary education opportunities, recognizing that there exists a direct correlation between higher levels of education and economic development.



UWI's new Five Islands Campus in Antigua and Barbuda

### **EBooks in Secondary Schools Programme**

The Ministry of Education, prior to the pandemic introduced the EBooks in Secondary Schools Programme. The objective of the programme is to ensure that each student has access to e-textbooks and to expand in the classroom the resources available to teachers and students. The Ebook allows students to make their own notes; to be assessed real time on specific topics; and the teacher has the capability to distribute to assignments, homework and additional notes electronically. Additionally, the teacher and students can collaborate easily in class as well as out of class. The teacher can also use the Ebook as a Whiteboard. Further, analytics and detailed reports can be generated for the teachers to assist the students who need additional assistance. This programme continued to be useful during the school closures brought about by the pandemic.

### **Provision of Technological Devices for Students and Teachers and Internet Access in Schools Islandwide**

This programme, implemented before the COVID-19 pandemic provides technological devices for students in low-income homes as well as those students who live in homes with multiple siblings and limited devices. Teachers also benefit from this initiative to support the implementation of the curriculum in a digitized format. The programme also enhances research capabilities and provide infinite access to resources to students and teachers through the World Wide Web. There also is the provision of internet access in schools across the island to further encourage diversification of the teaching and learning process. Students without internet access at their homes have also benefited from this programme.

### **Caribbean Safe School Initiative**

Antigua and Barbuda is part of the Caribbean Safe School Initiative (CSSI) which was launched in 2017 and provides a framework to advance school safety at the national level with a focus on creating safe learning facilities (disaster-resilient infrastructure); school disaster management; and disaster risk reduction and resilience education.

### **Kool Kidz Drive**

The Kiwanis club organizes and manages a quarterly initiative called the “Kool Kidz Drive” which provides preschools and daycares with school and cleaning supplies as well as ensuring that the school environment meets good quality standards for learning. With respect to advancing SDG 4, specific outcomes include:

- the supply of snacks, food items which aims to ensure the provision of food which also serves to advance SDG 2
- school supplies such as reading books, learning charts, paper, and pencils, towards ensuring access to educational tools
- cleaning and sanitation equipment which serves to ensure that children can learn in clean and safe areas which also contributes to good health and well-being, advancing SDG 3.



## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 4**

- Increase investments towards developing and rolling-out a standards-driven and outcomes-based education system that ensures that education and training is learner centered, review and revise the curriculum, including widening it, in keeping with STEAM<sup>11</sup> and STEM<sup>12</sup> and ensure that all including those with special needs and PWDs are able to access the system.
- Ensure that the curricula are specifically tailored to meet the needs of the society, particularly the labour market.
- Improve the learning achievements of students at all levels, especially in the core areas of English and Mathematics.
- Ensure that the secondary school system better equips students exiting with the tools and abilities to access further education, training and/or decent work.
- Develop a special needs policy to cater for persons with disabilities.
- Create mechanisms to reduce the mismatch between the well trained and educated workforce and the needs of the labour market to advance growth and competitiveness.

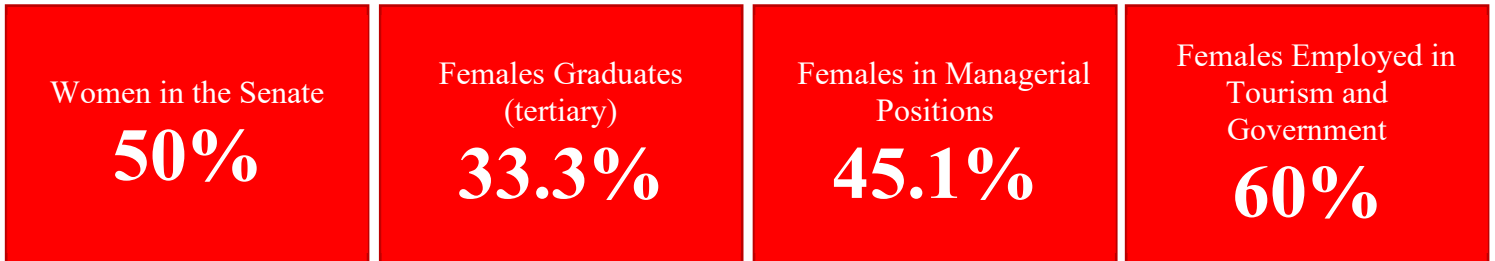
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<sup>11</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics

<sup>12</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

## SDG 5: Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Promoting and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women in all spheres of life remains a priority of the Government. The Government recognizes the need for greater levels of gender mainstreaming to promote the economic, social, cultural and political empowerment of women; as well as ensure that gender mainstreaming initiatives are included in all national policies, plans and programmes. In Antigua, women account for 52 per cent of the population while in Barbuda, they account for around 47 per cent.

The Directorate of Gender Affairs (DoGA) is the national gender machinery and focal agency for gender and development, with the mandate to empower women and promote gender equality nationally and ensure that the national development process is gender-responsive and national policies are developed using a gender lens. Antigua and Barbuda is committed to having constructive dialogue in the reviewing and strengthening of its legislative framework to promote gender equality and the full enjoyment of rights for women, by developing a National Gender Action Plan and Policy, with the main aim of ensuring that gender is mainstreamed throughout the Government's development plans, policies, legislations and initiatives.

In the Review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda highlighted its work towards prioritizing the differential needs of women in its social protection system. The review highlighted the country's progress in providing opportunities for women to access low-income housing, work experience training, direct cash transfers for single mothers (through the People's Benefit Programme), school support to single mothers (through the Board of Governor's Programme) and a provision through the Medical Benefits Scheme to support women who stay at home to raise children or take care of other family without formal employment, or unemployed women. This is important since, women (particularly female headed households) are particularly vulnerable and are at risk of falling into poverty.

Antigua and Barbuda has experienced significant progress in the area of education and the training of women. Women and girls in Antigua and Barbuda enjoy universal access to education and are

also well represented at every level within the education system. Considering the education system as a gendered space, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Country Gender Assessment for Antigua and Barbuda noted that efforts have been made in Antigua and Barbuda for curricula to support the changing nature of gender labour roles, and further, to enable access for females to pursue courses in male-dominated fields and vice-versa. Although females have been dominating enrollment at tertiary level institutions in the Caribbean region, some disparities still remain in relation to women being overrepresented in fields that tend to be lower paying and more social services oriented, while men tend to be better represented in higher paying fields related to STEM. In Antigua and Barbuda there are no structural barriers preventing girls from studying subjects such as electronics and woodworking, but cultural norms still, to some extent, determine students' subject choices. However, measures are being taken to reduce gender stereotyping within the education system.

Beyond the barriers created through gender stereotyping in course selection, girls who become pregnant were historically denied continued access to education. The Ministry of Education established a policy in 2012 to ensure that pregnant girls had the opportunity to complete their education. At the tertiary level, females are entering higher institutions of learning in greater numbers than males.

The Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code CAP. 27, E 8 (1) ensures that there is equal pay for equal work in both the public and private sectors of the economy. The law states: "No woman shall merely by reason of her sex be employed under terms of employment less favorable than that employed by male workers in the same occupation and by the same employer." Women account for the large majority of employment within the tourism and government sector. In the government sector for example, over 60 per cent of those employed are women, and they account for the majority of directors and managers in the public sector. Antigua and Barbuda has ratified a number of International Labour Organization's (ILO) fundamental convention to advance the rights of workers; particularly women and vulnerable groups.

Antigua and Barbuda has continued its coordinated efforts to address various forms of gender inequality that are outlined within the National Strategic Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence (2013-2018). Moreover, its national agenda includes the passage and implementation of the Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) Act, and other child protection-based legislation. Antigua and Barbuda commenced the drafting of legislation in 2018 to address sexual harassment in the country. The Government also commenced the drafting of a national policy to address workplace discrimination and harassment throughout the public service.

Currently, there are no laws or policies which specifically call for the equal participation of women in positions of power, leadership and decision-making. However, women's involvement in political leadership and decision-making has steadily increased since 2004, when the first female was elected to the House of Representatives. Today, two members of the House of Representatives are women or 11 per cent of seats held in the national parliament is by women. Two smaller political parties in Antigua and Barbuda are currently led by women. Today, the Senate of Antigua

and Barbuda maintains gender parity in representation, as 9 of its 18 members, including the President of the Senate, are women. Also, Antigua and Barbuda has started a local chapter of the regional organization, Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership, also known as CIWIL, which is a group aiming to catalyze women's participation in leadership and politics within the region and nationally.

Almost half of employed women (45.1%) are in managerial positions. Notwithstanding, the Caribbean Human Development Report 2016 stated that Antigua and Barbuda has the lowest percentage of firms headed by female managers in the Caribbean, with only 17.5 per cent of local firms having female managers in top positions and the other 82.5 per cent headed by men<sup>13</sup>.

Through comprehensive social protection reform, the Government has introduced various measures to address gender inequalities that contribute to poverty among women. There is a paradigm shift in Antigua and Barbuda which is taking into account the need for gender-responsive integrated social protection systems, and the need for investment in public services and infrastructure to support the implementation of these systems. Notwithstanding, because many women head single parent households, and often have other dependents, such as the elderly and the disabled, with responsibilities to provide and care for them, particularly economically, causes many women to fall into poverty. This, combined with some of these women occupying the lower paid jobs and engaging in high levels of unpaid care/domestic work, can lead to an overrepresentation of women in poverty and precarious positions which may lead to further vulnerability.

Persons engaging primarily in household duties are still considered to be part of the 'Economically Inactive' population in Antigua and Barbuda. There are no provisions for the measurement of the contribution of household duties or homework to GDP in Antigua and Barbuda which has significant impact on women's autonomy and economic empowerment.

There are no laws that discriminate against a woman's ability to access bank loans, mortgages or any other form of financial credit. However, the CDB Country Gender Assessment noted that "Women have limited access to and control over the means of production in Antigua and Barbuda, in particular, land and credit" (CDB 2014:2). The fact that fewer women are granted loans and mortgages primarily results from the fact that women generally have less property than men to use as collateral for a loan. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda is continuously seeking new and innovative ways to alleviate this situation and it does so through measures such as land and housing programs, the provision of low-interest loans to enhance credit status of women in Antigua and Barbuda.

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<sup>13</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone. Available at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf). (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

The National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) is the entity responsible for disaster management and disaster risk reduction in Antigua and Barbuda. NODS recognizes and understands the importance of ensuring the participation of women in consultations on disaster risk reduction and climate change initiatives. It has held various consultations which gave women the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes and in developing prevention and response strategies for disaster risk management. Women have also been trained as shelter managers and shelter workers as part of the emergency response mechanism.

The UN, UNDP, UNWOMEN and UNICEF are implementing 11 key activities in Antigua and Barbuda to support Goal 5 with the assistance of development partners such as the Department of International Development (DFID) and Global Affairs Canada.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Men as Partners Programme**

The Men as Partners (MAPs) Programme is an initiative spearheaded by the Directorate of Gender Affairs to create and increase the presence of male advocates to support gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and to reduce/eliminate all forms of gender-based violence. The main objectives or goals of the programme are to: increase the number and presence of male advocates; train other men and boys to become male advocates; reduce negative gender stereotypes, in particular among young men and boys; and reduce/eliminate all forms of gender-based violence.

### **Support and Referral Center**

The Support and Referral Center (SARC) helps to ensure victims of gender-based violence have access to justice. The first of its kind in the Caribbean region, the SARC provides timely, gender-responsive and coordinated response to sexual assaults, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. The SARC helps to ensure victims of gender-based violence have access to justice. The first of its kind in the Caribbean region, the SARC provides timely, gender-responsive and coordinated response to sexual assaults, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **The Sexual Offences Model Court**

The Sexual Offences Model Court (SOMC) is the first of its kind in the Caribbean region. The Model Court has introduced specialized procedures to remedy the deficiencies in the court's handling of sexual offences.

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 5**



- Carry out a time-use survey to quantify unpaid work to address comprehensively the inequalities rooted in the sexual division of labour,
- Develop and promulgate a National Gender Policy,
- Mainstream gender considerations across all government policies and take into consideration having a gender focal point in all ministries and agencies of Government.
- Mainstream gender considerations in national budgeting.



- Complete the review of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code (1975), which has already been subjected to a series of amendments in 1998, 2007 and 2011.
- The Statistics Division will work with key stakeholders to ensure that data collected across all development spheres are disaggregated by sex.
- Create the enabling environment to support more female leaders and female entrepreneurs being promoted to managerial positions.

## Dashboard of SDG Targets – People


This dashboard shows at a snapshot how Antigua and Barbuda is progressing with respect to the achievement of the SDG targets under **People**.

- Target met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
- Fair progress but acceleration is needed
- Limited or no progress
- Moving away from the target/deterioration
- No trend data available
- Insufficient data/not applicable

<b>SDG Targets Goal #1 – No Poverty</b> 	<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.	
By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions.	
Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all.	
By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services.	
By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.	
<b>SDG Targets Goal #2 – Zero Hunger</b> 	<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.	
By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.	
By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers.	
By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.	

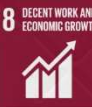
By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels.		
<b>SDG Targets Goal #3 – Good Health and Well-being</b>		<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.		
By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases.		
By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.		
Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.		
By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.		
Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.		
By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.		
<b>SDG Targets Goal #4 – Quality Education</b>		<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.		
By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.		
By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.		
By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.		
By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.		



By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.	
Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.	
<b>SDG Targets Goal #5 – Gender Equality</b> 	<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.	
Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.	
Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.	
Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.	
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.	
Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.	
Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.	



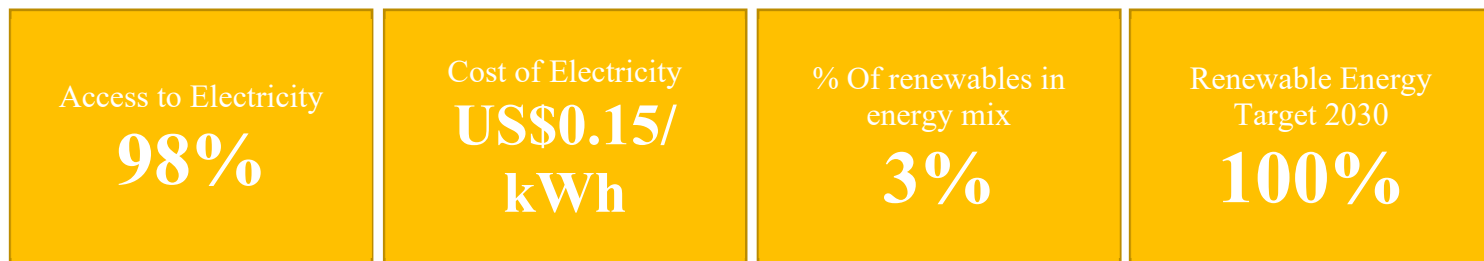
AGENDA 2030 - THEME II  
**BRINGING PROSPERITY  
TO THE LIVES OF  
OUR PEOPLE**



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**

## SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



One hundred per cent of the urban population has access to electricity while 96.55 per cent of those in rural areas have access. One of the key priorities of the Government is to reduce the cost of energy and improve energy security. Energy security is viewed as key to improving its competitiveness as an investment destination as well as in improving economic resilience and reducing the nation's carbon footprint. The Government recognizes that in the pursuit of energy efficiency focus must be given to reducing the negative impacts on the environment through exploring and investing in opportunities for expanding the use of renewable energy.

Like most Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Antigua and Barbuda has been reliant on conventional fossil fuels for energy supply—electricity generation and transport. The country imports almost 100 per cent of petroleum products to meet its energy demands. This dependence coupled with uncertainties in the global environment due to declining global oil reserves, conflicts in some major oil producing states also renders the country vulnerable to disruptions in the energy supplies due to external shocks and volatility of the petroleum fuel market. Rising energy costs negatively impacts communities, households and businesses.

Antigua and Barbuda's electricity utility rates range from approximately US\$0.15 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) – US\$0.17 per kWh, which is below the Caribbean regional average of \$0.33 USD/kWh.<sup>14</sup> While the nation's carbon footprint is relatively low, vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change necessitates adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Antigua and Barbuda continues to make significant progress in advancing sustainable energy policy. Antigua and Barbuda's National Energy Policy (2011) provides the framework for ensuring that the population as well as enterprises have access to affordable, sustainable and modern energy. The National Energy Policy has been designed to create a stable, sustainable and efficient

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/09/f79/ETI-Energy-Snapshot-Antigua-Barbuda\\_FY20.pdf](https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/09/f79/ETI-Energy-Snapshot-Antigua-Barbuda_FY20.pdf)  
(Accessed on June 7, 2021)

energy sector that fosters national economic and social development. It places focus on energy cost reduction; diversification of energy sources; electricity reliability improvement; environment protection and stimulating new economic opportunities. Aligned to the National Energy Policy is the Sustainable Energy Action Plan developed and implemented in accordance with the stipulations of the National Energy Policy. It serves as a road map for the energy future in the country. It outlines strategies action ranging from short to long term. Specifically, it focuses on energy conservation, energy efficiency, and diversification of energy sources, sustainable energy consumption and generation as well as the utilization of available renewable energy sources.

Antigua and Barbuda possesses abundant renewable energy resources, including considerable solar, wind, ocean and biomass potential. The challenges in harnessing these resources are significant and include financial, technological, environmental and other barriers. To support its efforts to increase the percentage of renewables in the energy mix, the Renewable Energy Act was promulgated in 2015 to promote the use of renewable energy resources that are capable of generating electricity such as winds, solar, hydropower, biomass, geothermal and wave/tidal.

In 2019, Antigua and Barbuda received assistance from the International Renewable Energy Agency to develop a Renewable Energy Roadmap. An assessment of the country's power system showed that about 3.55 per cent of the electricity share is derived from renewables. The Roadmap concluded that it is both technically feasible and economically viable for the country to increase its renewable energy share to 100 per cent through a mix of solar, wind, hydrogen and biodiesel for both power and transport sectors. It also noted that full deployment of electric vehicles to further increase the renewable energy share in the transport sector can also be achieved cost efficiently. This is consistent with the revisions made by the Government to its National Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, which has



proposed a target of 100 per cent of its energy generation from renewable energy sources by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050, reflecting the need to contribute to emission reductions and develop a robust energy system based on renewable energy.

Through the renewable energy roadmap<sup>15</sup> Antigua and Barbuda is exploring renewable energy options such as utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV), distributed solar PV, utility-scale wind and green hydrogen. The island nation recently established interconnection standards and a net billing

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.irena.org/publications/2021/March/Antigua-and-Barbuda-Renewable-Energy-Roadmap>

programme, creating the incentive for households to consider renewable energy such as photovoltaic as a viable option to reduce their household energy costs.

The table below shows a snapshot of actions and targets in energy efficiency and renewable energy that Antigua and Barbuda have either successfully implemented or is in an advanced stage of implementation.

Energy Efficiency Actions		Renewable Energy Actions	
Energy Efficiency Standards	■	Feed in Tariffs	■
Demonstration Projects	■	Net Metering	■
Restrictions on incandescent lighting	■	Interconnection Standards	■
Appliance Labelling Standards	■	Public Loans/Grants	■
Energy Efficiency Targets	■	Renewable Energy Targets	■

Source: *Catalyzing Low-Carbon Sustainable Development in the Caribbean Region*

Key - ■ in development ■ in place

To begin to fulfill its renewable energy targets, the Government in 2018 began implementation of a project geared towards retrofitting government buildings, hospitals, schools and car parks with wind and solar installations. This project will contribute 10 megawatts of renewable power and represents around 10 percent of the island’s energy needs.

## Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities

### Green Barbuda, 800 kW Solar + 800 kWh Lithium-ion Battery Storage Project

Following the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma in 2017 on Barbuda, the Government will build a solar and storage plant on the island as a first step in Barbuda’s reconstruction and in advancing a more sustainable approach to the country’s development as they seek to ‘build back better’. The project will build a modern, climate-resilient, safe, reliable and sustainable supply of electrical power for Barbuda. This project will include a hybrid solar-diesel power station, with a hurricane-resilient lithium-ion battery storage. The plant is expected to save the Government of Antigua and Barbuda over US\$320,000 a year through the reduction in oil imports and offset 690 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. Hurricane Irma destroyed 95 per cent of the island, forcing all 1,800 of its residents to be evacuated to Antigua.





*Aerial view of the ground-mounted solar power plant at the VC Bird International Airport*

The country also recently installed in 2016 a 3-MW ground-mounted solar power plant project at the newly constructed V.C. Bird International Airport. This was Antigua's first major infrastructure project to utilize renewable technology. It has exceeded the original expectations and generated revenue of more than US\$1 million. In its first six months of operation the plant generated 2.5 million kWh and saved 2,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The solar energy plant covers almost all energy demand of the airport. The significant benefits of the solar power plant to the energy needs of the airport resulted in the V.C. Bird International Airport to be chosen by the Caribbean Journal as the second-best airport of the Caribbean. The installation of the 3 MWP airport solar energy plant represents the first step of a 10 MW clean energy project cluster.

### **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 7**

- Develop a green public procurement policy that includes targets for use of energy efficient equipment within the public sector as well as renewable energy technologies as a strategic action to drive and increase the use of renewables in the energy mix as well as reduce the use of fossil fuel energy.

- Develop and implement tax credits and tax exemptions to drive the uptick of renewable energy.
- Develop and roll out a comprehensive energy conservation programme.
- Create the enabling environment to facilitate the use of renewable energy by businesses, including opportunities for wheeling.
- Adopt and adapt the Regional Energy Efficient Building Code to local conditions. The Code establishes the minimum energy efficiency requirements for buildings using prescriptive and performance-related provision inclusive of building envelop, cooling systems, ventilation, lighting, pumping and water-heating systems.
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation practices among consumers through public education.
- Implement activities to reduce energy use in the transportation sector.
- Ensure that the country can generate 100 per cent of its water from reverse osmosis and the energy to power these plants is 100 per cent renewable.

## SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



GDP Growth 2019

**3.4%**

Unemployment Rate

**8.7%**

Inflation Rate 2015 - 2019

**2 - 3%**

Debt-to-GDP 2020

**89%**

As a small open economy, Antigua and Barbuda remains vulnerable to external shocks in the global economy, extreme weather events and climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a socioeconomic crisis which is impacting lives and livelihoods. The uncertainty regarding the pathway, duration and full impact of the pandemic threatens economic development which benefits from stable and predictable macroeconomic conditions. The challenges facing Antigua and Barbuda involves treating with the impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, building back better from the unprecedented devastation caused by Hurricane Irma in 2017, overcoming the legacies of the global financial crisis of 2008, and remaining focused on the country's long-term goal of improving the quality of life for all its citizens. Disaggregated, these challenges may seem insurmountable, however, the Government remains focused on building and entrenching resilience in all areas of development.

Over the period 2016 – 2020, the country's strategic imperatives were based on the recognition that the country was in the efficiency-driven stage of development. This stage requires focus on optimizing the benefit to be harnessed from higher education and training, market efficiency (goods, services and financial), technological readiness and market access towards attaining higher levels of competitiveness.

The strategic priorities to improve fiscal and debt sustainability are contained in the Medium-Term Debt Strategy 2016 – 2020, designed to ensure that the country can better respond to exogenous shocks, give greater focus to fiscal discipline, strengthen the financial sector and pursue sustainable and inclusive growth initiatives.

Hurricane Irma halted and, in some cases, reversed progress made in economic development and labour market conditions. Prior to the devastating impact of Irma, Antigua and Barbuda had begun to show stable and predictable macroeconomic conditions evidence by relatively low and stable levels of inflation, a reduction in public debt and economic growth led by the tourism sector. Efforts to restore pre-disaster output levels resulted in an uptick in the construction sector which



combined with the tourism industry contributed to growth of 6.95 per cent in 2018 following growth of 3.1 per cent in 2017.

For 2019, the country continued to experience increases in economic output with growth of 3.4 per cent. In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda's economy plummeted by 20 per cent. This decline follows annual average growth of about 5 per cent over the preceding five years. Much of this could be attributed primarily to the strategies employed to stem the spread of the COVID-19 as well as devastation caused by the pandemic on all the country's major source markets which also were impacted by COVID-19. This also created fiscal pressures as revenues declined and there was increased spending on programmes related to COVID-19 as well as on imports of medicines and medical equipment. The economic and social disruption has and is expected to, inter alia, place downward pressure on economic output, increase unemployment, widen the fiscal imbalance, delay critical development projects and increase the vulnerability of many, particularly the poor.

The country's debt-to-GDP ratio at the end of 2020 was 89 per cent, compared to 67 per cent at the end of 2019. Reducing the debt-to-GDP ratio is one of the key thrusts of the Government in pursuit of debt and fiscal sustainability. Based on International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates, the economy is projected to decline by 3 per cent for 2021<sup>16</sup>. The fiscal deficit also is expected to increase to 9 per cent and the rate of unemployment is projected to be over 30 per cent. Given the high dependence on tourism, the impact of COVID-19 is expected to be significant.

To address the fiscal issues that the country is confronted with due to the global pandemic, the Government has developed a Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS) for execution over the next three to five years – 2021 – 2026 which focuses on enhancing revenue performance, increasing efficiency in public spending, and securing debt sustainability.

Regarding labour market outcomes, in October 2018, there were 47,429 employed persons aged 15 and over in Antigua and Barbuda which corresponded to an unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent<sup>17</sup>. Unemployment was, however, more prevalent among women (9.9%) than men (7.3%). Notwithstanding, when absolute numbers are considered, there were more employed women than men as women comprise a larger share of the working age population. The overall employment to population ratio stood at 65.9 per cent with females having a lower ratio (62.1 %) than males (70.5 %). By the end of 2020, there were about 11,000 fewer employed persons than at the start of the year. More than 70 per cent of these persons were employed in the hotel accommodation and hospitality sectors. Early estimates by ECLAC (2020) indicate that total employment will be reduced by nine percentage points in the Caribbean with Antigua and Barbuda

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<sup>16</sup> World Bank, World Economic Outlook Database. Available at <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2021/April>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

<sup>17</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Statistics Division, Antigua and Barbuda 2018 Labour Force Survey Report. Available at <https://statistics.gov.ag/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2018-Antigua-and-Barbuda-LFS-Report.pdf>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

being one of the countries. expected to experience the largest declines of over 13 percentage points due to the issues that have emerged because of COVID-19.

The country has employment legislation ensuring that there is equal pay for equal work regardless of gender. Efforts continue to be made by the government to reduce the high level of unemployment by increasing activities across a range of economic industries such as tourism and ensuring that decent work is placed on the agenda in new and emerging activities. The country also suffers from underemployment and like many other Caribbean countries, a large informal economy. The informal sector is a significant source of employment and income, with the informal economy accounting for as much as 31 per cent of economic activity, with a high proportion of those in the informal economy being women.

With respect to youth employment, employment and sustainable livelihoods for youth is one of the key focus areas of Antigua and Barbuda's 2007 National Youth Policy, including significant attention to the need for decent work. The country also has been implementing a range of initiatives towards facilitating the school to work transition for youth, both male and female, as well as the development and implementation of programmes to support youth entrepreneurship. Some of these programmes include:

- Work-Based Training Component of the Antigua & Barbuda Skills Training and Empowerment Programme (ABSTEP) which is operated by the Department of Labour
- ICT Cadet Programme operated by the Department of Information Technology
- Secondary Schools Internship Programs operated by various secondary schools
- Training and Internships for Youth - youth in the tourism sector are provided with hospitality training and placed in internships, with private internships offered by some of the country's major hotels

Despite this, there remains insufficient work opportunities for youth, reflected by a high overall youth unemployment rate. In 2018, the unemployment rate for youths aged 15 to 24 was 25.7 per cent<sup>18</sup>, with even higher rates for youth aged 15 – 19. These rates have been observed despite growth in the economy which was driven by growth in the country's tourism industry. Recent natural disaster events such as Irma in 2017 may negatively impact this situation even further.

With respect to the tourism sector, the country relies heavily on tourism for growth and income generation and the sector accounts for about 47 per cent of annual output when both direct and indirect impacts are considered<sup>19</sup>. The levels of unemployment forecasted in the sector due to COVID-19 will, disproportionately affect women more, as they make up about 60 per cent of persons working in Hotels & Restaurants.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://statistics.gov.ag/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2018-Antigua-and-Barbuda-LFS-Report.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Available at <https://www.bb.undp.org/content/dam/barbados/docs/heat-reports/updated-heat-reports/undp-bb-Human%20Impact%20and%20Economic%20Assessment%20of%20Impact%20-%20Antigua%20&%20Barbuda.pdf>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

With respect to the tourism sector and within the context of enhancing international competitiveness, the sector, through public-private partnerships have been implementing programmes and initiatives such as the Green Tourism Initiative which has been developed to assist businesses in the sector to reduce negative impacts on the natural environment while providing opportunities for them to reduce costs and improve the overall efficiency of their operations. Areas of focus include hotels and other tourism related entities implementing initiatives towards:

- Energy conservation and efficiency and use of renewable energy
- Water conservation
- Improved and proper waste disposal practices
- Green building practices
- Green procurement
- Sustainable transportation practices
- Promoting the local economy,
- Employee engagement and consumer education in conservation
- Corporate social responsibility activities

The manufacturing industry is fairly small and concentrates primarily on light manufacturing. Local manufacturers have some access to the United States (US), European, and Caribbean markets. The agricultural sector over the years has experienced a steep decline in productivity and competitiveness and contributes less than three per cent to GDP. There has been focus on the development of agriculture. Focus is being placed on attracting new investments in agriculture as well as financing to increase job opportunities in the sector and contribute to food security.

Micro, small and medium sized enterprises suffer from issues related to operational inefficiencies, to access to capital to business development support and limited use of clean technologies which impact their competitiveness. Other sectors such as Construction, Transport, Storage and Communication and the Wholesale and Retail sector also declined in 2020. The decline of the various economic sectors also impacted employment.

Foreign direct investment (FDI), particularly in industries that create jobs and earn foreign exchange is strongly encouraged by the Government and remains one of the key pillars for advancing economic growth. Through the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA), and the Ministry of Tourism, the government facilitates and supports FDI and maintains an open dialogue with current and potential investors. All potential investors are afforded the same level of business facilitation services. Priority investment areas that have been identified include tourism and related services, manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries, information and communication technologies, business process outsourcing, financial services, health and wellness services, creative industries, education, yachting and marine services, real estate, and renewable energy.

One of the areas that the country is working towards making significant improvements is in the ease of doing business. The 2020 World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report ranked Antigua and Barbuda at 113 among 190 economies with a score of 60.3<sup>20</sup>. While the country has done relatively well in areas such as starting a business and getting electricity, there is need for reforms related to resolving insolvency and access to credit, among others.

Remittances also are an important source of income and foreign exchange revenue, reflecting the close ties that the Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora in the USA and Canada have with their families back home. Remittances over the years have also played a key role in shoring up the foreign exchange position in the currency union and provide critical sources of income for the most vulnerable, supporting basic consumption, education costs for children and medical care.

A critical issue faced by Antigua and Barbuda is its inability to access concessional funding or grants from the international financial institutions due to its relatively good economic performance and its designation by the UN as a high-income country. The island nation has been denied loans from the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) because of the skewed per capita income criterion applied by these institutions' policy-making boards. This was particularly troubling during 2020 and at the heights of the COVID-19 pandemic when the country needed assistance. Apart from a line of credit from the Inter-American Development Bank, Antigua and Barbuda did not receive much support from IFIs to assist with the enormous challenges faced, challenges which caused some developed countries to 'buckle'. Notwithstanding, the Government was able to assess some funding from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the Regional Government Securities Market, and other institutions such as the Caribbean Development Bank, the Abu Dhabi Fund, and the country's domestic bank.

The economic fallout due to COVID-19 is predicated on declines in the economies of the country's main tourism markets, increase expenditure on the health sector, financial support for the most vulnerable, which is likely to increase as the pandemic persists, as well as other necessary measures which requires government intervention. The issues and challenges facing the country necessitates innovative and strategic approaches which call on all stakeholders to be engaged in partnerships for recovery and development. The actions taken today must address the immediate concerns of the country, while keeping the island nation on a path to achieve its long-term goals and targets. Some of the more urgent issues and challenges that the country needs to address include:

- Rising unemployment particularly for persons employed in the tourism sector.
- Widening current account deficits due to lower tourism receipts and remittance inflows

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<sup>20</sup> World Bank, *Doing Business 2020: Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies*, (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2020). Available at <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/688761571934946384/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies.pdf>

- Slowdown of foreign direct investments
- Sustaining emergency fiscal and monetary measures
- Risk to the stability of the financial system owing to the combination of high debt and low growth can transform liquidity problems into insolvency crisis

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Achievements under SDG#8**

Despite many challenges, Antigua and Barbuda can boast of many achievements under SDG#8. Some of these include:

- Consecutive years of economic growth over the period 2016-2019, with a high of 6.95 per cent in 2018
- Low stable inflation within the target range of 2 – 3 percent over the period 2015-2019
- Debt to GDP of 78.5 per cent in 2018, which is below the 80 per cent target of 2019
- Implemented a series of measures to respond to the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19 including:
  - increase in health- sector expenditure equivalent to 0.5% of GDP
  - 20 per cent reduction in electricity costs to the public and fuel costs to fisherfolk for 90 days
  - a one-year investment incentive framework for home renovation and construction
  - suspension of the common external tariff on food imports and all new tax measures announced in the 2020 budget
  - expansion of social safety net programmes

### **Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS) to Accelerate Recovery from COVID-19**

Various targets have been established to help the country recover faster from the fallout due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The implementation of the MTFS over the next few years is expected to lead to the achievement of key fiscal targets as presented below:

- Primary surplus between 0.5 per cent and 1 per cent of GDP by 2023
- Overall deficit less than 1.5 per cent of GDP by 2024
- Wages and salaries accounting for not more than 9 per cent of GDP by 2025
- Tax to GDP to increase to at least 18 per cent by 2023 and to be maintained at a minimum of 20 per cent over the medium-term
- Debt to GDP ratio to fall below 70 per cent by 2030

### **Entrepreneurial Development Fund**

The Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDP) is for the creation of new business entities which generate revenues, employment and innovation, and is essential for the development of a vibrant micro and small business sector. The vision of the EDP is to create a supportive business environment that empowers entrepreneurs to be successful and contribute to national economic development. To mission of the EDF is to provide entrepreneurs with access to affordable funding,

enabling them to deliver quality goods and services to customers resulting in the creation of wealth to owners and shareholders.

### Interventions Aimed at Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship

In an attempt to reduce the number of unattached youths, several interventions are being implemented. Some of these include:

- Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunity (CEBO) which is part of a regional project developed by the CARICOM secretariat, where out-of-school youths are given theoretical and practical training on how to start a business. They must design a business plan, make it marketable and promote a product or service. The target groups are mainly unemployed young men and young women
- Gilbert Agricultural Rural Development (GARD) Centre Business Enterprise Courses and Business Development Support, which is operated by an NGO, the GARD Centre and provides vocational training and business advice to young people and women through its training courses. Courses include business enterprise training, agriculture, yacht maintenance and craft-related skills among others. The target groups are youth and women.

### Green Fins Programme – “The only Internationally recognized Environmental Code of Conduct for Diving and Snorkelling”



The Green Fins Programme is part of the country’s thrust for a more sustainable tourism product and to also improve the competitiveness of the tourism sector. The objective of the Green Fins Programme is to increase public awareness and management practices among local diving and snorkeling companies that will benefit the conservation of coral reefs and reduce unsustainable tourism practices. Antigua and Barbuda is the 1<sup>st</sup> English Speaking country to adopt the Green Fins Programme at the National Level in the Western Hemisphere. There is an established and certified Green Fins team within the Ministry of Tourism with three (3) additional local persons trained and internationally certified as Green Fins Assessors. Six (6) businesses have been certified with more signaling their intention to participate in the programme.

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 8**

- Reposition Antigua and Barbuda as a premier world class destination that is sufficiently differentiated from other destinations. This will enable the country to restore, maintain and enhance its competitive advantage.
- Transform Barbuda into a Green, Low Density, High-End Tourism Destination.
- Pursue strategies to expand existing efforts and explore new opportunities to utilize the country's marine space and resources. New opportunities could include the generation of energy from ocean currents, wave motion and temperature differences as well as exploration and sustainable extraction of minerals
- Create the enabling environment to allow nationals to engage in entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Improve employment opportunities for youth and aim to reduce youth unemployment levels consistent with the National Youth Policy. Include opportunities spanning the promotion of on-the-job training and work experience, to initiatives for youth entrepreneurship development, and the expansion of skills training, especially in the areas of agriculture, ICTs, and the creative and cultural industries.
- Create strategies to better align education and training to match employment needs.
- Continue to intensify efforts to attract foreign investment in order to reposition the tourism industry and develop new and emerging industries.
- Improve the ease of doing business.
- Promote the use of clean technologies across all economic sectors to enhance efficiencies and competitiveness and put Antigua and Barbuda on the path to advancing its green economy.
- Promulgate a tourism master plan and develop a green growth strategy for the tourism sector.
- Undertake the necessary assessments and provide much needed support to micro and small businesses to expand private sector participation and more so small businesses.
- In the pursuit of the green and blue economies, the Government will also need to assess the new and emerging jobs that could be created in these sectors and ensure that training needs are aligned with the labour market and the opening up of industries associated with these 'new' economies.

## SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



Rank ICT Development Index

**76/176**

% of Households Owning a Computer

**59%**

% of Households with Internet Access

**58%**

% Contribution of Other Industries (outside of tourism) to GDP

**21.57**

The country's Medium Term Development Strategy has as one of its four sustainable development dimensions as Optimal Generation of National Wealth which focuses on ensuring adequate infrastructure, a strong tourism industry that serves as an economic anchor; Barbuda is transformed into a green, low density, high-end tourism destination; and diversification of the economy by prioritizing the export of non-tourism services.

It is universally recognized that adequate infrastructure is essential in creating and achieving higher levels of competitiveness. Quality infrastructure for transport (air and sea) water, telecommunication and electricity has facilitated the development of the country's tourism sector. Focus has been given to maintaining and enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism industry which requires the rehabilitation and upgrading of aging transportation infrastructure. This provides a strong base to reposition the country as a premier world-class tourism destination.

Efforts to improve the economic infrastructure is embedded in an improved physical planning framework which must be integrated into efforts to reduce disaster risks. This integration is seen as important in improving resilience to climate change and reduce and where possible reverse adverse environmental impacts. To accomplish this, priority has been given to improving coordination among agencies to ensure effective planning and implementation of infrastructure projects.

Work is already underway to address issues related to the adequacy of airport and seaport infrastructure. A new terminal building for the V.C. Bird International Airport has been completed and progress is being made with the implementation of a comprehensive plan to redevelop the main seaport.



The contribution of industries outside of tourism including construction, mining, manufacturing, electricity, water and gas was 21.57 per cent in 2019, up from 17.9 in 2016<sup>21</sup>. Antigua and Barbuda's manufacturing sector is relatively small, contributing 2.29 per cent towards overall GDP in 2019. The performance for 2019 represents a trend decline from 2.7 per cent in 2016.<sup>22</sup> The majority of the manufacturing industry comprise light manufacturing sectors such as textiles, distilled liquors and pottery. The major manufacturing exports are bedding, handicrafts and electronic components, the local manufacture of which is encouraged by incentives such as tax- and duty-free concessions.

High cost of labour is one of the contributing factors for the relatively limited scope of the manufacturing industry. Antigua and Barbuda has one of the highest costs of labour in the region which results in the country being seen as uncompetitive among potential manufacturers and investors. The government has introduced projects and legislation such as the Caribbean Basin Initiative, CARICOM and the Lomé Convention which give local manufacturers access to markets in the Caribbean, Europe and the US.

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing disruptions in global value chains and the supply of products and compounding existing challenges. Disruptions in the sector will have an impact on the sectors employment levels.

Development of ICT underpins the full gamut of social and economic development – from e-Government to improving health services, education and industrial development and is key to achieving the sustainable development goals. Antigua and Barbuda prioritizes technological adaptation and innovation as it is viewed as a necessary condition to effect transformative change for sustainable and inclusive outcomes. Over the period 2016 - 2020, a number of strategic efforts were pursued including:

- Building institutional capacity to encourage technological adaptation and innovation. Focus was and continues to be given to supporting business to explore the use of technology to improve performances of enterprises
- Developing an intelligence framework to support technological adaptation and innovation, including green technology towards ensuring timely awareness of opportunities to growth through technological imitation and adaptation
- Developing a framework and function for rational assessment of specific application of technology which will provide a clearer basis for promoting the use of such technologies and will map a general path forward for accelerating the mainstreaming of green technology application in Antigua and Barbuda

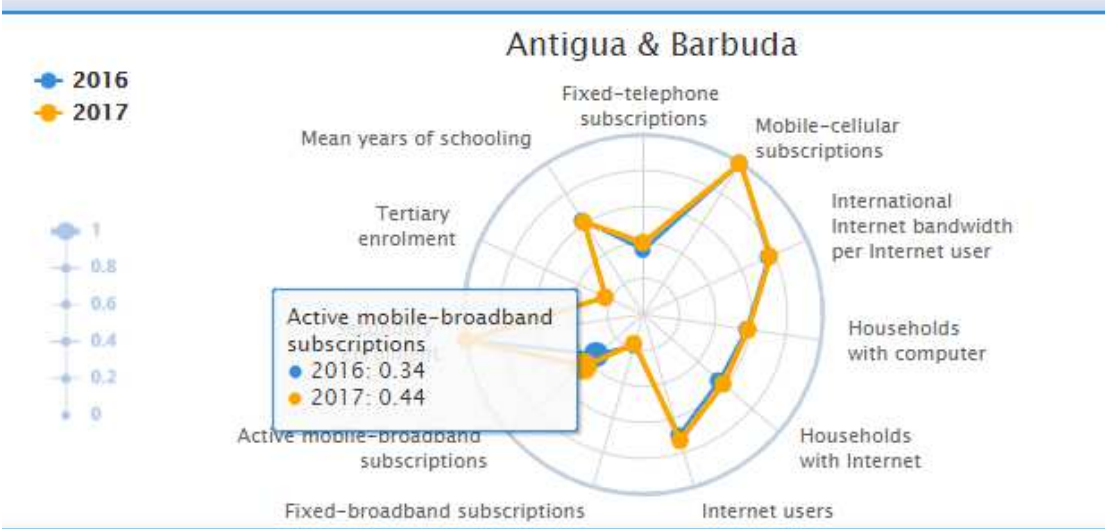
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<sup>21</sup> World Bank, "Industry (including construction), value added (% of GDP) - Antigua and Barbuda", World Development Indicators. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.TOTL.ZS?locations=AG>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

<sup>22</sup> World Bank, "Manufacturing, value added (% of GDP) - Antigua and Barbuda", World Development Indicators. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.MANF.ZS?locations=AG>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

The government recognizes the importance of information and communication technology (ICT) and the critical role it plays in promoting growth and increasing productivity. Antigua and Barbuda has made substantial progress in the market for ICT services. The Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to monitor ongoing discussions concerning E-commerce at the World Trade Organization (WTO) concerning facilitating electronic transactions, electronic contracts, electronic invoicing and electronic payments which once finalized and multilateralized will have impacts related to SDG 8 and 9. Increased competition has fostered both the expansion of services provision and viable pricing when compared not only with regional levels but also worldwide, resulting in a high share of the population regularly using the Internet.

In 2017, the country ranked 76 out of 176 countries on the ICT Development Index ahead of countries such as Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica and Mexico with a score of 5.48 and above the global average of 5.11.



This relatively high rank was based on a number of indicators including:

Indicator	2017
Fixed-telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	24.26
Mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	194.08
International internet bandwidth per Internet user (Bit/s)	88622.21
Percentage of households with computer	59.13
Percentage of households with Internet access	58.63
Percentage of individuals using the Internet	73.00

Indicator	2017
Fixed (wired)-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	9.99
Active mobile-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	44.21

SDG 9 also focuses on fostering innovation. Technology and innovation are among the primary engines of a nation’s growth and economic development. To this end, in 2018, with the support of UNOPS, Antigua and Barbuda launched the first science and innovation centre to support national and regional innovation in science and technology fields with a focus on youth engagement.

## Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities

### Mobile-Cellular Penetration Rates and the Market for ICT Services

The country’s mobile-cellular penetration rates surpass both regional and worldwide levels. The fixed-broadband market has been partially competitive since 2000 and not only is pricing lower than the world’s average, but bandwidth per Internet user is largely above it, being on par with the region’s average. Antigua and Barbuda has made substantial progress in the market for ICT services. Increased competition has fostered both the expansion of services provision and viable pricing when compared not only with the regional levels but also worldwide, resulting in a high share of the population regularly using the Internet.

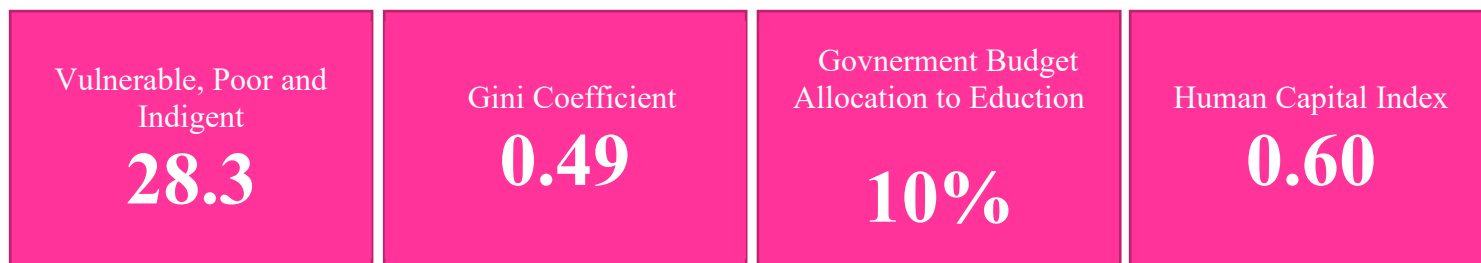
## Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 9

- Develop and implement a National Transport Plan which will examine among other things future transport demand, key transport issues, appropriate institutional arrangements for effective management of infrastructure. The Plan should explore business logistics including linkages between the international air and the main seaports and reflect all areas of transport infrastructure including road, sea and air.
- Renew and upgrade critical infrastructure, especially seaports and airports, and improve waste disposal systems as a foundation for maintaining and enhancing the country’s competitiveness.
- Put initiatives in place to improve the country’s information technology infrastructure and strengthen the regulatory environment. The ultimate goal will be to secure the most cutting-edge, reliable and growth-inducing ICT network for Antigua and Barbuda as well as harness the benefits of advanced ICTs which requires appropriate infrastructures, services, and skills.
- ‘Climate proof’ physical infrastructure to withstand heavy rainfall events, and more intense storms and hurricanes.



## SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries



SDG 10 calls for a reduction in inequalities by 2030. The more unequal a society is, the more likely there would be large groups of persons who are left behind. Antigua and Barbuda has been making improvements in inclusion and efforts towards leaving no one behind.

Some of the groups in the country that are most impacted or at risk of being left behind include: the youth, PWDs, the elderly and women and girls. Whilst Antigua and Barbuda continues to make steady development progress, issues such as inequality, poverty and unemployment continues to impact progress. This has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is estimated that 28.3 per cent of the population is either poor or at risk of falling into poverty<sup>23</sup>. The UN indicates that the island nation has one of the highest Gini coefficients in the Caribbean (0.49), as the poorest 20 per cent enjoy just 4.5 per cent of expenditures compared to 56.3 per cent enjoyed by the wealthiest 20 per cent of the population<sup>24</sup>.

The Government is cognizant of the fact that inequality and lack of opportunity remains one of the greatest impediments to people-centred development. As such the Government is intent on implementing a range of interventions under SDGs 1 to 5 to reduce the pockets of inequality that exist, increase job opportunities, access to education and health care as well as strengthening the social safety net. The Government also recognizes the role budgetary allocations to key areas such as social protection and other social areas play in reducing inequalities by increasing access to various goods and services and have attempted over the years ensure that budgetary allocations in areas such as education, health and social development are prioritized. For example, the Government usually allocates the largest share of the Government's budget to education – about 10 per cent in 2021 for example.

<sup>23</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Living Conditions in Antigua and Barbuda: Poverty in a Services Economy in Transition, Accessed at <https://statistics.gov.ag/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Antigua-and-Barbuda-CPA-Main-Report-Vol-I.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs OCHA Antigua and Barbuda Country Profile

Human capital—the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate over their lives—is a central driver of sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The Human Capital index (HCI)<sup>25</sup> provides a new definition of human capital and quantifies the contribution of health and education to the productivity of the next generation of workers. Antigua and Barbuda has a value of 0.60 on the index tying with Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia and above countries such as Jamaica. The HCI ranges between 0 and 1. The index is measured in terms of the productivity of the next generation of workers relative to the benchmark of complete education and full health. An economy in which a child born today can expect to achieve complete education and full health will score a value of 1 on the index. Countries can use the measure to assess how much income they are foregoing because of HC gaps, and how much faster they can turn these losses into gains if they act now. The HCI therefore suggests that those born today receive 60 per cent of their education and health needs.

The Government also has put in place dynamic social protection mechanisms recognizing that universal access to effective social protection is key to reducing poverty and inequality. More importantly, the Government recognizes the need for a multidimensional approach to address poverty that includes a diversity of needs beyond income.

Aligned to reducing inequalities is also advancing the decent work agenda and creating opportunities for new jobs. By accelerating economic and social transformation the ability to access more and better paying jobs is envisaged to emerge in the near future. The Government also is cognizant of the inequalities as it relates to women and girls and how poverty and inequality disproportionately impact women and therefore is focusing strategies and actions that provide greater opportunities for women and girls.

For the government reducing inequalities also extends to providing opportunities for micro, small and medium sized enterprises to allow them to improve their competitiveness.

The Government remains focused on economic, social and environmental forces that could affect and contribute to widening inequality. Some of these factors include the impacts of a changing climate, technological innovation, climate change, and urbanization. Through policy development and implementation, the Government is taking strategic steps to ensure that these four factors do not lead to widening inequalities but close the gaps in equality and enhance equality of opportunity of opportunity. For example, technological change can be an engine of economic growth, but it can also exacerbate wage inequality and displace workers, while the impacts of climate change can result in the most vulnerable and certain groups such as PWDs suffering most. In the case of urbanization which offers unmatched opportunities, care is being taken to reduce

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<sup>25</sup> The HCI was launched in 2018 as part of the Human Capital Project, a global effort to accelerate progress toward a world where all children can achieve their full potential. Measuring the human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by her 18th birthday, the HCI highlights how current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers. In this way, it underscores the importance for governments and societies of investing in the human capital of their citizens.

the incidence of poverty in the capital city thereby reducing the existence of poverty and wealth in close proximity.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks Designed to Reduce Inequalities**

Across a range of sectors, the Government has been implementing policies and programmes that support reducing inequality by promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. Some of these include:

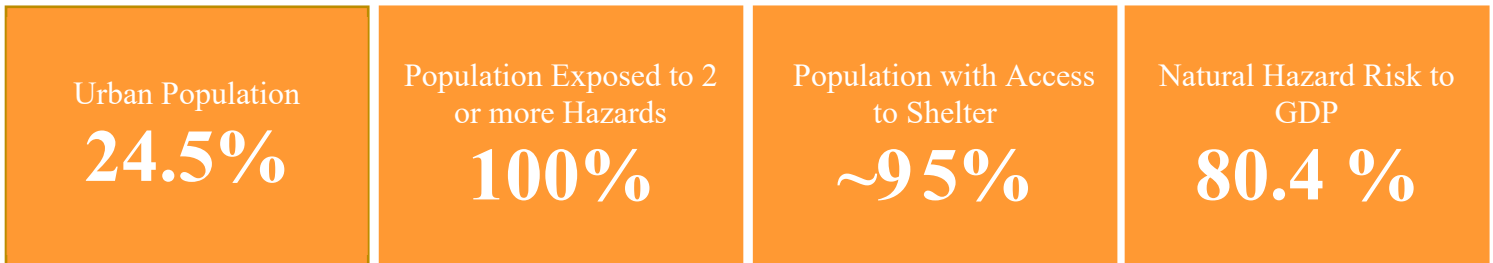
- Medium-Term Development Strategy
- Social Protection Act, 2020
- Disabilities and Equal Opportunities Act, 2017
- National Food and Nutrition Policy (2012)

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 10**

- Develop a multidimensional Poverty Index, as a means of addressing issues of inequality.
- Undertake national poverty surveys every 5 years to be able to better and more fulsomely address social development and inequality issues.
- Build the capacity to ensure that policy development is undertaken through an inequality lens.
- Enable the macroeconomic policy environment to be conducive to reducing inequality recognizing that fiscal and monetary policies can encourage greater equity. In addition to their direct impact on income distribution, they can also mobilize resources for social policies, including social protection.
- Pursue the path to a green and blue economy as key to eradicating poverty, increasing employment, enhancing food security, managing water resources, and increasing energy conservation and efficiency.
- Implement strategies to ensure that vulnerable persons and their families can, in the event of a natural disaster identify and access shelters that are equipped to handle the needs of women, single parent families, persons with disabilities, young men and women, and other persons with special circumstances.
- Expand the existing social protection mechanisms to consider unemployment benefits as well as sustainable livelihoods and access to insurance mechanisms for the vulnerable as well as financial inclusion.

## SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



The Government of Antigua and Barbuda is committed to transforming urban spaces and human settlements toward ensuring that they are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Managing rapid urbanization remains a challenge and involves ensuring adequate housing and infrastructure, addressing environmental impact of urban sprawl and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters. The urban population represents about 24.5 per cent of the total population.

Over 95 per cent of the population has access to basic services such as electricity, potable water, sanitation services, and shelter.

Antigua and Barbuda is among the top five countries most exposed to multiple hazards as 100 per cent of the land area and 100 per cent of the population is exposed to 2 or more hazards. Regarding risk to economic output, the country is also among the top 20 countries at risk from two or more hazards with an estimated 80.4 per cent of GDP that could potentially be impacted.<sup>26</sup> Critical infrastructure, concentrated in the vicinity of St. Johns, in Antigua, for power generation, drinking water, air and sea transport, among others are particularly at risk and alternative services are limited. One seaport serves the islands and is located on Antigua in the capital St. Johns. The islands are also served by a single international airport on Antigua and two smaller airfields on Barbuda. Damages to these facilities disrupts critical services to the functioning of the country.

Population growth and urbanization has put increasing pressure on land, housing and other resources. Squatting has been on the rise due to rising land prices. A relatively large portion of residential dwellings are built with wood and sheet metal roofing, which is less resilient to natural hazards such as tropical cyclones and manmade hazards such as fires. The issues associated with housing quality were further exposed after the passage of Hurricane Irma in 2017, with that sector suffering significant damage and loss. The capital city St. John's suffers from a myriad of urban issues related primarily to the expanding urban population and expanding economic activity due to its designation as the main commercial hub and tourism centre.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.gfdr.org/sites/default/files/publication/drm-country-note-2010-antigua-barbuda.pdf>

Despite the country's high level of human development, many citizens, are not able to afford decent housing. Focus is being placed on making adequate housing more accessible to citizens, reducing urban congestion, improving poor living conditions, and improving the aesthetics of housing. Specific actions include establishing new housing developments; replacing inadequate and dilapidated shelters on already owned lands; alleviating housing pressure especially in urban areas through the construction of flats in close association with the redevelopment of existing areas. A number of new housing projects are being implemented to allow public servants such as teachers, nurses and police to be able to access affordable housing.

Increase focus has been placed on urban and rural planning. Urban and rural planning is being integrated with land-use planning in order to maximize economic potential and efficiency through the appropriate location of economic and residential activity, reducing poverty and vulnerability and improving living standards. Emphasis is being placed on ensuring that adequate provisions are made to accommodate road and utility services within settlements, reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. As such, priority has been given to increasing access to adequate housing and improving the living conditions in communities and addressing urban congestion. Improving the aesthetics of housing is also being prioritized as part of efforts to improve national pride and sharing the benefits of economic growth equitably, while at the same time positively impacting the quality of the tourism product.

The COVID-19 pandemic may significantly impact persons who are already challenged by, inter alia, inadequate housing, poor waste management systems and overcrowded public transport. This exacerbates existing challenges linked to urbanization and the repercussion for sustainability cities.<sup>27</sup>

A National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) was ratified in 2012. It aims to provide a strategic, national spatial development framework that addresses current development issues, and provides a platform for feasible private and public sector development initiatives, reflecting local cultural values and aspirations over the next twenty years to 2032.

The country has adopted the 'Build Back Better' approach following the devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 and initiatives are being put in place to improve construction standards and support more resilient building code amendments. Antigua and Barbuda has embarked on updating and revising the national building code to ensure that climate change resilience and other adaptations are integrated into the construction process, thereby making significant strides in prioritizing the resilience of its building sector. Climate-resilient technologies and interventions are being implemented in public and community buildings (i.e. disaster services, healthcare, fire services, police, schools and community centres).

The preservation of a country's cultural and natural heritage is key to achieving SDG 11. To this end, the Government has been mapping natural and cultural heritage sites. The objective of this initiative is to develop a current and up-to-date inventory of all cultural, traditional and natural

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<sup>27</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.PM25.MC.M3?locations=AG>



heritage sites. This is to help to raise awareness and support for heritage preservation. The maps give the location and local history of each site. Over fifty sites in Antigua and Barbuda and the trails/paths leading to them have been GPRS mapped. These maps preserve the authenticity and accuracy of the story being told for each site as it also provides that text; and contributes to the diversification of the country's tourism product.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Housing Support to Barbuda after Hurricane Irma**

Antigua and Barbuda and the European Union (EU) have signed an agreement to support the reconstruction of houses in Barbuda after Hurricane Irma in 2017. The programme will rebuild to higher resilience standards 150 houses in Barbuda, following strict and adapted building codes that will allow 150 Barbudan families will return to a safe, high quality.

### **UNOPS Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments**

UNOPS is partnering with the government of Antigua and Barbuda and the private sector to launch an innovative affordable housing programme that will create jobs and opportunities for local communities. Over ten years to 2030, UNOPS – through its Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment (S3I) initiative – and Sustainable Housing Solutions (SHS) will utilize construction technology that promote sustainability, resilience, disease control and use of renewable energy to develop 10,000 affordable homes.

### **The Establishment of Management Plans and Mechanisms for the Betty's Hope Estate**

The objectives of these plans are to create a functioning management plan for Betty Hope to ensure the preservation of this component of the country's cultural heritage. Outside of the Nelson's Dockyard National Park, this is the largest heritage site on Antigua and has several of its ruins still intact. Hence, with the proper management mechanisms in place, this site will ensure that visitors and locals have a true understanding and appreciation for the country's history.

## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 11**

- Review and as necessary adjust arrangements or surveillance, review and control of developments that surround historical and cultural sites.
- Put in place appropriate institutional arrangements for implementing the National Physical Development Plan.
- Develop local area development planning and the preparation of local sustainable development plans.
- Continue efforts to significantly increase access to housing.
- Creating sustainable mechanisms to facilitate low- and middle-income beneficiaries who are most in need of housing and shelter especially those that are unable to access housing loans and are otherwise unable to finance adequate housing solutions.

## Dashboard of SDG Targets – Prosperity

This dashboard shows at a snapshot how Antigua and Barbuda is progressing with respect to the achievement of the SDG targets under Prosperity.

- Target met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
- Fair progress but acceleration is needed
- Moving away from the target/deterioration
- No trend data available
- Limited or no progress
- Insufficient data/not applicable

<b>SDG Targets #7 – Affordable and Clean Energy</b>	<b>Progress</b>
By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.	
By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.	
By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.	
<b>SDG Targets #8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth</b>	
Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.	
Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labor-intensive sectors.	
Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro- small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.	
Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.	
By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.	
By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.	
Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.	
By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.	
Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.	

<b>SDG #9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</b>	
Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.	
Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.	
Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.	
By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.	
Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.	
<b>SDG #10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries</b>	
By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.	
By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.	
Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.	
Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.	
<b>SDG Targets #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities</b>	
By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.	
By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.	
By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.	

Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.	
By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable Situations.	
By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.	
By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.	

AGENDA 2030 - THEME III  
**PROTECTING OUR PLANET  
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**

## SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Availability and access to potable water supply and sanitation services is one of the fundamental determinants of human health, quality of life and progress towards sustainable development. Over 97 per cent of the population has access to drinking water and 88 per cent of the population has access to sanitation services. Most households in Antigua and Barbuda (86 per cent) are served by the public water supply system that is managed by the Antigua Public Utilities Authority, with the remainder resorting to cisterns and wells. With respect to sanitation, about 85 per cent of households use water closets and a little over 10 per cent use pit-latrines. Even though there have been improvements in sanitation services over the years, the absence of a municipal wastewater treatment plant on the island of Antigua has led to a rapid increase in septic tanks and soak-aways many of which are poorly built and maintained leading to the pollution of the water table as well as downstream coastal waters.

The total average rainfall for both islands is estimated at 453 million m<sup>3</sup>/year and renewable water resources are estimated at about 52 million m<sup>3</sup>/year<sup>28</sup>. There are no perennial rivers, only intermittent rivers where water flows during part of the year.

**The population receives freshwater from 3 sources: 60 percent from reverse osmosis; 30 percent from surface water treatment plants; and 10 percent from ground water.**

The country's agricultural and municipal (domestic and commercial) water demands are being met by four desalination plants, two surface water treatment plants, numerous small ponds and five

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/ca0429en/CA0429EN.pdf>



well fields. The demand for water has drastically exceeded the available supply from ground and surface water sources. There also is a decrease in the storage capacity of watershed basins primarily due to increase sedimentation and the lack of runoff control measures in watershed areas. Groundwater resources are increasingly threatened by land-based sources of pollution, water availability for farming is placed at high risk.

Antigua and Barbuda ranks as one of the most water-stressed countries in the Caribbean (total renewable water resources per capita at 566.3 m<sup>3</sup>/year)<sup>29</sup>, therefore water availability is a serious issue. The FAO defines countries like Antigua and Barbuda, as water-scarce with less than 1000 m<sup>3</sup> of freshwater resources per capita.

Groundwater resources are increasingly being threatened by population growth, pollution, unsustainable development patterns and climate change. Climate change is expected to bring a decrease in water availability and a greater vulnerability to natural hazards along with the associated problems for water resource management. Other environmental issues and challenges identified that have implications for water resources management deforestation, land degradation, pollution of coastal water and underground water sources, and waste management. These factors have contributed to the country being increasingly dependent on desalination to produce freshwater for consumption which is more expensive to produce to meet national needs. One initiative that has been promoted to households by the Government is rainwater harvesting. By law, all new houses are fitted and equipped with rainwater collection and storage systems.

These challenges need to be factored in programmes and projects that are designed to ensure that the country maintains and improves the quality of its water and sanitation services. Drought also places the country at risk.

The management of water is guided by the Public Utilities Act 1973 which is outdated but under which responsibilities for water management are dispersed across several agencies within government. The Antigua Public Utilities Authority has legislative oversight to regulate the use of water sources but does not manage or regulate the disposal of wastewater which is managed under the Public Health Act which provides legislative powers to the Central Board of Health, another Government agency.

Antigua and Barbuda faces challenges with respect to the distribution of water due to aging infrastructure, leakages and high unaccounted-for water due to corrosion and leaking pipes and inadequate storage to keep pace with peak demands. Faulty and analog water meters which result in sometimes inaccurate and inconsistent meter readings impact billing. Watershed management issues also impact the quantity and quality of water. Water conservation and efficiency remain good options for water management especially considering the high cost of the energy used in producing and distributing water.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/ca0429en/CA0429EN.pdf>

In 2011, the Government prepared the national Integrated Water Resources Management Road Map, which focuses on integrating strategies and activities to improve water, wastewater, land management, and disaster preparedness.

The water sector has been identified as a priority for climate adaptation, owing to risks of decreasing freshwater supply and saltwater intrusion of aquifers, which has implications for the spread of vector borne and waterborne diseases, reduction in the availability of freshwater for consumption and changes to soil.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Rainwater Harvesting**

One initiative that has been promoted to households by the Government is rainwater harvesting – key to water conservation. Currently, by law all new houses are fitted and equipped with rainwater collection and storage systems.

### **Rehabilitation of the Barnes Hill Community Reservoir**



To better manage drought and its impacts on vulnerable groups, particularly young children and the elderly, the Barnes Hill Community Development Organization restored the Barnes Hill Community Reservoir – which was designed and built in the 1890's. The reservoir was restored with input from skilled community members who provided their labor. The Antigua and Barbuda Skills Training Enterprise program placed young women at the project site to build vocational and life skills. The project which was funded by the Global Environmental Facility/Small Grants Programme GEF/SGP also developed a nature park and community conservation area with many trees planted to include the famous sugar apples which Barnes Hill is known for.



## **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 6**

- Develop and promulgate a national water and sanitation policy and associated action plan that includes a sustainable framework for the management of water resources.
- Build a municipal sewage treatment plant for the better management of wastewater which would have the dual effect of reducing pollution of groundwater sources as well as the marine environment.
- Ensure that the existing Water Resources Road Map is strengthened to consider climate change and its associated impacts on water resources.
- Prepare the National Adaptation Plan for Water Resources.
- Create a sustainable financing mechanism to effectively address wastewater management
- Develop and implement a national water conservation programme.
- Promote environmental management systems in industry, including for tourism that would encourage more sustainable practices including those associated with water.
- Develop and promulgate a policy for water reuse and recycling given that Antigua and Barbuda suffers from serious droughts.

## SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Sustainable consumption and production patterns are key to allowing countries to facilitate advancing their green and blue economies and benefit from resource efficiency, waste prevention and management, and innovation in production processes and service delivery. Sustainable consumption and production patterns also align with the Government's thrust for more sustainable economic practices particularly in sectors such as tourism, energy and manufacturing.

In 2019, Antigua and Barbuda promulgated its Environmental Protection and Management Act which among other things, brings into sharp focus the need to provide for sustainable environmental protection and management of the nation's natural resources to allocate administrative responsibility for the management of environmental matters; to give effect to Antigua and Barbuda's treaty obligations with respect to the environment; and, to provide the framework and financial mechanism to satisfy the requirements of the Act. This modern Act covers the development of environmental policies and plans, pollution control, the environmental impact assessment process, natural resources management, access to genetic resources and sharing of benefits, environmental management systems among other areas.

Antigua and Barbuda ranks second in the world for per capita waste generation. The twin-island nation generates 12 times the world average of waste at 5.5 kg/person/day, or 7 times higher than the European standard. Of the top thirty global polluters per capita, ten are from the Caribbean region These are Trinidad & Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis, Guyana, Barbados, St. Lucia, Bahamas, Grenada, Anguilla and Aruba. This is an area of critical concern.

Ninety-five per cent of all households benefit from public collection of solid waste, while most businesses employ a private collection system. Notwithstanding, there are problems related to waste management. There is one waste disposal site on Antigua which is not a sanitary landfill and which is not properly lined and sealed so that leachates of toxic materials and other chemical wastes can enter groundwater and other ecosystems such as mangroves. Expansion of the urban population is exacerbating the waste management issue.

Plastic pollution has been an issue in Antigua and Barbuda, negatively impacting its marine environment and coastal communities and adding to its waste management problem. In 2016, ahead of all other countries in the Caribbean, the Government banned single use plastic bags and Styrofoam. In 2017, the Government banned the importation and use of food service containers and hot and cold beverage cups. In 2018, the ban was extended to plastic utensils, fruit, food and meat trays commonly used by supermarkets to package goods. Other attempts at addressing the issues of waste has included revising the anti-littering laws and increasing the penalties for littering.

The Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the hotel industry launched the Green Tourism Initiative to foster efforts in the tourism industry to achieve the triple bottom line objectives of environmental sustainability, sustained profits and social responsibility. Through this initiative, hotels have been implementing programmes related to energy conservation and use of renewable energy, water conservation, waste disposal practices, recycling, green building practices, customer education, and other conservation practices.

The Green Tourism Initiative now includes the Green Fins Programme. This is a UNEP Certification Programme and Antigua and Barbuda is the only country to have instituted this in the Western Hemisphere. It is the only recognized environmental set of standards with a comprehensive management approach to provide guidance and support for diving and snorkelling business owners to promote best practices. The programme will continue in 2021 as the COVID-19 Pandemic suspended its implementation.

Progress has been made in reducing air pollution evidenced by a trend decline of the mean annual exposure of fine particulate matter. PM<sub>2.5</sub> air pollution in 2017 stood 18.6 microgram per cubic meter, down from 23. 2 micrograms per cubic meter in 2011<sup>30</sup>.

To address many of the issues related to environmental sustainability, the Government has developed a national fund, the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund), to serve as the primary channel for environmental, climate mitigation and adaptation funding from international and domestic sources. The SIRF Fund has been established as a Special Fund under the Finance Administration Act (2006). This status as a special fund enables Antigua and Barbuda to earmark income from a range of sources to achieve its environmental and climate change goals.

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<sup>30</sup> World Bank, World Bank Open Data, Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.PM25.MC.M3?locations=AG>. (Accessed on June 7, 2021)

## Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities

### Civil Society Organizations Implement Waste Management Projects

CSOs have been doing significant work in waste management, focusing on projects that support the 3Rs of reduce, reuse and recycle towards advancing a circular economy. Some of these projects include Adopt a Coastline – Youth Stewardship Programme. The project promotes the sustainable management of coastal and marine ecosystems, the rehabilitation and protection of key natural resources, and the improvement of local livelihoods. To achieve these goals, the project builds the capacity of youth to become active environmental stewards to raise awareness among the local population about the benefits of marine protection and waste management, and the economic potential of developing and marketing products from recycled materials. Under the project, waste and trash from beaches are being recycled into bespoke items for sale.



Another CSO, ZERO Waste Antigua Barbuda is involved in beach cleaning to protect the habitats of marine animals, turtles and for protection of the islands' ecosystems. The organization is involved in a National Mercury Management Program to phase down and phase out Mercury as well as recycling of metals.

### Participation in the Clean Seas Campaign

Antigua and Barbuda is a part of the Clean Seas Campaign which is being implemented to eliminate the needless use of disposable plastics and protect oceans and rivers from a toxic tide of pollution that is endangering livelihoods and killing wildlife.

### Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 12

Sustainable consumption and production practices requires the efforts of the government, CSOs and the private sector and ensures that production patterns are based on efficiency and the use of cleaner technologies. It also requires that all citizens play their part in sustainability efforts by ensuring that they participate in activities to reduce their ecological footprint such as reducing waste, conserving water and energy and engaging in more sustainable consumption patterns such as reducing use of plastics, among others.



- Invest in a sanitary landfill for Antigua and give consideration for the establishment of waste disposal sites for hazardous waste as well as white waste and e-waste.
- Develop a green procurement policy for the Government to better facilitate government ministries and agencies to contribute to creating a green economy through its procurement practices. This is important since governments have a significant share in the purchase of goods and services and can play a key role in stimulating the demand for environmentally friendly goods and services.

- Expand the sustainability and resource efficiency considerations that are incorporated into national tourism policies and plans, thereby creating a more sustainable tourism sector and associated tourism products.



- Ensure that future local and foreign investments take into account cleaner technologies in production and also take on board environmental stewardship guidelines to achieve higher levels of resource efficiencies.
- Create additional mechanisms to engage in more recycling programmes to reduce the amount of waste disposed.
- Develop and roll out public awareness campaigns related to waste management, recycling and sustainable consumption.
- Pollution sources are identified and mapped and the polluter pays principle is fully understood nationally and strategies developed to implement it.
- Pollution in the energy sector (electricity and transport) is reduced by 50% to be achieved by ensuring that 25MW of off grid and islanded electricity and the infrastructure for electric vehicles are put in place.





## SDG 13: Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

<p># of Persons Affected by Natural Disasters 2000 - 2019</p> <p><b>32,000</b></p>	<p># of Hurricanes between 1998 and 2018</p> <p><b>11</b></p>	<p>Chance of at least 1 hurricane in every 3 years</p> <p><b>33%</b></p>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup></b> Science and Innovation Centre for climate change and clean technology in the Caribbean</p>
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As a small island developing State, Antigua and Barbuda is highly vulnerable to climate change and its associated impacts, including extreme weather events, more frequent and severe tropical cyclones, sea level rise, increasing temperatures, changing precipitation patterns. Human health and well-being are also threatened by climate change, with threats including water insecurity (due to saltwater intrusion of freshwater aquifers because of sea level rise and drought); heat stress; spread of vector borne, waterborne and foodborne diseases; and injury and death from extreme weather events. Climate change also has other socioeconomic impacts including threats to the tourism and agriculture sectors as well housing and other critical infrastructure.

Eleven hurricanes have affected Antigua and Barbuda over the period 1998 – 2018. Between 2000 – 2019 over 32,000 persons have been affected by natural hazards and total damages caused by these disasters are more than US\$200 million. On average, there is a 33% chance of at least one hurricane affecting (passing within 120 miles) Antigua and Barbuda in any given year or roughly once every three years. The year 2017 was an exceptional year as Antigua and Barbuda was impacted by three major hurricanes: Irma, Jose and Maria. Hurricane Irma was the strongest storm ever to hit the Caribbean Leeward Islands. Hurricane Irma made landfall on Barbuda on 6 September 2017 and damaged or destroyed almost all infrastructure on the island of Barbuda, forcing evacuation of the population. Hurricane Irma impacted more than 25,000 persons which is the highest total number of persons affected by a single weather-related event in the island-nation. The post disaster needs assessment undertaken after Irma concluded that the total damage of Hurricanes Irma and Maria for Antigua and Barbuda was approximately US\$ 136.1 million, with losses amounting to approximately US\$ 18.9 million.

Recognizing the need for immediate liquidity following a natural disaster, the Government has put in place disaster risk financing strategies and is a member of CCRIF SPC (formerly the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility) - the world's first multi-country, multi-peril risk pool based on parametric insurance. The Government purchases parametric insurance coverage from CCRIF for tropical cyclone, excess rainfall and earthquake from CCRIF and has been a member of CCRIF since its inception in 2007.

The products that CCRIF provides are designed to pre-finance short-term liquidity helping to close the protection gap, reduce budget volatility and allow countries respond to their most pressing needs post disaster. Being able to access quick liquidity after a natural disaster allows the government to quickly support the most vulnerable in its population. Following Hurricane Irma in 2017, the Government

### HIGHEST PRIORITY CLIMATE-SENSITIVE HEALTH RISKS FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Direct effects	
Health impacts of extreme weather events	✓
Heat-related illness	
Indirect effects	
Water security and safety (including waterborne diseases)	✓
Food security and safety (including malnutrition and foodborne diseases)	✓
Vector-borne diseases	✓
Air pollution	
Allergies	✓
Diffuse effects	
Mental/psychosocial health	✓
Noncommunicable diseases	✓
Mitigation actions to reduce emissions through sustainable procurement	
Mitigation measures to reduce emissions of health facilities	
Mitigation measures by coordinating with other sectors	

Source: Adapted and updated from the PAHO Health and Climate Country Survey 2017 (4).

received a payout under its tropical cyclone policy from CCRIF of approximately US\$6.79 million within 14 days of the event.

Climate change also is expected to affect other areas of Antigua and Barbuda's development and present impacts on food security, human health and economic sectors such as tourism. Climate change may already be exacerbating the malnutrition and the metabolic and lifestyle risk factors associated with NCDs.

### **Climate Change Projections for Antigua and Barbuda include:**

- 30-50% less average annual rainfall by 2090 compared to late 20th century norms
- Sea Level Rise between 1.5 and 3 mm per year, which will increasingly put inland freshwater resources at risk of saline intrusion
- One-meter Sea level rise would impact 10 per cent of major tourism resorts, all seaports, and 2% of major road networks
- Increased exposure to vector-borne diseases and the spread of water-borne illnesses
- Increase in intensity, if not frequency, of hurricanes posing an increasing threat to the population and the economy

Antigua and Barbuda is also being impacted by drought. Drought ranks as the single most common cause of severe food shortages in developing countries and is a key issue for food security. Antigua and Barbuda has been plagued by severe droughts every 5 – 10 years since recorded history.

The Government continues to emphasize climate change adaptation, comprehensive disaster risk management and sound environmental practices and is accelerating investment in resilience, disaster preparedness and response as well as localized, people-centred vulnerability reduction. There are many competing development and economic growth priorities, and the Government recognizes that spending for adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage response to climate change is constrained by the country's high levels of debt and its high-income status, with the latter resulting in its inability to access the much-needed international grants and concessional public finance to meet its needs. Knowing that the costs of not acting to adapt to climate change are likely to be high, the Government has taken the proactive step and established a national fund, the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund), to serve as the primary channel for environmental, climate mitigation and adaptation funding from international and domestic sources. The SIRF Fund was established as a Special Fund under the Finance Administration Act (2006). This status as a special fund enables Antigua and Barbuda to earmark income from a range of sources to achieve its environmental and climate change goals.



There also is a focus on communicating climate change issues to key economic sectors, the private sector and the education sector in particular. For example, a Teacher Resource Guide on Climate Change has been developed and will be disseminated in the secondary schools to assist teachers in communicating information on climate change.

Antigua and Barbuda is a member of the Alliance of Small Island States within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. Accordingly, the Government has been putting in place investments in resilience, disaster preparedness and activities that would reduce the vulnerability of the population. The country also continues to take deliberate actions to reduce the budget volatility from natural disasters and has in place disaster risk financing strategies and ex-ante disaster risk financing instruments.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **Sustainable Island Resource Framework**

The Sustainable Island Resource Framework (SIRF) Fund and the SIRF Regulations serve as the primary channel for environmental, climate mitigation and adaptation funding from international and domestic sources. The SIRF Fund was established as a Special Fund under the Finance Administration Act. This status as a special fund enables Antigua and Barbuda to earmark income from a range of sources to achieve its environmental and climate change goals. The Fund also provides financial resources to assist the vulnerable communities and civil society organizations to build their resilience to climate change.

### **Caribbean's First Science and Innovation Centre for Climate Change and Clean Technology**

With the support of UNOPS, Antigua and Barbuda launched the Caribbean's first Science and Innovation Centre to support innovation in climate change adaptation and development and use of clean technology. This dedicated facility is designed to also foster local entrepreneurship in the areas of climate change and clean technology. Importantly, the centre also focuses on engaging youth in climate change and entrepreneurship.

### **Enhancing Civil Society's Access to and Readiness for Climate Finance**

The Government understands the important role CSOs and NGOs play in Antigua and Barbuda's development and the role that it can play in the national climate change response, especially since they are well positioned to lead bottom-up approaches and develop and implement initiatives at the local level to reduce vulnerability.

The Government in collaboration the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) are implementing a project titled "Enhancing Caribbean civil society's access and readiness for climate finance, funded by a US\$1.29 million grant from the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Mobilizing funds from GCF and other climate funds is key to better support civil society and channel resources to the most vulnerable communities and groups. The goal of the project is to build the capacity of CSOs including national non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and resource user groups such as

farmer and fisherfolk associations and cooperatives, to access and deliver climate finance and build climate resilience. It will enhance CSOs' knowledge, skills and organisational structures, and strengthen institutional mechanisms to enhance civil society voice and participation in climate change decision-making nationally and regionally.

### Accreditation of the Department of the Environment to the Adaptation Fund

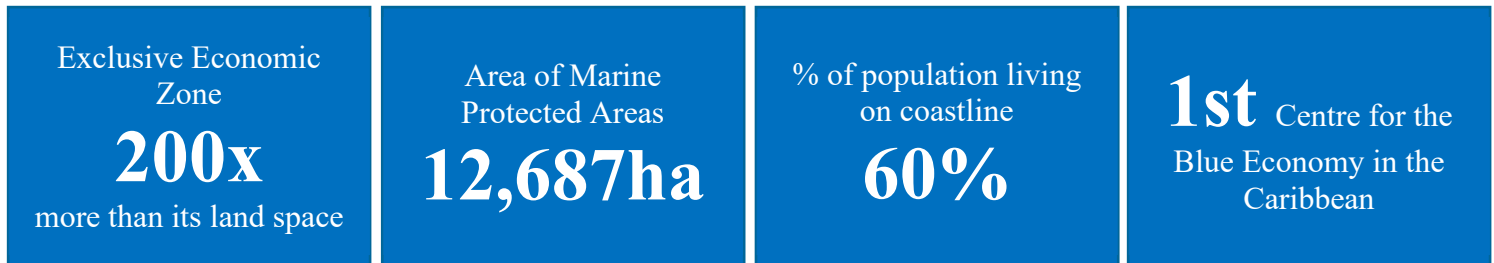
The Department of the Environment gained accreditation to both the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund, which has provided a pathway to access additional resources for climate change adaptation.

### Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 13

- Climate change adaptation especially to climate proof infrastructure requires vast amounts of capital which small islands such as Antigua and Barbuda cannot readily afford. This calls for increased access to concessional financing even for those islands that may be in a high human development category or considered high income countries.
- Development of national adaptation plans for health, agriculture, food security, tourism among others based on the results of vulnerability and adaptation assessments that also should be implemented.
- Increase focus on data and risk modelling as key to climate change adaptation across all sectors.
- Legislating the inclusion of nature-based solutions to build resilience in future infrastructure projects/programmes.
- Include climate risk analysis in spatial planning.
- Ensure that at least 40 percent of homes in Antigua and Barbuda are 'climate proofed' and fully able to withstand category 5 hurricane.
- Invest in climate proofing other critical infrastructure such as clinics and hospitals so that they can continue to operate fully during and after a tropical cyclone, severe rainfall events and during severe drought and excessive heat conditions.
- Climate proof waterways to prevent flooding in the event that there is 10 inches or more of rain in less than 12 hours.
- Farmers can have access to desalinated water during a drought at a reasonable cost.
- Prepare training materials and amend relevant curricula at the primary and secondary school levels to ensure that climate change issues are incorporated into the schools' curricula.

## SDG 14: Life Below Water

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Antigua and Barbuda is a large ocean state with an exclusive economic zone 200 times larger than its land mass and is currently repositioning the twin island nation to serve as the home and hub of the OECS blue economy efforts. Recognizing this, the Government continues to place strategic focus on fisheries, oceans, and the marine economy. In 2021, the Government established the Department of the Blue Economy and approved the country’s first Maritime Blue Economy Plan (MBEP). The MBEP sets out priorities and actions to broaden economic opportunities in sustainable manners towards enhancing economic resilience, improving socioeconomic standards, and creating opportunities for climate adaptation and reducing vulnerabilities. The Plan also allows the country to use in a sustainable manner its marine space and focus on areas beyond tourism thereby exploring new economic opportunities for the benefit of the people of the twin-island nation. Additionally, the Government is supporting the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus.

Estimates indicate that Antigua and Barbuda, as well as the wider Caribbean region, stand to benefit from this emerging industry that is worth approximately USD\$2.5 trillion through the diversification of the economy in areas such as aquaculture, marine renewable energy, biotechnology and sea vegetable farming in products such as sea cucumbers<sup>31</sup>.

Antigua and Barbuda has four Marine Protected Areas in its waters and coastal areas, with a combined area of over 12,687 hectares. The marine environment is impacted by land-based sources of pollution particularly from untreated sewage, dredging, sediment loading due to soil erosion and from the passage of hurricanes. The islands’ coral reefs which contribute to the formation and protection of beaches, are under continuous stress both from both the natural and manmade impacts. The coral reef ecosystem around the islands is considered the most diverse in the Eastern Caribbean. A National Reef Health Index (RHI) conducted in 2016 to describe the

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/marcom/newsroom/entry/8026>

overall condition of reefs, reef health and their resilience gave a score of 2.3 (out of 5). Four primary coral health indicators are assessed:

- Coral cover: proportion of reef surface covered by live stony corals which form the three-dimensional network of the reef.
- Macro-algal cover: proportion of reef surface covered by fleshy algae.
- Herbivorous fish abundance
- Commercial fish abundance

The main driver of this degradation is anthropogenic influences, including over-exploitation of marine resources and sediment and pollution from inland sources. To address some of these issues, the Government is currently in the process of developing National Marine Protected Area legislation to support existing and future protected areas.

With respect to the fisheries sector, the Government continues to focus on the sustainable growth of the sector through diversification of the industry and maintaining access to international markets. Notwithstanding, the biodiversity of the fishing resources in the country is increasingly threatened by overexploitation, habitat destruction, overfishing, pollution, destructive fishing methods, climate change, and the improper placement of fish traps.

Overall, the fisheries sector plays an important role in food security, both as a source of food to the local population, and a source of employment and income. Fish consumption is quite high at 55 kg one of the highest consumption levels in the world, although the real consumption of nationals is probably less, as there is unrecorded fish export. The Fisheries sub-sector makes the greatest contributor to agriculture GDP. Because the vast majority of the population or about 60 per cent lives within a few kilometers of the coastline, the fisheries sector plays an important role in rural development.

Fisheries communities are an important part of the population. In Barbuda, about one quarter of the population is somewhat involved in fisheries or is part of families involved in fisheries. In 2015 a total of 1877 people were registered to engage in the fishery and aquaculture sector. Of these, 1,776 were based in Antigua and 101 in Barbuda. Four percent of fishers were women and the remaining 96 per cent men.

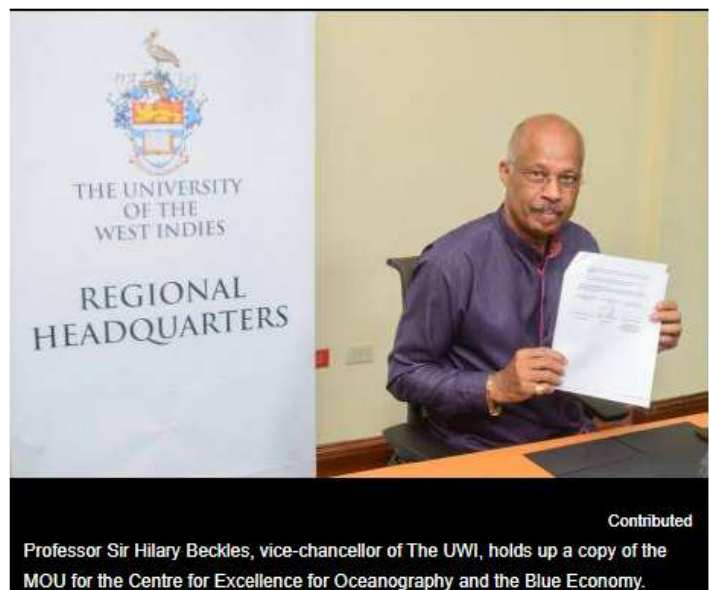
The fisheries sector is governed by the Fisheries Act of 2006, which was entered into force in 2013. The Act applies to the Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) and fisheries zone. Other national policies also support the development and sustainability of the fisheries sector including the Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Antigua and Barbuda. This Policy has a focus on the replacement of imports through domestic production as well as promoting the sustainable exploitation of the country's fisheries resources and exploring greater investments in aquaculture to increase the availability of fish and fish products. The Policy also promotes sustainable fisheries management practices. From as far back as 2010, the Government adopted the Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

Antigua and Barbuda is distinguished by its fine and extensive white sand beaches which provide the foundation of the country's tourism-based economy. Antigua for example, is known as the land of 365 beaches. One issue with respect to beaches is that of Sargassum seaweed, which has become a serious problem not only for Antigua and Barbuda but for most of the Caribbean region in recent years. Sargassum seaweed not only causes the landscape and beaches to deteriorate but it also is accompanied by foul odors caused by seaweed filling the coast, as well as the generation of hydrogen sulfide and the decrease of oxygen concentration in the sea posing a great threat to the marine ecosystem, and the country's tourism and fisheries industries.

## Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities

### Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda will be supporting the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus. The centre aims to advance intellectual progress and strengthen institutional capacity in the areas of marine science and the blue economy while capitalizing on the economic opportunities for the Caribbean within this emerging sector.



### Commonwealth Blue Charter

Antigua and Barbuda is co-championing the sustainable stewardship of the Commonwealth's Blue Charter demonstrating its commitment to leveraging ocean resources wisely, sustainably and responsibly, while tackling unemployment, food insecurity and poverty. The Commonwealth Blue Charter is one of the most effective platforms for countries to proactively collaborate across borders to tackle shared ocean challenges. The Commonwealth Blue Charter is a commitment made by leaders of all 54 member countries to work together in address ocean challenges and fulfil global commitments on ocean sustainability.

### Project for Strengthening Use and Management of Coastal Fisheries Resource in the CARICOM Countries

The Government recently received a grant from the Japanese Government to enable the diversification of the fisheries sector and create the enabling environment to allow Antigua and Barbuda to access international markets for fisheries, particularly the European Union and Asia for the large pelagic type fish. Under this project, equipment will be procured to enable the move away from coastal fisheries into large-scale pelagic fisheries. These will include aggregating

devices, a hydraulic boat lift, pick-up trucks and a wastewater treatment aerator system to improve the operational efficiency and hygienic environment, which is key for the fisheries industry.

## Eliminating Subsidies for Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing



*Antigua and Barbuda's Delegation to the World Trade Organisation (WTO)- H.E Colin Murdoch, Permanent Representative and Ms. Joy-Marie King, Director of International Trade engaged in negotiations to secure an agreement on eliminating subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing.*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently engaged at the WTO in negotiations to secure an agreement on eliminating subsidies for illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. These negotiations were to be completed in 2020 but the WTO faced a few setbacks including the COVID 19 Pandemic and a period of transition while it conducted consultations to appoint the new Directed General. It is anticipated that by November 2021 in time for the 12th Ministerial Conference an agreement on Fisheries Subsidies will be on the table for approval.

### **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 14**

Antigua and Barbuda will continue to pursue the following strategies and actions to conserve and sustainably use its marine resources:

- Strengthening of the country's the fiscal policy framework to support this transition to a green and blue economy.
- Finalize and promulgate the draft policy on exploration and development of the Blue Economy.
- Address the challenges faced by the fisheries sector such as imports of cheap fish products from other CARICOM countries, problems with fish poisoning; poaching by fishers from

other islands; restricted marketing of fish in European Union countries, resulting from the stringent health and quality standards; limited investment capital to equip boats for deep sea fishing in order to harvest migratory species; higher levels of enforcement.

- Develop and promulgate the National Marine Protected Area legislation to support better management of marine protected areas.
- Generation of energy from ocean currents, wave motion and temperature differences.
- Exploration and sustainable extraction of minerals.



## SDG 15: Life on Land

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



Environmental  
Performance Index

**63**

Endemic Species

**209**

Watershed Area

**43%** of Land  
Area

Forested Area

**22%**

Antigua and Barbuda ranked 63 out of 180 countries on the 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) with a score of 48.5. The island-nation ranked the highest among Caribbean countries. The EPI ranks 180 countries on 32 performance indicators in the following 11 issue categories: air quality, sanitation and drinking water, heavy metals, waste management, biodiversity and habitat, ecosystem services, fisheries, climate change, pollution emissions, agriculture, and water resources. These categories track performance and progress on two broad policy objectives, environmental health and ecosystem vitality. The nation's score for environmental health shows improvements across all the issue categories since the last report of 2018, including water quality and air quality and exposure to waste and heavy metals. Issue categories that showed significant improvements related to the twin-island nation's management of its wetlands and to the designation and management of protected areas. Areas of concern on the EPI included fish stocks and the rate of growth of sulphur dioxides.

Antigua and Barbuda's economic and social development is heavily dependent on its environmental resources and their interrelated ecological functions. Antigua and Barbuda has a rich diversity of natural resources whose interactions form the basis for the country's culture and economy. Being the largest of all the Leeward Islands in the Lesser Antilles, Antigua, and its sister island of Barbuda, are home to a number of unique and some endemic species. The biodiversity is unique due to geographic isolation and environmental difference, which have played an important role in the evolution of the species. Sustainable use and management of natural resources is key to the nation's sustainability.

The Department of the Environment is the government agency that leads the management of the natural environment and ecosystems. The Department is guided by the Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA) 2015 and has a broad mandate for environmental policy in areas such as water and air quality, pollution prevention, ecosystems management, financing strategies to better manage natural resources and as well as programming priorities for the SIRF Fund,



climate change, physical planning, environmental education, and coordinate the implementation of Antigua and Barbuda commitments to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Some of the threats to its natural resources and ecosystems include unplanned housing, tourism development, over grazing of livestock, fires, land-based sources of pollution from sewage and leaching of the waste disposal site, sand mining and dredging.

Antigua has 83 watersheds which are sub-divided into thirteen distinct watersheds, with six of these highlighted as being critical based on their socio-economic, agro-ecological and hydrological values. These 6 watersheds constitute 43 per cent of Antigua's land area; sustain 50 per cent of its forests, and 90 per cent of its agricultural crops. They also contain 90 per cent of Antigua's groundwater supply and 90 per cent of its surface water reservoirs.

Antigua and Barbuda has four main protected areas, including the offshore islands of North Sound and Codrington Lagoon of Barbuda, the latter of which is a Ramsar wetland site. Antigua and Barbuda has some 209 known species of amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles according to figures from the World Conservation Monitoring Centre<sup>32</sup>. Of these, 2.9 per cent are endemic, meaning they exist in no other country, and 3.3 per cent are threatened. Antigua and Barbuda is home to at least 1,158 species of vascular plants, of which 1.9 per cent are endemic. According to a 2006 report issued by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the number of threatened species included 2 species of birds, 5 types of reptiles, 11 species of fish, and 4 species of plants. Endangered species in the nation included the Antiguan ground lizard, the West Indian whistling duck, and the Antiguan racer. Recognizing the importance of its biodiversity, the Government has in place a National Biodiversity and Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP), 2014 - 2020 and in National Reports to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity have set relevant targets for biodiversity conservation. The Government also is the process of updating the NBSAP as well as preparing the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in time for UNFCCC COP 2021.

A 22.7 per cent or about 10,000 hectares of Antigua and Barbuda is forested, with these forests containing a million metric tons of carbon in living forest biomass.

Land degradation is an issue and is the result of inappropriate land use practices including the improper disposal of wastes that include wastewater and oily waste residues. Land degradation is leading to loss of biodiversity, loss of economic productivity of rain-fed or irrigated land used for crops, range, and pasture. Due to issues related to land degradation the Government developed the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought. The Plan has been developed to identify the land degradation profile of the nation, determine the priority issues and areas and formulate a national implementation plan to address the issues. They have also completed the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) – Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP) and have established national LDN targets.

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<sup>32</sup> [https://rainforests.mongabay.com/deforestation/2000/Antigua\\_and\\_Barbuda.htm](https://rainforests.mongabay.com/deforestation/2000/Antigua_and_Barbuda.htm)

With respect to agriculture, unsustainable agricultural practices, particularly those related to the sugar industry, have over the years reduced the fertility of the limited agricultural land. There continues to be pollution from inorganic fertilizers and pesticides due to high levels of application. In the agriculture sector, strategic focus is placed on integrated pest management although resources are limited and constrains implementation of programmes. The agricultural sector also is impacted by natural hazards which are exacerbated by climate change.

Despite several challenges the Government has been putting in place a range of policies, strategies and interventions to support the protection of the natural environment. The promulgation of the Environmental Protection and Management Act, 2019 brings much opportunity to ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources and ecosystems.

## **Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities**

### **An Integrated Approach to Physical Adaptation and Community Resilience - Northwest Mckinnon's Watershed**

The Northwest Mckinnon Watershed is a high risk and populated watershed on the northwest coast of Antigua. The area around the watershed is vulnerable to climate change, and it continues to suffer from urban expansion. The area supports low income and lower middle-income families. This project focuses on the integrated approach to physical adaption and community resilience and seeks to reduce vulnerability of the community, by increasing the ability of the watershed to handle extreme rainfall, while increasing the resilience of the built environment simultaneously to cope with the multiple stressors of climate change. This integrated approach will ensure that the community will be able to withstand projected climate change impacts while the ecosystems can accommodate increased rainfall. The areas of focus of the project are:

- Implementing concrete adaptation actions that support natural and physical drainage systems along the 3-km urban and semi-urban waterways to meet projected climate change impacts associated with extreme hydro-meteorological events and disease vectors. These interventions will adopt a variety of approaches including ecosystem-based adaptation, such as wetland restoration to address disease vectors, and hard and soft engineering solutions, such as drainage and retention ponds, to build resilience to the latest climate change projections.
- To disburse concessional loans through a revolving fund mechanism to vulnerable households and businesses to meet new adaptation guidelines and standards for built infrastructure to withstand extreme climate variability. These interventions include for example water harvesting, installation of hurricane shutters, mosquito screens, water storage etc.
- Supporting social adaptive capacity and local ownership of adaptation through community-awarded contracts and climate resilient community buildings such as community centers, schools, and clinics. This will include interventions to allow the buildings to withstand hurricanes and droughts and serve as shelters.

## Civil Society in Action – The Environmental Awareness Group

The Environmental Awareness Group (EAG), a nongovernment organization focusing on environmental conservation, has undertaken several initiatives to advance progress towards achieving several SDGs. With respect to SDG 15, the main areas of focus of the EAG cover Habitat Restoration, Private Landowner Environmental Management Capacity Building and Protection Area Declaration. Some activities which have been undertaken to date include restoration and rewilding of offshore islands, surveying, and monitoring of wildlife (birds, endemic lizards, invertebrates, endemic endangered Antiguan Racers (snakes). Inclusion of biodiversity, critical for tracking progress and informing decision making, in national reporting to regional and international sources and for National Environmental Policy and Project Planning. The reach of programme intervention has also extended to outreach and education including youth via Floating Classroom (experiential learning) with over 3,000 children benefiting. In addition to children and youth other beneficiaries include teachers, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and government agencies. The range of beneficiaries reflect the understanding that all stakeholders play important roles. Other notable achievements from the work of the EAG include contributing to the development of the National Biodiversity Action (NBSAP), leading rehabilitation efforts for Redonda and its designation as a protected area.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EAG was forced to make some adjustments, especially since projects were developed to involve significant engagement and interaction. Floating Classroom have been transformed into a virtual classroom experience, supported by Teachers' Resource Guides and Activity Booklets for children. This change has garnered a positive outcome in the form of expanding the reach for educating the wider public through videos which will readily be available on platforms such as YouTube.


### **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 15**



- Focus must be placed on the valuation of natural capital and biodiversity as a means ensuring their sustainable management and use as well as determining trade-offs between the environment and economic activity.
- Develop and employ methodologies for the economic valuation, assessment and accounting of natural resources.
- Make provision for the Access and Benefits Sharing (ABS) regime to be rolled out and a research center within the Bendals Botanical Gardens site in Antigua be established to promote the use of plants for medicinal purposes.
- The Sustainable Island Resource Framework (SIRF) Fund is fully operational and programming over US\$15M per year in funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation.


- Rolling out public education programmes to increase environmental awareness and good environmental stewardship practices.
- The System of Protected Areas is managed through public-private partnerships involving communities and NGOs.

## Dashboard of SDG Targets – Planet


This dashboard shows at a snapshot how Antigua and Barbuda is progressing with respect to the achievement of the SDG targets under **Planet**.

SDG Target #6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	A & B Progress
By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.	Green
By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.	Yellow
By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.	Yellow
By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.	Yellow
By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels.	Yellow
By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.	Yellow
Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.	Yellow
<b>SDG #12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</b> 	White
Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries.	Orange
By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.	Yellow
By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.	Orange
By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.	Yellow
Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.	Orange

Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.	
By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.	
<b>SDG #13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</b>	
Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.	
Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.	
Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.	
<b>SDG #14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</b>	
By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.	
By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.	
By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.	
By 2030, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.	
By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.	

<p><b>SDG 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</b></p>		
<p>By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.</p>		
<p>By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.</p>		
<p>By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.</p>		
<p>Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.</p>		
<p>By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.</p>		





AGENDA 2030 - THEME IV  
**FOSTERING PEACEFUL,  
JUST AND AN  
INCLUSIVE SOCIETY**



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**



## SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Signed and Ratified  
Escazu Agreement to  
enhance civil society  
participation in  
governance

Murder Rate  
**3/100,000**

Crime Rate  
**Lowest**  
in the Caribbean

Sexual Offences Model  
Court  
**1<sup>st</sup>**  
in Caribbean

In the Medium-Term Development Strategy Antigua and Barbuda commits to initiate "... a harmonious, prosperous and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents." Antigua has a stable political environment with a democratic political system which is based on free and fair elections. This has been supported by a stable macro-economic environment, a pursuit for socioeconomic development and an independent and sound judicial system and membership in an integrated OECS legal system known for efficiency, transparency, and reliability.

Overall, the island-nation continues to perform relatively well on many of the global governance indicators. In terms of voice and accountability, Antigua and Barbuda, scored on average between 1996 and 2019, 0.53 points with a minimum of 0.32 points in 2003 and a maximum of 0.76 points in 2019. This means that the country has a relatively good framework for allowing citizens to participate in governance matters, allowing freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media. The Freedom of Information Act (2004) gives citizens the right to access official documents, with the exception of confidential reports. It also facilitates mechanisms through which documents can be obtained under the supervision of an information officer.

Sasha Gay Middleton from Antigua and Barbuda emphasises the importance of taking a bottom-up approach and working with communities when linking national climate action with development priorities.  
[@SEIclimate](#) [@DIE\\_GDI](#) [#cop23](#)  
[#NordicPavilion](#)



The landscape of NGOs and CSOs has been known to be an effective voice for change on issues of equality, calling for transparency and justice and working to keep the power and the spirit of volunteerism and active citizenship alive. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to recognize and create the enabling environment for CSOs to play meaningful roles in governance and policy making processes. To solidify the importance of CSOs, in 2020, Antigua and Barbuda signed and ratified the Escazu Agreement, the first international environmental agreement which guarantees CSOs the right to access information, public participation and access to justice to reduce conflicts since it provides mechanisms for contributions to decision making. Since 2015 for example, the Government has facilitated the participation of CSOs at United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings, providing registration and some financial support to them. Essentially, the country encourages growth and development of civil society organizations as a critical element in the process of governance.



*Antigua and Barbuda was the only Caribbean county represented at the Open Multi stakeholder dialogue on the operationalization of the Local Community and Indigenous people's platform which provided many learning and sharing opportunities. and supported the processes leading up to the LCI. Antigua and Barbuda's CSOs work and actions were shared and documented on various panel presentations on the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) platform with the twin-island nation leading some of the sessions.*

Strong focus is placed by the government on governance issues as it relates to rule of law, justice, transparency and accountability, the delivery of public goods and services and the participation of citizens in various developmental processes. The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators shows that Antigua and Barbuda scored 0.28 (on a -2.5 to 2.5) scale on control of corruption and 0.4 on rule of law. This indicates that Antigua and Barbuda performs slightly worse than the region's other micro-states, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Bahamas and Barbados, though slightly better than the larger states such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

The legal anti-corruption framework of Antigua and Barbuda contains many of the necessary provisions to stem corruption but also has some gaps. The Integrity in Public Life Act (2004)

establishes a code of conduct for civil servants and the Integrity Commission as one of the principal anti-corruption institutions in the country. The law requires all public officials to declare all their assets to the Integrity Commission. The Integrity Commission oftentimes lacks the resources to undertake investigations into alleged acts of corruption.

National security is at the core of social stability and an effective and well-managed security sector protects citizens and visitors alike. It is important that the public is educated about their legal rights and avenues for redress and that they have access to legal services. Antigua and Barbuda has the lowest crime rate in the Caribbean recording 3 murders in 2019, a 75 percent decrease from 2018. Most of the crimes committed are petty theft, car break-ins, home invasions and malicious damage which account for more than half of the crimes reported. Most of the crimes occur in the capital city. Despite the low rates of homicide, there were 39 sexual assaults recorded in 2018.

Over the years there have been some issues with cyber security with some government websites being targets of attacks. The government along with other governments of the Eastern Caribbean have been taking steps to develop better investigative infrastructure for cyber incidents as evidenced by the 2017 opening of the Regional Security Systems Digital Forensic Laboratory, significantly enhancing their ability to investigate crimes with a digital nexus. The country also promulgated the Electronic Crimes Act (2013), which addresses the prevention and punishment of electronic crimes and related matters. The Act covers illegal entry into networks and systems, unauthorized use of the systems, illegally obtaining information and sending malicious software and/or messages. It also covers areas including sending offensive messages through communication services; violation of privacy; child pornography; and harassment utilizing electronic means.

Antigua and Barbuda has been progressive in the protection of children. The country has ratified the UN conventions on the rights of children, women and, most recently in January 2016, persons with disabilities. It has also adopted other key international legal instruments aimed at addressing interlinked problems of harmful child labour, trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children for commercial gain. National legislation and policies articulate bold targets aligned with the SDGs and strategic regional visions that aim to improve the lives of girls and boys in the areas of education, health, food security and social protection.

Notwithstanding, according to the 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report, Antigua & Barbuda is deemed as a destination and transit country for men, women and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour. To address this, the country has put in place a Human Trafficking Investigative Committee and adheres to the Trafficking in Humans Act and the Migrant Smuggling Act. The country has promulgated The Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) Act (2010); and The Trafficking in Persons (Prevention) (Amendment) Act (2015) to address some of these issues.

## Bright Spots, Success Stories and Opportunities

### One-stop centre for survivors of gender-based violence, Support and Referral Center (SARC)

In 2016 the Government, with assistance from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and UN Women Multi-Country Office Caribbean, introduced a one-stop centre for survivors of gender-based violence, named the Support and Referral Center (SARC). The SARC helps to ensure victims of gender-based violence have access to justice. The first of its kind in the Caribbean region, the SARC provides timely, gender-responsive and coordinated response to sexual assaults, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

Emerging from the SARC, coordination and development of inter-sectoral protocols with an intersectional, intercultural, gender and human-rights-based approach, which establishes quality service standards has taken place. There are various inter-agency procedures, programmes and interventions for handling sexual offences and these target specific groups such as men and boys with key arrangements within each sector and the financial resources necessary for their implementation.

The SARC also introduced a gender-sensitive system for the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, the first of its kind within the country. It incorporates various service providers across Government and civil society inputting information in a centralized data management system specific to gender-based violence.

### Sexual Offences Model Court

In 2019 with the support of the Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening (JURIST) Project, Antigua and Barbuda launched the Sexual Offences Model Court (SOMC), which is the first of its kind in the Caribbean region. The Model Court is intended to introduce specialized procedures to remedy the deficiencies in the court's handling of sexual offences. There are four main objectives for the Model Court:

- Provision of timely, gender-responsive and coordinated response to complainants of sexual assault cases
- Ensuring greater coordination between the courts and agencies that provide services to sexual assault complainants
- Improving the monitoring and evaluation of sexual offences. It is critical for us to take an evidence-based approach to support improvements in the treatment of sexual offences and not simply rely on anecdotal evidence
- Reducing the secondary re-victimization that complainants experience

## Civil Society Organizations Actions and Advocacy Contribute to the Passing of the Environmental Protection and Management Bill

CSOs in Antigua and Barbuda are not new to good governance practices and their actions, advocacy and engagement led to the passing of the Environmental Protection and Management Bill (EPMB) of 2015, which eventually become an Act in 2019. After 10 years in the making local community groups championed the cause at the Parliamentary Consultation where they made statements and ensured that their voices were heard. The governance structure in Antigua is fast changing and the legislation mandates that local community knowledge be recognized and valued and that citizens contribute to policymaking through meaningful engagement in these processes. The Government has indicated that CSOs must be continually empowered and be engaged in environmental, social and governance issues to enhance the notion of leaving no one behind and to also avoid conflicts.

## Signing of the Escazu Agreement

In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda signed and ratified the Escazu Agreement. Antigua and Barbuda Minister of Foreign Affairs-the Escazu Focal Point hosted the official meeting of the Second Signatory meeting of the Escazu in 2020. The Agreement came into force on Earth Day, April 22, 2021.

## CSOs Take the Spotlight at UNFCCC Events

The CSO inputs to the Gender Action Plan (GAP) under the UNFCCC process were internationally recognized as Antigua and Barbuda was the only Caribbean Island that produced text for the GAP shown on large visuals displays along other documents submitted.


## Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 16

The following key strategies will need to be accelerated if Antigua and Barbuda is to advance the achievement of SDG #16:

- Improving the legislative framework governing public administration.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity for monitoring and evaluation.
- Encouraging the public's participation in assessing the transparency, quality and reliability of services provided.
- Strengthening the technical capacity of the public service and ensuring that it becomes highly productive and innovative and operating at world-class standards.
- Enhancing institutional capacity in modern detection techniques and crime-solving.
- Broadening the legislative framework to address new forms of crime.
- Enhancing the rehabilitation programmes within penal reform institutions.
- Providing avenues to ensure that justice is available and accessible to all.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the justice system.
- Improving access to legal services.
- Wider participation of the civil society in decision-making and governance.

## Dashboard of SDG Targets – Peace

This dashboard shows at a snapshot how Antigua and Barbuda is progressing with respect to the achievement of the SDG targets under **Peace**.

<b>SDG Target #16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</b>		<b>A &amp; B Progress</b>
Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.		Green
End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.		Yellow
Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.		Yellow
By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.		Yellow
Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.		Yellow
Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.		Yellow
Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.		Green
By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.		Green
Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.		Green





AGENDA 2030 - THEME V  
**IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE GOALS THROUGH  
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP**



**"BUILDING FORWARD STRONGER"**

## SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



**Antigua and Barbuda recognizes the critical role that international development partners play in its development. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to stress the need for increases in concessional financing and has called on the international community to increase aid to countries such as Antigua and Barbuda. Being classed as a high-income country has reduced its ability to access the levels of concessional financing, liquidity and aid it needs to advance its own developmental prospects and achieve the SDGs. The Government has also stressed the importance of development partners considering extending credit to countries which are investing in clean/ green technologies through for example debt swaps.**

Antigua and Barbuda supports and promotes the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in the implementation of the SDGs. Internally, the government, private sector and civil society have accomplished much in working towards its goal “To improve the quality of life of Antiguan and Barbudans and their prosperity”. Central to implementing the SDGs, Antigua and Barbuda puts emphasis on collaboration with other countries and international development partners to facilitate both South-South and North-South collaboration, to access financial support, knowledge sharing and capacity development. The socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the critical importance of partnerships to achieve the SDGs

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development focuses on national, regional and international systems related to finance, technology, trade and capacity building underpinned by the cross-cutting issues of policy and institutional coherence as well as data monitoring and accountability.

Antigua and Barbuda, like other CARICOM countries, has a small economy that is extremely vulnerable to both international economic shocks and vagaries of the climate. As a CARICOM member, it can utilize the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) platform for addressing the challenges of globalization. The CSME provides the framework for increasing the competitiveness of goods and services by removing barriers to trade and opening new opportunities for CARICOM nationals. The CSME has become increasingly necessary for the region since the present global economic climate and trading regimes have put greater demand on Caribbean countries to become more competitive in all their activities. Antigua and Barbuda is



among other Caribbean economies that have been integrated into the global economy through the efforts of the CSME and the OECS Economic Union.

International development partners provide some level of financing for projects in areas such as climate change, biodiversity and renewable energy among others. Notwithstanding, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to stress the need for increases in concessional financing and has called on the international community to increase aid to countries such as Antigua and Barbuda. Being classed as a high-income country has reduced its ability to access the levels of concessional financing, liquidity and aid it needs to advance its own developmental prospects and achieve the SDGs. The Government has also stressed the importance of development partners considering extending credit to countries which are investing in clean/green technologies through for example debt swaps.

Within the context of COVID-19, the Government has called on international development partners to consider a suspension of per capita income as a criterion for concessional financing; debt relief, including suspension of debt payments, write-offs of aged debt, particularly by the Paris Club, and budgetary support through a mix of grants and low-cost loans. This sentiment is being echoed by organizations such as ECLAC that are advocating that borrowing is not an option for Caribbean countries, stating that access to concessional funding and debt relief is needed to face the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and recover faster and build forward better... within the context of achieving the SDGs.


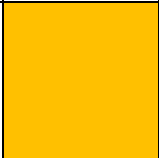
It is universally agreed that data collection, management and access are vital to long-term planning for sustainable development. ECLAC is providing assistance to Antigua and Barbuda to design and implement an institutional mechanism for mainstreaming the SDGs. This technical assistance includes addressing the institutional and capacity needs of the country's National Statistical System (NSS) to produce data to support evidence-based policy planning, including data for the SDG indicators. This support is expected to contribute to a more coordinated framework for compiling official statistics.

### **Strategies and Actions that will Accelerate the Achievement of Goal 17**

- Establish a national coordinating mechanism that would manage the various responsibilities of SDG planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting in the country.
- Implement the Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS) to Accelerate Recovery from COVID-19.
- Conduct a gap analysis of the country's capacity to collect data to inform a strategy for the collection and strategic use of the country's data.
- Participate in the proposed Caribbean Resilience Fund.

**Dashboard of SDG Targets – Partnerships**

This dashboard shows at a snapshot how Antigua and Barbuda is progressing with respect to the achievement of the SDG targets under Partnerships.

<p><b>SDG Target #17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</b></p>		<p>A &amp; B Progress</p>
<p>Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.</p>		

# Means of Implementation

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change outline a new development agenda, which implies a profound transformation of the sustainable development model and the mobilization of both internal and external resources, together with a change in the manner in which development is pursued and focusing on a more integrated approach to development.

While the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing has brought about changes that will enhance the landscape as it relates to financing for development with new partners and financing sources gaining importance, including donors which are not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), non-governmental organizations, climate funds, the private sector and foundations, innovative financing mechanisms such as innovative financing tools – blue and green bonds, and South-South cooperation initiatives, Antigua and Barbuda is defined as a high income country making it difficult for the country to access concessionary financing to address many of its development needs. Private capital has become and will continue to be leveraged as an important source of financing, through a diversified range of instruments including shares, bonds, debt securities, concessional loans and risk hedging instruments (including guarantees), as well as workers' remittances and voluntary private contributions (ECLAC, 2017a).

Based on the foregoing, the successful development and implementation of the national development plan and consequently the advancement of the SDGs in Antigua and Barbuda will require the following:

- Adequate and sustained financing and removing as the per capita GDP/income as an indicator upon which the ability to access concessional financing is assessed.
- Development of a new national development plan that is long range in scope and ambition
- The establishment of the required governance framework and coordinating mechanisms in-country to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the development plan and the SDGs.
- Stakeholder engagement and participation will be key to advancing the SDGs.
- Enhancing the statistical capacity in the country as well as building the capacity of the country's statistical office, recognizing that building national data and statistical capacity, is critical for monitoring of the SDGs Indicators as well as the indicators contained in the national development plan.
- Institutionalization and mainstreaming of processes to align the 2030 Agenda with the new national development plan and the strategic and operational plans and budgets of



government entities; country development plans of international development partners; and the work of the private sector and civil society organizations.


- Integration of the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental - across all policy areas in the development of new policies will be critical ensuring that there is equal treatment and consideration of each pillar in all key areas of national development. This also will involve policy integration and coherence and infusion of the goals and targets into national policy development as well as sectoral and government policies.
- Regular and timely reporting of performance and progress of the 2030 Agenda.
- Technology and knowledge transfer and greater levels of South-South cooperation.


## Dashboard of SDG Targets and Progress for Antigua and Barbuda


Using the key below we have sought to undertake a rough measurement or mapping of the country’s progress across all goals – in other words to provide a snapshot of where we are:

- Target met or likely to be met by 2030/substantial progress
- Fair progress but acceleration is needed
- Limited or no progress
- Moving away from the target/deterioration
- No trend data available
- Insufficient data/not applicable



SDG Goals	Targets				
<p>SDG 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p> 	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.				
	By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions.				
	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all.				
	By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services				
	By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.				
<p>SDG 2 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p> 	By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.				
	By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.				
	By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers.				


SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.				
	By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels.				
SDG 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages 	By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.				
	By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.				
	By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases.				
	By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.				
	Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.				
	By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.				
	By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.				



SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.				
	By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.		Yellow		
SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all  	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	Green			
	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.	Green			
	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.	Green			
	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.		Yellow		
	By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.		Yellow		
	By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.		Yellow		
	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.		Yellow		



SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.		Yellow		
	By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.	Green			
SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls  	End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere		Yellow		
	Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.		Yellow		
	Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.			Orange	
	Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.		Yellow		
	Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.		Yellow		
	Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.		Yellow		
	Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.		Yellow		





SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<p data-bbox="216 248 600 345">SDG 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p> 	By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.	Green			
	By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.		Yellow		
	By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.		Yellow		
	By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.		Yellow		
	By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.		Yellow		
	By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.		Yellow		
	Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.		Yellow		
<p data-bbox="216 995 600 1239">SDG 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</p> 	By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.		Yellow		
	By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.		Yellow		
	By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.		Yellow		
<p data-bbox="216 1295 600 1393">SDG 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and</p>	Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.		Yellow		



SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<p data-bbox="216 246 579 310">productive employment and decent work for all</p> 	Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.				
	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.				
	Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.				
	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.				
	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.				
	Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.				
	By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.				
	Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.				
	SDG 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable	Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.			


SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<p data-bbox="216 246 569 311">industrialization and foster innovation</p> 	Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.				
	Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.				
	By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.				
	Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.				
<p data-bbox="216 909 579 974">SDG 10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries</p> 	By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.				
	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.				
	Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.				
	Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.				

SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<p data-bbox="216 245 600 347">SDG 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p> 	By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.				
	By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.				
	By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.				
	Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.				
	By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.				
	By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.				
	By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.				
<p data-bbox="216 1146 600 1248">SDG 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p> 	Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries.				
	By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.				

SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.			Orange	
	By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.		Yellow		
	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.			Orange	
	Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.			Orange	
	By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.		Yellow		
SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.		Yellow		
	Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.		Yellow		
	Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.		Yellow		
SDG 14 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.		Yellow		
	By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.		Yellow		

SDG Goals	Targets	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
<p>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p> 	<p>By 2030, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.</p>				
	<p>By 2030, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.</p>				
	<p>By 2030, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.</p>				
	<p>By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.</p>				
<p>SDG 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.</p>				
	<p>By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.</p>				
	<p>By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.</p>				

SDG Goals	Targets				
	Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.				
	By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.				
<p data-bbox="216 480 579 727">SDG 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p> 	Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.				
	End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.				
	Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.				
	By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.				
	Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.				
	Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.				
	Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.				
	By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.				
<p data-bbox="216 1162 548 1341">SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.				

SDG Goals	Targets				
					



## Acronyms and Abbreviations

5Ps	People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership
6NR	Sixth National Report
ABIA	Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority
ABS	Access and Benefits Sharing
ABSTEP	Antigua & Barbuda Skills Training & Empowerment Programme
ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
BCG	Bacille Calmette-Guérin
BOP	Balance of Payments
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEBO	Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunity
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
COP	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSSI	Caribbean Safe School Initiative
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DALY	Disability-adjusted Life Years
DFID	Department for International Development
DoGA	Directorate of Gender Affairs
DPT	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis
EAG	Environmental Awareness Group
EC	Eastern Caribbean
XCD	Eastern Caribbean Dollar
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEZ	Economic Exclusive Zone
EPI	Environmental Performance Index
EPMA	Environmental Protection and Management Act
EPMB	Environmental Protection and Management Bill
EU	European Union

EUR	Euro
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FEC	Financial Empowerment Centre
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GARD	Gilbert Agricultural Rural Development
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GNI	Gross National Income
GPRS	General Packet Radio Service
HAPI	Home Advancement Programme for the Indigent
HCI	Human Capital Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IBC	International Business Corporation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFI	International Financial Institution
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
JURIST	Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LCIP	Local Community and Indigenous People's
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
MAP	Men as Partners
MBEP	Maritime Blue Economy Plan
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MMR	Measles-Mumps-Rubella
MTDS	Medium-Term Development Strategy
MTFS	Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy
NBSAP	National Biodiversity and Strategic Action Plan
NC	Necessary Conditions

NCD	Noncommunicable Disease
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NODS	National Office of Disaster Services
NPDP	National Physical Development Plan
NSS	National Statistical System
OECS	Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States
OPV	Oral Polio Vaccine
OSEC	One-Stop Employment Centre
PM	Particulate Matter
PV	Photovoltaic
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RHI	Reef Health Index
RIA	Rapid Integrated Assessment
S3I	Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment
SARC	Support and Referral Center
SDD	Sustainable Development Dimensions
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SHS	Sustainable Housing Solutions
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIRF	Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund
SOMC	Sexual Offences Model Court
SPARC	Substance –Use Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation Centre
SPC	Segregated Portfolio Company
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TEP	Temporary Employment Programme
TP	Training Programme
TSP	Target Setting Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
UWI	University of the West Indies
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WTO	World Trade Organization