

# Promoting COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake and Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean: Presentation Agenda

## *Background*

Since the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Caribbean on the 1st March 2020, while the region has reacted swiftly with non-pharmaceutical interventions to control the outbreak, this has left countries in a much weaker economic position as economic growth contracts, debts rise, and fiscal space narrows limiting governments abilities to support recover and rebuild.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread globally with the appearance of new variants of concern, vaccinations offer the best hope of helping countries reduce and remove the spread of this virus.

The steady arrival of vaccines in the Caribbean over 2021 has placed countries in a better position now to plan for their recoveries. As immunity from COVID-19 builds governments have been able to soften restrictions. However, after a strong uptake initially, some countries in this region have been experiencing delays in the acceptance of or refusal to take the vaccine. This hesitancy is impacting on countries ability to plan new vaccine deliveries as well as the timing of them opening their economies up further to spur economic recovery.

The development and launch of this proposal represent a joint United Nations Agency approach to supporting Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean reduce vaccine hesitancy and expedite the rollout of vaccines. In doing so it combines the expertise of five UN Agencies – PAHO/WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNWOMEN, and ITU – under the oversight of the UN Resident Coordinator and technical lead of PAHO/WHO to support the governments across five pillars of work to reduce hesitancy.

- I. Research and policy options
- II. Behavioural change strategies
- III. Risk communications and advocacy
- IV. Strengthening COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout
- V. Vaccine Motivation
- VI. Monitoring and evaluation

The key outcome expected from this project is for governments to achieve and surpass their COVID-19 vaccine rollout targets to protect citizens against this virus as well as eventually eliminate the transmission of this virus.

The structure and agenda of the event is detailed below.

## Event Overview

**When:** Friday November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 10.30am to 12.10 AST

**Where:** Virtually via [UWI TV](http://www.uwitv.org) [www.uwitv.org] and UN Facebook Page

The purpose of this event is to announce the present the United Nations Vaccine Hesitancy Proposal.

**Duration:** 1.40 hours (approx.)

## Agenda

1. Opening of Session			
10.30 – 10.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 mins)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mr. Didier Trebucq</b>, UN Resident Coordinator for Barbados &amp; the Eastern Caribbean</li> </ul>	
10.35 – 10.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Context and summary of the proposal on Vaccine Hesitancy (10 mins)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dr. Yitades Gebre</b>, Resident Representative PAHO/WHO</li> </ul>	
2. Government leadership statement			
10.45 – 11.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Session 1:</b> Importance of reducing Vaccine Hesitancy in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean (10 min each)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Hon. St. Clair Prince</b>, Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.</li> <li><b>Hon. Nickolas Steele</b>, Minister for Health and Social Security, Government of Grenada.</li> <li><b>Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph</b>, Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda</li> <li><b>Dr. Sharon Belmar-George</b>, Chief Medical Officer, Government of Saint Lucia</li> </ul>	<b>Moderator:</b> Dr. Allyson Leacock
3. UN Agencies current practices on COVID-19 Vaccine roll out			
11:25 – 12:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Session 2:</b> Issues on the operationalizing vaccine rollout to reduce vaccine hesitancy (5 mins each)</li> <li>Q&amp;A (15 min)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mr. Clinton White</b>, Resident Representative, USAID</li> <li><b>Ms. Jennifer Heys</b>, Head of Cooperation, Global Affairs Canada</li> <li><b>Mr. Cleveland Thomas</b>, Representative, ITU</li> <li><b>Dr. Aloys Kamuragiye</b>, Representative UNICEF</li> <li><b>Mr. Dennis Zulu</b>, Director ILO</li> </ul>	<b>Moderator:</b> Dr. Allyson Leacock
4. Closing			
12.05 – 12.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closing Remarks (5 min)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Hon. Akilah Byron-Nesbitt</b> Minister of Health, Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis</li> </ul>	