



British
High Commission
Kingstown

NEWS RELEASE

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UK Boosts Caribbean Resilience through Infrastructure Development Programme

The strong partnership between the United Kingdom and the Caribbean was on full display during the recently concluded UK Caribbean Infrastructure Conference 2023. The Conference, which was held last week in St Vincent and the Grenadines, was organised in by the Government of the United Kingdom and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and focused on enhancing project management and delivery of large infrastructure projects, while underscoring the importance of prioritising climate resilience and social inclusion.

The UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund (UKCIF), which provided funding for the Conference, is a £350 million grant-funded programme from the UK Government to build climate-resilient, inclusive infrastructure and boost economic growth in the Caribbean. UKCIF is administered by the CDB.

Project teams from nine Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines) who are implementing the 13 projects being funded by the UKCIF were in attendance. They were joined by regional experts from the UK Government, British Standards Institute, CDB, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Pan American Health Organisation, the private sector, and many more.

Some key takeaways from the conference include the sharing of lessons on how to

improve project management, environment protection, and social and gender inclusion on infrastructure projects.

The British Commissioner to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, H.E. Scott Fursedonn-Wood said:

“We know that the ever-present challenge of climate change demands our immediate attention and urgent collaborative action. The United Kingdom stands side by side with Small Island Developing States on the global stage. Given the unique vulnerability of the Caribbean, the UKCIF was set up to deliver transformational infrastructure projects that drive economic development, with social inclusion and climate resilience at the centre. By prioritising these things, we are not only safeguarding communities today but also building a sustainable legacy for future generations.”

In his address to the regional delegates in attendance at the Conference, CDB’s Vice President - Operations, Isaac Solomon said:

“The UKCIF programme has provided Beneficiary Countries access to more affordable financing options and lowered the cost of borrowing within the portfolio. ...UKCIF resources have funded transformative projects... this partnership has facilitated the delivery of development projects that have transformed the lives and livelihoods of our people in a way that neither the Bank, the governments, nor the private sector could have implemented and completed alone”.

Assistant Project Manager for the Kingstown Port Modernisation Project in St Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr. Lenski Douglas shared, *“One of the biggest takeaways from this exercise is that as a region our project teams experience similar challenges, but there is still a huge opportunity where shared experiences can be communicated and be made available so that the implementation process can proceed with more efficiency and effectiveness.”*

Participants also shared that they were particularly inspired by the conference sessions on *Women and Youth in Construction* and *Disability Inclusion* and are committed to championing more diversity in the sector. The UKCIF projects are being built to be accessible to all, regardless of gender, age, disability, race or ethnicity, heritage or socio-economic status.

The UK Government's Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) also shared useful tools the UK uses to manage infrastructure development. As a follow-up to the conference, the UK will sponsor some Caribbean delegates to participate in the IPA Infrastructure Foundations Masterclass in London in March 2024.

Note to Editor:

Attached to the email are five photos:

UKCIF 1 – Group photos of delegates.

UKCIF 2 – From Left to right British High Commissioner to Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean, His Excellency Scott Fursstedonn – Wood and Minister of Finance, St Vincent and the Grenadines, the Honourable Camillo Gonsalves.

UKCIF 3 – From Left to Right Vice President of the Caribbean Development Bank, Isaac Solomon and UK Development Director to the Caribbean, Malcolm Geere.

UKCIF 4 – Team Leader, UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund, Dr. Harriett Stone.

UKCIF 5 – From Left to Right British High Commissioner to Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean, His Excellency Scott Fursstedonn – Wood, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves and Vice President of the Caribbean Development Bank, Isaac Solomon.



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