



Dist.
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National capacity building workshop in strategic policy planning

Castries, Saint Lucia, 22–30 June 2026

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean is currently implementing a Development Account (DA) project titled “**Strengthened capacity to design and implement policies to enhance resilience in Caribbean SIDS.**” Under the 16th tranche of the Development Account, the objective of this DA16 project is to strengthen national capacities of Caribbean countries to design and implement policies and strategies for accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and building resilient economies. Six Caribbean countries, namely, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Suriname will benefit from the project, which is expected to enhance the technical skills of decision-makers of the target countries in the development of policies and projects to promote sustainable development and build resilience to shocks, while strengthening national institutional capacity to facilitate greater synergy in the implementation of the SDGs and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS).

The midterm review of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a sobering account of the slow pace of achievement of the SDGs. The COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts have negatively affected progress on SDG targets related to poverty, hunger, and climate action, while earlier gains recorded in promoting health and wellbeing, advancing quality education, and reducing inequalities are seriously threatened, if not reversed.¹ More recently, the higher tariff regime being pursued by the new United States administration is disrupting global financial markets and has introduced new uncertainties for global trade that could constitute barriers to trade in goods and services for Caribbean SIDS. These events have severe implications for foreign exchange reserves of nations. Furthermore, global crises and their impacts exacerbate the subregion’s existing vulnerabilities, which include susceptibility to the impacts of climate change, exposure to natural hazards and disasters, increasingly unsustainable public debt, and limited technical and institutional capacity to effectively manage development challenges.

Considering the global environment in which Caribbean SIDS operate, and noting that the timeline for the 2030 Agenda is now just five years away, there is an urgency to accelerate action in implementing the SDGs. This will require strengthening national and subnational capacity, accountability, and public institutions to deliver accelerated progress towards achieving the SDGs. In its call to action for the transformation required to fully achieve the global Goals and their targets in the remaining years of the 2030 Agenda, the Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 underscores the need for capacity building at individual, institutional and network levels.² Capacity development is also prominently emphasized across thematic areas in ABAS, the Outcome Document of the Fourth International Conference on SIDS (SIDS4).

Due to the human capital limitations that Caribbean countries face, there have been notable national planning and implementation gaps hindering sustainable development and resilience building. These gaps are reflected in the weak alignment of national development goals and sectoral policies, weak evidence base for development targets, and weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks for monitoring the

¹ While this represents a global trend, developing countries and the poorest and most vulnerable in society have been the most affected, see The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023; Special edition. Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023.pdf>.

² See Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, Global Sustainable Development Report 2023: Times of crisis, times of change: Science for accelerating transformations to sustainable development, (United Nations, New York, 2023). <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023.pdf>.

achievement of national development goals.³ As such, capacity strengthening at institutional and individual levels is crucial for resilience building in the Caribbean. Of particular importance is the consistency with which Caribbean countries acknowledge in their Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports presented to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development their need for capacity strengthening. Therefore, this DA16 project is designed to respond to the institutional capacity needs of Caribbean member States, including capacity strengthening in evidence-based decision making through the provision of training in strategic policy planning.

To this end, and in collaboration with the Government of Saint Lucia and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean conducted a national capacity building workshop in cost-benefit analysis during 30 June–4 July 2025, followed by a national training course in project proposal preparation and effective project implementation during 16–26 September 2025, for senior officials and technical officers of the Government of Saint Lucia. Building on the knowledge imparted during these workshops, and in furtherance of Output 1.2 (OP1.2) of the DA16 project, which includes the conduct of a national capacity building workshop per target country on strategic policy planning to raise the skills level of policymakers in the drafting of evidence-informed national policies and sectoral strategies, ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, in collaboration with the Government of Saint Lucia and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, is organizing this workshop to be held in Saint Lucia during 22–30 June 2026.

Rationale

In its first VNR presented in 2019, Saint Lucia underscored the lack of reliable data as a major impediment in the country's implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and in instituting evidence-based decision-making and effective targeting of policy interventions. Therefore, it was acknowledged that national efforts should be directed at addressing such challenges through capacity strengthening.

More recently, in the 2025 VNR, the Government also emphasized that its national priorities continue to revolve around building productive capacity and expanding growth opportunities; building strong institutions as a platform for growth and development; infrastructure, connectivity and energy; social transformation through building social resilience and social capital; enhancing the labour force through education, training and workforce development; adaptation for environmental sustainability, climate change and disaster vulnerability reduction; and improving health and wellness.

In promoting an evidence-based approach to development planning in the country, the Ministry of Economic Development and Youth Economy has started the process of preparing Saint Lucia's Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2026–2030 and the country's first National Development Plan (NDP) 2026–2040. This strategic policy planning workshop, therefore, is very timely in facilitating this process and contributing to strengthening the capacity of the Government to produce policies that will promote the sustainable development of Saint Lucia and enhance its resilience to shocks.

³ See The Caribbean Outlook: forging a people-centred approach to sustainable development post-COVID-19, (United Nations, Santiago, 2020). <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/34d3c249-6dda-4b9c-971d-55bf9235994b/content>.

Objective

The overall objective of the national workshop is to strengthen the skills level of senior officials and technical staff of the Government of Saint Lucia in strategic policy planning. This will enhance national capacity in assessing development options and monitoring and evaluation, towards promoting national sustainable development and resilience building.

Participants

The training will target two main groups of participants:

Senior Government Officials

Senior government officials at the level of Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, and Director, are the most senior career professionals in the public service. They provide strategic direction and oversight for their ministry/department and are tasked with implementing national development priorities within their respective sectoral mandates. Therefore, their improved knowledge of tools that could improve strategic planning and the alignment of sectoral objectives in contributing to national development goals will enhance efficiency and promote sustainable development.

Technical Staff of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

The efficiency with which technical staff with responsibilities for implementing government policies, programmes and initiatives operate will be greatly enhanced when they have improved skills in strategic planning and better understanding of monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This will enable them to align activities at the MDA level with national development priorities. They will also be better positioned to report on their respective MDA's contribution to the attainment of national development goals, as well as international development goals such as the SDGs and ABAS.

Format

The national workshop will be delivered using presentations and breakout group discussions, and will provide an opportunity for ECLAC to illustrate the use of strategic planning tools. Modules to be covered during the training course include:

- Principles and Concepts of Strategic Policy Planning
- Steps in the Strategic Planning Process
- Stakeholder Consultation
- Tools of Strategic Planning
- Assessing Policy Options
- Monitoring and Evaluation

The workshop will include a two-day working session with participants of the national training course in project proposal preparation and effective project implementation, a DA16 project activity which took place on 16–26 September 2025, to get feedback on progress in developing project proposals for submission to funding agencies.

Expected outcome

At the conclusion of the workshop, senior government officials and technical officers in Saint Lucia would have gained improved knowledge of, and skills in, strategic policy planning; monitoring and evaluation of national development goals; and aligning global development agendas, such as the SDGs and ABAS, with national development priorities.

Venue, date and language of instruction

The workshop will take place in Castries, Saint Lucia, during 22–30 June 2026 and will be conducted in English.

Required ICT facility for the workshops

Training participants are required to have a laptop with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, or other word processing and presentation applications such as Google Docs, Sheets and Slides, installed.

AGENDA

Training Workshop in Strategic Policy Planning

Monday 22 nd June 2026	
Morning session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start of Workshop<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Introductions○ Ice-breakers: Mentimeter on background preparation of course participants
Afternoon session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principles and Concepts of Strategic Policy Planning
Tuesday 23 rd June 2026	
Morning session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steps in the Strategic Planning Process
Afternoon session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducting Stakeholder Consultation in National Planning• Tools of Strategic Planning
Thursday 25 th June 2026	
Morning session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Breakout Session
Afternoon session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Breakout Session
Friday 26 th June 2026	
Morning session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Presentation
Afternoon session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessing Policy Options
Monday 29 th June 2026	
Morning session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
Afternoon session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Exercise<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ M&E○ Group Presentation• Course Evaluation

AGENDA

Training Workshop in Strategic Policy Planning – Project Proposal Follow-up Sessions

Wednesday 24 th June 2026	
9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.	• GROUP 1
10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	• GROUP 2
1:00 p.m.–2:30 p.m.	• GROUP 3
2:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m.	• GROUP 4
Tuesday 30 th June 2026	
9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.	• GROUP 5
10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	• GROUP 6
1:00 p.m.–2:30 p.m.	• GROUP 7
2:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m.	• GROUP 8