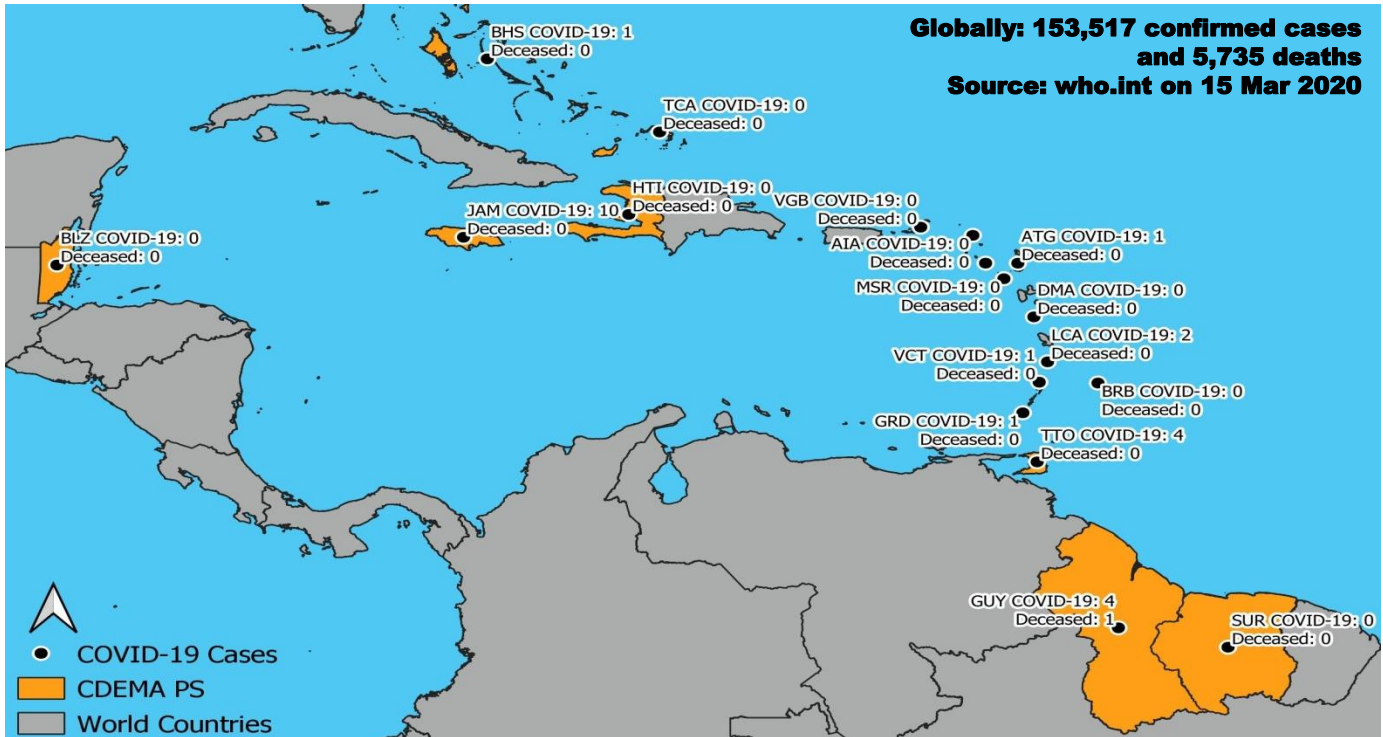


# COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN CDEMA PARTICIPATING STATES

## SITUATION REPORT No. 1

AS OF 8:00PM ON MARCH 16, 2020

**On March 11, the WHO declared the COVID-19 viral outbreak as a Pandemic**



## SITUATION

According to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Situation Report No. 22 (issued on March 13, 2020), the WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared the COVID-19 viral outbreak as a pandemic in a statement on 11 March 2020. This declaration came as a result of the 13-fold increase in COVID-19 cases outside of China with a tripling of the number of affected countries within the past two weeks. This has caused deep concern of not only its rapid spread and severity but also the disturbing lack of action observed in some countries. WHO expects an increase in the number of cases, deaths and affected countries.

The first case of the disease in the English-Speaking Caribbean was reported in Jamaica on 10 March 2020. The risk of further importation of cases to the Caribbean remains **Very High**. The Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS), is actively working with Heads of Government and regional partners on a collective approach to the COVID-19 response. Countries are strongly urged to strengthen their health sector response and move to a state of readiness and rapid response.

## Updates from CDEMA Participating States

On March 15th 2020 the CDEMA CU facilitated a meeting with the National Disaster Coordinators to provide an update on the actions taken thus far in each Participating State. The following were reported:



### BARBADOS – Department of Emergency Management (DEM)

- The Health EOC has been activated since January 2020
- Reduced visits to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) and Geriatric Hospitals
- The National Pandemic Plan has been updated and sent to CABINET for approval
- DEM is supporting the Ministry of Health with coordination
- A number of quarantine centers have been identified; the primary one at Harrison's Point in St Lucy is being retrofitted
- Travel restrictions have been issued for high risk countries
- The Ministry of Commerce has been engaged to monitor food supplies and supply chains
- The Hon. Prime Minister convened a meeting of the Social Partnership last Tuesday (March 10, 2020)
- A number of sensitization campaigns have been ongoing; DEM has been supporting the Ministry of Health with public sensitisation
- Screening is ongoing at the various ports of entry



### GRENADA – National Disaster Management Agency (NaDMA)

- The Hon. Prime Minister declared all schools closed for the next two weeks and all public mass gathering suspended
- No confirmed cases in Grenada at the moment, however a number of samples (>25) were sent to CARPHA for testing
- The actions taken thus far are all precautionary
- Activated the national public education and information subcommittee to address public information sharing; the Ministry of Health has shared public information through this sub-committee
- Media houses recognizing their role in information sharing have put contingencies in place should their facilities become contaminated
- A meeting is being planned by the National Advisory Council in the coming week

## Updates from CDEMA Participating States



### GUYANA – Civil Defense Commission (CDC)

- First imported case confirmed on March 7, 2020, which resulted in one fatality
- Four (4) new cases confirmed subsequently, all within the same household of the deceased case
- The Ministry of Health was able to conduct contact tracing with most of the persons being identified. Persons who were in contact with the deceased have been self-quarantined
- A total of 18 persons are in isolation
- The government is identifying additional quarantine locations; separate locations for symptomatic patients are also being identified
- The GIS specialist from the CDC is supporting the contact tracing operations
- The CDC is assisting the Ministry of Health with audits of available resources and setting up of quarantine facilities
- All schools are closed for the next two (2) weeks
- Government has indicated that management staff are to report to work and support staff to report to work on a rotating basis in all Ministry Departments
- The NEOC is partially activated and continues to provide support to the health surveillance system



### JAMAICA – Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)

- The Hon. Prime Minister declared Jamaica a National Disaster Area on March 13, 2020. The declaration is in immediate effect and is in accordance with the Disaster Risk Management Act 2015
- The communities of 7 and 8 Miles Bull Bay, St. Andrew designated as a quarantine area
- The Hon. Prime Minister announced the closure of schools islandwide on March 12 with effect March 13, 2020. The closure is to remain in effect for fourteen (14) consecutive days
- The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAF) advises that Jamaica has adequate food supply both locally produced and imported
- On March 12, 2020 the Drought Management Committee met to discuss preparations for coordinated response to COVID-19
- On March 13, 2020 a Special COVID-19 Meeting was called by the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) to discuss strategic measures for national response
- On March 14, 2020 the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) convened a coordination meeting with representatives from four (4) municipal corporations, the Ministry and the ODPEM

## Updates from CDEMA Participating States



### ST. KITTS & NEVIS – National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)

- Enhanced surveillance at air and sea ports
- The Ministry of Health is encouraging self quarantine at home
- Accident & Emergencies (A&E) at the General Hospital will be divided to deal with COVID-19 cases and other A&E cases
- A hotline has been established with the support of telecoms companies
- Public information sharing is ongoing- videos and other awareness packages have been created
- The Ministry of Health is reaching out to retired nurses to assist with health care
- A task force has been established with the Ministry of Health as the lead – the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) serves on this task force



### SAINT LUCIA – National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)

- Two (2) confirmed cases as at Sunday March 15, 2020
- Contact tracing is ongoing
- Schools are closed and churches have been asked to minimize congregating
- All mass crowd events have been suspended
- A meeting of the National Emergency Management Advisory Committee (NEMAC) is planned for Monday March 16, 2020
- The Hon. Prime Minister invited all stakeholders to a briefing (including Faith based Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Public and Private sectors)

## Updates from CDEMA Participating States



### ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES – National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)

- One confirmed case as at Sunday March 15, 2020
- The health EOC is partially activated
- Four (4) additional swabs were sent for testing on March 15, 2020
- NEMO has been coordinating with the Ministry of Health
- Continued public awareness and communication in schools and communities
- Currently in dry period and water rationing was scheduled, but this will be postponed



### TRINIDAD & TOBAGO – Office of Disaster Preparedness & Management (ODPM)

- Four (4) confirmed cases as at Sunday March 15, 2020
- The Ministry of Health has taken a multi-sectoral approach; three (3) meetings have been held with the special committee created to address COVID 19, which is chaired by the Ministry of Health. ODPM is represented at all levels at these meetings
- The government has taken a decision to close all schools and tertiary institutions, only critical staff will attend to work
- Catholic and Anglican Churches suspended all mass
- All mass gatherings have been postponed
- The ODPM is having a table top exercise and meeting with key stakeholders in the coming week
- The information task group has been activated to support public information campaigns
- Surveillance at ports has been upgraded/enhanced

## Updates from CDEMA Participating States



### **TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS – Department of Disaster Management & Emergencies (DDME)**

- The NEOC & Health EOC are activated. Health is leading and the NEOC is providing support
- Five (5) suspected cases – all results returned negative. Samples were tested in the Bahamas and by CARPHA
- DDME is part of the National Security Advisory Committee
- DDME has been asked to minimise or cancel mass gathering events
- A meeting of the NEOC chaired by the Governor will be held on Monday March 16, 2020
- The Environmental Health Regulations have been enhanced and updated in January to give more authority to respond to the threat of COVID-19



### **THE VIRGIN ISLANDS (UK) – Department of Disaster Management (DDM)**

- As at March 3, 2020 the NEOC was activated at the lowest level, the Health EOC was also activated
- The Ministry of Health is to take the lead with support and guidance provided from the NEOC
- CABINET and Ministers have been meeting regularly
- Testing is ongoing (10 persons) all results returned negative
- Public information is being facilitated by the Ministry of Health through the information cell and providing information to the media
- Churches are exploring options on how to continue masses if they are unable to do so in the traditional way
- A health declaration form has been issued to allow for a first level of screening at all ports of entry
- Persons requiring quarantine will be home quarantined at first
- Contingencies for supporting remote operations among the public services are being discussed
- Education still continues, but plans are being reviewed with support from UNESCO
- Examining possible external sources for support

# **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) Actions**

## **REGIONAL LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS & COORDINATION**

1. On March 1, CARPHA, CDEMA and IMPACS joined Caribbean Heads of Government, Ministers of Health and their Chief Medical Officers, Ministers of Tourism and representatives from the PAHO, at a special meeting convened by the Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley, in Barbados. The aim of the meeting was to discuss ways of protecting the region from COVID-19. The meeting considered recommendations from the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD- Health) working group on regional coordination for management of the virus and other infectious diseases on passenger ships;
2. CDEMA has developed a suite of guidance documents to support national and regional coordination efforts including a draft regional protocol for a whole of government approach for inputs, checklist specific to COVID-19 for NDCs to guide on general actions to take and measures to be ensured; a Logistics Supply Chain Guidance note and a Continuity of Planning Guidance Note;
3. CDEMA issued SAVINGRAM 1 on COVID-19 on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020
4. CDEMA conducted a briefing for CARICOM Agencies on March 4<sup>th</sup> and Scenario Planning on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2020;
5. Convened a meeting of the Caribbean Development Partners Group (CDPG) on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March to raise awareness of actions and engage the partnership;
6. Provided guidance and support to CARPHA on the Risk Communication Strategy;
7. Ongoing collaboration with CARPHA, PAHO and the National Disaster Offices (NDOs);
8. CDEMA's annual SYNERGY exercise originally scheduled for May 2020 has been changed to April 16-17, 2020 to test the Pandemic Annex of the Regional Coordination Plan;
9. CDEMA continues to work closely with the regional institutions to enhance readiness and improve information flows; this includes scenario planning with regional partners and in the near future with Participating States;
10. The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) is the main regional coordinating platform. The RRM is on alert and the RCC is partially activated to facilitate regional level coordination in support of health sector lead;
11. The latest updates on the COVID-19 pandemic in the region can be accessed from the CARPHA's website [www.carpha.org](http://www.carpha.org)
12. CDEMA and the Regional Response Mechanism partners will continue to monitor the situation and will provide updates as appropriate.