

Terms of Reference
Activity 2.2.1.2
Individual Consultancy for the Development of a Regional
Action Plan for Regional Preparedness and Response to Public Health Emergencies

1. Background

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is a regional Institution of the Caribbean Community, formally established on July 4, 2011 through the ratification of an Inter-Governments Agreement (IGA) by Heads of Member States of CARICOM in January 2013. The Agency is the Caribbean's collective response to addressing public health issues including those related to Communicable and Non-Communicable diseases; mental health, disaster response, injuries and violence and workers health.

In so doing, CARPHA has subsumed the functions of the previous five Regional Health Institutions (RHI) – The Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC), the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFHI), the Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC), the Caribbean Regional Drug Testing Laboratory (CRDTL) and the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI). The agency began operation in January 2013 with Headquarters in Port of Spain Trinidad and offices in Saint Lucia and Jamaica.

CARPHA'S mission is to provide strategic direction, in analyzing, defining and responding to public health priorities of Member States to prevent disease promote health and respond to public health emergencies.

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) plays a vital role in advising CARPHA Member States (CMS) on matters of Regional Health Security. Health emergency preparedness and response coordination is listed in the Inter-governmental agreement which established CARPHA, as one of the main functions of the agency. As such, the Agency maintains close collaborative partnerships with regional preparedness and response agencies such as the Pan American Health Organization, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, the Regional Security System and the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security.

CARPHA supported the response to public health incidents such as the 2013/14 Chikungunya virus epidemic, preparedness for the possible introduction of Ebola into the region during the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, and the 2015/16 Zika virus epidemic. Additionally, CARPHA has responded to many outbreaks throughout the regions, more recently, CARPHA has played a pivotal role in leading the regional response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In response to these events, several activities related to Preparedness, Epidemiology and Laboratory, Communication, Public Information and Community Outreach, and Resource Mobilization were performed.

Given the region's vulnerability to multiple hazards such as disease outbreaks, earthquakes, tropical storms, and volcanic eruptions, country and Caribbean Regional plans have been

developed to guide responses to emergencies. Additionally, due to the high amount of tourism, travel, and immigration to the region, countries are vulnerable to the import and circulation of infectious diseases. Though wider regional plans exist, the unique cooperation between the OECS countries provides an opportunity for improved coordination in response to public health threats and emergencies.

Approved in August 2019, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Regional Health Project (RHP), is a project funded by the World Bank and implemented across four CARPHA Member States (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) and by CARPHA and the OECS Commission¹. The overall objective of the project is to (i) improve preparedness capacities of health systems for public health emergencies in the OECS region, and (ii) provide a response in the event of eligible crises or emergencies. To mitigate against the public health emergencies that are encountered in the region as a result of infectious disease outbreaks, extreme weather events and other climate change risks, this project seeks to address the weakness in the public health emergency systems through the proposed strengthening of the health systems.

This individual consultancy addresses Component Activity 2.2.1: Development of a regional preparedness and response Action Plan for public health emergencies, specifically, subcomponent 2.2.1.2 – Development of a Action Plan for Regional Preparedness and Response to Public Health Emergencies. This individual consultancy will be responsible for the development of the Regional Action Plan. The consultant will engage with stakeholders identified by CARPHA to clarify regional needs, capacities, goals, and objectives in responding to Public Health Emergencies (PHEs). This shall include consideration of countries' experiences on the COVID-19 pandemic response, gaps, lessons learned, and any best practices emanating.

2. Objective(s) of the Assignment

2.1 The **overall objective** is:

To improve country and regional capacity to respond to public health emergencies

2.2 The **purpose** of this consultancy is:

To draft a Regional Action Plan for Preparedness and Response to Public Health Emergencies that will guide countries in responding to internal and external public health threats.

3. Scope of Services, Tasks (Components) and Expected Deliverables

The consultant will be expected to:

- Engage with regional stakeholders to understand their capacities and requirements for responding to public health emergencies at country and regional levels. The consultant will

¹ OECS Commission completed own part of project in July 2024

gather documents from completed after-action reviews and country multi-hazard emergency response plans which were completed during other phases of the WB-OECS project. This country engagement will also include exploring the gaps uncovered, lessons learned, and best practices emanating during the COVID-19 pandemic response and the management of multi-hazard, concurrent incidents. These will inform the development of the Action Plan.

- Review WB and other partner agencies' activities and include them in the Action Plan, addressing specific activities related to preparedness and emergency management in health.
- Draft a Regional Action Plan for Preparedness and Response to Public Health Emergencies which outlines the roles and responsibilities of OECS countries and regional organizations in responding to public health emergencies.
- Incorporate into the Action Plan, best practices in the field of emergency response and lessons learned from regional emergency responses and simulation exercises previously completed.
- Undertake a Stakeholder training event to support the socialization of the Regional Action Plan.

The expected deliverables are:

i. Inception Report Developed and submitted for the approval of the Project Manager

- Engage in an initial briefing with the Project Manager and other relevant CARPHA personnel to discuss the scope of the work to be undertaken; the approach and any other issues pertaining to the Project upon the commencement of the Consultancy.
- Design a template/structure for the Regional Action Plan and the corresponding next step actions
- Prepare and submit for the approval of the Project Manager, an Inception Report which includes the template/structure of the Regional Action Plan, a list of internal and external stakeholders to be consulted for the development of the Action Plan, the timelines for the specific project activities and the methodology for the activities.

II. Workshop Reports with OECS and other stakeholders

- Design and facilitate workshops to gather information to develop
- Information gathering to produce first draft
- Review and discussion on the first draft
- Develop training programme to establish interoperability across the draft RAP

III. First Draft Regional Action Plan for Response to Public Health Emergencies developed and submitted

- Conduct a desk review and analysis of information on public health emergency and disaster preparedness and management priorities and activities of the region.
- Consult with key internal and external stakeholders and secure their technical inputs to be incorporated into the Regional Action Plan to ensure synergy and linkage of the DELETEDas, Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security (RCM-HS), Caribbean

Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

- Conduct a regional risk assessment using country level risk assessments and interviews with regional partners (CARPHA, CDEMA, PAHO, OECS Commission, CARICOM, World Bank, and others) to determine the likely sources and impacts of public health emergencies for the region. This risk assessment will inform the development of the Action Plan and how countries will respond to emergencies.
- Develop a first Draft of the Regional Action Plan which must include the following core elements:
 - The role of Early Warning Systems for Public Health Emergencies and what are the regional Early Warning Systems for the region and what systems countries should have in place
 - A risk assessment for the region including predicted impacts
 - The expectations of a country-level emergency preparedness and response and how that response could lead to activation of the Regional Action Plan
 - How to implement efficient response and relief during emergencies
 - How to conduct the evaluation of response efforts and how to amend the Action Plan to cover gaps found during exercises or during a response
 - Roles and responsibilities of OECS countries and regional organizations in responding to public health emergencies in other countries as part of the Rapid Response Team.
 - Best practices in the field of emergency response and lessons learned from regional emergency responses and simulation exercises previously completed
 - A roadmap for the next steps in the development and implementation of the Action Plan.
- Incorporate the comments of CARPHA personnel, stakeholders and country consultations into a revised Draft of the Regional Action Plan. The Project Manager will have the responsibility of disseminating the Action Plan and gathering input and comments. The comments will be collected and shared with the consultant.

IV. Workshop to discuss first draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan

A consultative workshop involving key stakeholders from OECS Member States, regional agencies, and partners to review and provide feedback on the first draft of the OECS Regional Response Action Plan. The session aims to validate the proposed structure, identify gaps, ensure alignment with national response mechanisms, and gather inputs to refine the Action Plan. The workshop promotes collaboration and ensures that the Action Plan reflects the realities and needs of Member States.

V. Second Draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan

The Second Draft of the OECS Regional Response Action Plan incorporates feedback and recommendations from the initial stakeholder workshop and subsequent consultations.

This version presents a more refined and comprehensive response Action Plan, addressing identified gaps and ensuring coherence with international best practices, regional policies, and Member State priorities. The second draft serves as the basis for further review and endorsement by key decision-makers.

VI. Orientation and Training with stakeholders on content of draft Regional Action Plan

A capacity-building session designed to familiarize OECS Member States, regional agencies, and key stakeholders with the content, structure, and operational procedures of the draft Regional Action Plan. The orientation includes presentations, practical exercises, and discussions to enhance understanding of roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms outlined in the Action Plan. The training aims to strengthen stakeholder readiness and promote effective implementation once the Action Plan is finalized.

VII. Simulation exercise and Report

A practical, scenario-based activity designed to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the OECS Regional Response Action Plan and related emergency procedures. It involves key stakeholders and response agencies engaging in a simulated emergency event (e.g., disease outbreak, natural disaster) to practice coordination, decision-making, communication, and resource management. The exercise helps identify strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement in preparedness and response capacities, ensuring that roles and responsibilities are well understood and operational mechanisms are functional.

VIII. Draft Final Report developed and submitted in accordance with the reporting requirements in Section 5 of these Terms of Reference.

The submission must be a comprehensive report comprising the work conducted by the Consultant, the challenges encountered, and actions taken to address challenges. The Action Plan Documents should be set out as an Annex to the Draft Final Report.

IX. Final Report developed and submitted in accordance with the reporting requirements in Section 5 of these Terms of Reference.

Indicative Implementation Schedule

Deliverables/Activities	Timelines to submit reports to the Project Manager and Implement Activities					
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Result 1: Inception Report	X					
Result 2: Workshop with Stakeholders			X			

Result 3: First Draft of Regional Action Plan for Response to Public Health Emergencies developed				X		
Result 4: Virtual workshop to discuss first draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan				X		
Result 5: Second Draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan					X	
Results 6: Orientation and Training with stakeholders on content of draft regional Action Plan					X	
Result 7: Simulation exercise and Report					X	
Result 8: Draft Final Report						X
Result 9: Final Report						X

4. Team Composition & Qualification Requirements for the Key Experts

The work requires use of initiative and capacity to work without close supervision, use of judgement, tact, and diplomacy.

(A) Key Expert

Academic Qualifications

An advanced degree (at a minimum a Masters) in Public Health, Emergency Management, or a related field

Specific Experience

- At least 5 years of experience working in Public Health, Humanitarian, Emergency Management or related work experience,
- At least 5 years of experience in working in public health emergencies
- At least 5 years of experience in design and implementation of emergency planning
- At least 5 years of experience in managing projects revolving around public health issues faced by Caribbean territories
- Experience working with Caribbean countries will be an asset

General Experience

- Demonstrated knowledge of work-based training and education programs
- Demonstrated Experience in presentations and leading working groups at meetings/workshops
- Demonstrated broad knowledge of and ability to utilize principles, methods, techniques and systems of project management
- Proven ability to prioritize and manage time effectively, and contribute to a team environment of respect, recognition, and mutual accountability

Languages

- Excellent knowledge of English – written and spoken

IT Skills

- Demonstrated ability to effectively use software programs such as Microsoft Office suite and online communication tools including MS Teams and Zoom.

5. Reporting Requirements and Time Schedule for Deliverables

- **Reporting requirements**
 - **The intended start date is November for Six (6) months (Catering for in ability to have certain activities during the month of December).**
 - The assignment will be carried out under the direct supervision of the Project Manager, who will be responsible for approving all Reports of the Consultant.
- **Submission and approval of reports**

All **reports** and outputs shall be submitted to the Project Manager in electronic form by email. The Project Manager is responsible for approving all submissions.

	Timeline to submit reports to the Project Manager					
Deliverables/Activities	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Result 1: Inception Report	To submit report one week from start of contract					
Result 2: Workshop with Stakeholders			X			
Result 3: First Draft of Regional Action Plan for Response to Public				To submit report		

Health Emergencies developed				by the second week		
Result 4: Workshop to discuss first draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan				X		
Result 5: Second Draft of OECS Regional Response Action Plan					To submit report by the third week	
Results 6: Orientation and Training with stakeholders on content of draft regional Action Plan					X	
Result 7: Simulation exercise and Report					X To submit report before the end of the 4 week	
Result 8: Draft Final Report						To submit report before the end of the first week
Result 9: Final Report						To submit report by the end of the second week

X= to be conducted/ implemented within timeline

The Project Manager reserves the right to request any necessary revisions of the documents and submissions to reach an appropriate outcome and quality control requirements.

6. Client's Input and Counterpart Personnel

- (a) Services, facilities and property to be made available to the Consultant by the Client include:
 - i. Material from previous and current emergency plans.
 - ii. Logistical arrangements for attendance at the meetings/workshop (Zoom access, country engagement, participant selection, materials) will be made by the Client
 - iii. No office accommodation is required and will not be provided by the Client.
 - iv. The Consultant shall be required to provide his/her personal computer (e.g., laptop or tablet) and Internet connectivity for use during this project.
 - v. No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the Contracting Authority/partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the Contracting Authority/partner country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.
- (b) Professional and Support Counterpart Personnel assigned to the Consultant:
 - i. The Project Manager will be designated by CARPHA and will have overall responsibility for the Project. The Project Manager will work closely with the Consultant to give guidance and to facilitate engagement for the development of materials.