



#### Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

# Pioneering initiatives for Sustainable Cities in Antigua and Barbuda

Region	Latin America and the Caribbean
Award Scheme	Dubai International Award
Start Year	2017
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

## Summary

Sometimes it is the actions of a committed, determined and passionate individual that make things happen. With draft legislation sitting for 10 years, Ruth Spencer and her local community groups engaged the public through radio, tv and social media to educate the people and bring awareness of the need for comprehensive legislation. On May 15, 2015, we assembled at the Parliament building to make statements.

## Background and Objective

I kept hearing the daily cries of people on the radio talk shows desperate for lower electricity costs. In Antigua we pay .50 cents US per kwh. As I move around the island, people connect with me in the communities, in the shops, and supermarkets, and stop me to ask for help with solar energy systems.

## Actions and Implementation

I encountered many problems especially in the building structures, utilized in the local communities to carry out their training activities. Many of the buildings had structural problems. The roofs for many of the buildings could not bear the weight of the panels and this resulted in extra cost to put the supporting rafters and support beams in place. In addition, the electrical wiring was not in compliance with the standards of the utility company and many of the buildings had to be rewired but those issues did not deter me, instead, I reached out to other groups and the support was received from civic minded persons who realized the social gaps that were being filled in the communities and provided the support. The groups came together and the hardware stores even provided materials at very low costs. At the various launches, the groups shared their experiences in how they welcomed the installation and training provided which benefited their members.. My partnership with the Department of the Environment, the first Caribbean Government to be accredited to the Adaptation Fund in August 2015, one of the financing mechanisms for the Paris Agreement has resulted in multiple benefits for the local communities. The OAS carried out an evaluation with an external consultant and the dialogue enabled me to share my experiences working with local community groups in combined adaptation and mitigation solutions. A key NDC is building upgrades and making them climate proofed to be able to withstand the impacts of extremes conditions which are some of risks and threats from Climate Change on our small vulnerable island. A video is attached where I attempted to show some of the poor housing conditions existing on the island and lived in by many of our vulnerable persons. The approved Adaptation Fund Pilot project will bring solutions providing drains that can absorb the volume of water that come with increased rainfall, the raising of houses on pillars to prevent flooding,, construction of water cisterns and other water storage containers to mitigate against the drought,, window protection from mosquitoes carrying diseases which include dengue fever, malaria, yellow fever zika virus and chikungunya, provision of solar panels on roofs of homes, which include opportunities for continued training in green jobs and building of a multi functional hurricane shelter with wheel chair access and a custom designed box hand revolving loan fund

## Outcomes and Impacts

With this initiative starting since 2012, before INDC's were drafted and submitted for the Paris Agreement, here on the Caribbean island of Antigua, on the local scene was a women piloting and catalyzing local action in solar energy. It was not a government entity. Ruth's Place was directly spearheading the process and providing the public education and awareness partnering with churches and other local community groups to get the message out that this technology will benefit everyone and is cost effective since we have the free resource- sunlight to make it possible. I was able to attract grant funding to pilot all these initiatives. The involvement of the Association of Persons with Disabilities demonstrated to the nation, that even those with handicaps and frailties must be included and be involved and solar energy application and use can be a major innovation for development as seen through their hydroponics project aimed at providing self employment for their membership.. Women's empowerment was achieved for women were involved and



No. Title Source Author Publication Title Volume Number Date Page Number 1 Renewable Energy for Sustainable communities [http://www.oas.org/en/media\\_center/press\\_release.asp?sCodigo=E-043/16](http://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=E-043/16) OAS-Press Department Renewable Energy for sustainable communities E-043/16 April 13, 2016 Edit 2 Water documentary for IRENA project submission <https://youtu.be/9dxJPuYxyNY> Ruth Spencer 2015 Edit 3 Sustainable Housing for persons with disabilities <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4vsGeUEVio> Ruth Spencer 2016 Edit 4 Civil Society in a Changing Climate [https://youtu.be/e\\_ayjuyA2eQ](https://youtu.be/e_ayjuyA2eQ) Caribbean News Service Dec 2015-Paris Summit Edit 5 Adaptation Fund-10th Anniversary Publication <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/antigua-barbuda-using-box-hand-community-lending-model-adaptation-finance/> narrative and pictures provided by Ruth Spencer July 2017 Edit 6 Panelist at Adaptation Fund-Side Eventt at SB46, Bonn, Germany, May 2017 <http://bit.ly/2qKNPwR> Ruth Spencer May 2017 Edit 7 Sustainable Cities Course-Module One-Antigua and Barbuda [http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/Biodiversity/Sustainable\\_Cities/Sustainable\\_Communities/Events/SC%20Course%20Antigua%20and%20Barbuda%202016/M](http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/Biodiversity/Sustainable_Cities/Sustainable_Communities/Events/SC%20Course%20Antigua%20and%20Barbuda%202016/M)



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OAS June 24-30, 2016 Edit 8 R.Spencer-Solar energy project Antigua Observer newspaper Edit 9 Antigua faces Climate risks Inter Press Service Desmond Brown <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/10/antigua-faces-climate-risks-with-ambitious-renewables-target/> narrative and video Edit 10 The green Initiative Caribbean Export Development Agency-EU Caribbean Export Development Agency <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuZvp5u18cw#t=18> Dec, 2013

## Conclusion

My actions and practices are supported by the Environmental Protection and Management Bill of 2015 and other new regulations currently being developed under the Paris Agreement. For Antigua as a country to develop GHG experts and enhance UNFCCC reporting, legislative changes are required to enhance the country capacities to efficiently develop GHG inventories, mitigation projections, and to track NDCs. I am a part of the local multi sector stakeholder team currently developing our first BIENNIAL UPDATE REPORT (BUR) report which include sections on the IPCC guidelines to measure the country's GHG emissions along with the associated software details. It is by complying with the various reporting components of the Paris Agreement and identifying our gaps and short comings and training needs that we can then submit projects for funding to build capacities and competencies to the Green Climate fund. This is a new climate change action for a small island of 90,000 persons whose contributions to GHG is miniscule yet as a country we are fully committed and dedicated to keep temperatures below 1.5 degrees, and we are adhering to the conditions of the Paris Agreement and I am doing my utmost as a private individual to educate citizens and for public education and awareness. Antigua is piloting and pioneering initiatives and we are showing the world that things can be done if we can put the legislation in place and work in strong partnerships.