



**Climate Change Training for Budget Officers across MDAs**

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**Minister of State**

**Ministry of Finance and the Public Service**

**Ministry of Finance and the Public Service Penthouse**

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**9:00am**

Salutations

I wish to express my appreciation to our partner at the Climate Change Division, (Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation) as we collaborate with the National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP) in organising this two-day workshop for budget officers within Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

As we approach the Budget Call which is at the end of September, this workshop training is well timed and represents an important factor for inclusion in budgets. Jamaica has been proactive in accessing climate finance to address the impacts of climate change, whether to support policies, reduce vulnerabilities of communities or decarbonize its economy through renewable energy sources.

The academic community has also been responsive to the Government's prioritising Climate Change as a critical factor in the economic programme, by offering degree programmes at the Masters level in Sustainable Energy and Climate Change.

We can all remember the impact of Hurricane Dean in 2007, Hurricane Ivan in 2004, and the list of tropical storms that have wreaked havoc on our coastlines, agricultural sector and communities, resulting in billions of dollars, worth damage to our economy. Climate Financing is therefore an imperative for the Financial Year 18/19 budget and moving forward must be a high priority for our budget officers; each year, the cyclones enter earlier, ahead of what has traditionally been called the hurricane season; resulting in damages equivalent to a significant percentage of our GDP. We can no longer sit as budget officers, planners of the nation's financial resource and the allocation thereof without being aware of the budgetary impact of Climate Change.

When you think about it, it is not only the damage to specific economic sectors, and communities, we must also consider the loss of time in manpower hours as employees cannot traverse the roadways due to landslides, flood waters and deteriorated roadways. This two-day training course is therefore being offered at a pivotal juncture in the budget cycle and the strategic planning process of MDAs.

Jamaica has already demonstrated internationally that it is serious about Climate Change and this workshop certainly is indicative of our resolve to mitigate its adverse impact.

This workshop is expected to enhance the ability of the Government to integrate climate change adaptation into national and ministerial budgets; increase the understanding among budget officers of Jamaica's National Adaptation Plan and importantly to ensure that our budget officers understand the implications of Climate Change on the budget process.

As I stand here today, let me make it absolutely clear, that Climate Change is not a myth, it is real. So, I am encouraging everyone present to pay keen attention to the presentations, as we arm you with the necessary tools and techniques for including climate change as a part of the budget exercise.

Budget officers, we are still in the hurricane season, and we have been blessed so far with not having a hurricane threaten our shores; however the devastation of tropical storms, and even tropical depressions have left scathing mark on our communities and roadways.

So let us take advantage of this opportunity that could result in Jamaica benefitting from Climate Finance which is a provision under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where developed countries are to provide developing countries with the financial resources to implement the UNFCCC. It is understood that these funds are primarily channelled through bilateral or multilateral institutions but opportunities also exist at the national and regional level. The largest source of climate finance is the Green Climate Fund (GCF) which is set to generate approximately 10 billion dollars a year by 2020.

Climate finance is therefore a key priority and this government aims to improve our efforts to make our island home more resilient to storms, hurricanes and natural hazards; as such long term planning is important.

As I close, let me reiterate that this two-day workshop is critical to the budget process, it is critical to the national economic programme, it is critical to the way we do business, it is critical to our goal to achieve 5% growth target.

Jamaica has, and will continue to be affected by increased frequency and intensity of tropical weather systems, which can in part be attributed to climate change. Billions of dollars are lost each year as a result of the adverse effects of Climate Change. While we cannot change the weather pattern, we can certainly plan and be better prepared for the impact.

Climate change without a doubt has had a significant impact on the national economy; the quality of the country's natural environment and the livelihoods of thousands of people, damage to infrastructure; isolation of communities; disruption of educational institutions system, healthcare services and the work flow.

So budget officers, Les Brown a well-known motivational speaker said "it is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared"; you have an opportunity now to be strategic in the budget planning process by incorporating Climate Change in the budget exercise- do not squander this opportunity, use it well, and use it wisely.

We are depending on you!

God bless!