

A Gender Responsive and Multi-Dimensional Socio-Economic and Climate-Based Vulnerability Analysis of the Saint Lucia Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets 2016



2021





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- 2 Zero Hunger
- 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
- 4 Quality Education
- 5 Gender Equality
- 6 Clean Water And Sanitation
- 7 Affordable and Clean Energy
- 8 Decent Work And Economic Growth
- 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- 10 Reduced Inequalities
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Acronyms

ASP	Adaptive Social Protection
CSO	Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECPA	Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment
FIES	Food Insecurity Experience Scale
GDI	Gender Development Index
GII	Gender Inequality Index
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
MPI	Multi-dimensional Poverty Index
NIC	National Insurance Corporation
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
PAP	Public Assistance Programme
SP	Social Protection
SLC-HBS	Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VA	Vulnerability Analysis
WFP	World Food Programme

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Climate change is one of the crucial issues of the twenty-first century affecting human populations globally. Saint Lucia faces high climate change impacts with vulnerability and adaptation capacity varying widely throughout the country depending on a range of demographic, socio-economic and spatial factors. Women are affected disproportionately by climate change due to existing socio-economic and psycho-social conditions such as poverty and food insecurity (Third National Communication on Climate Change for Saint Lucia, 2017). There is a direct connection between access to adequate social assistance and protection, healthcare, food and nutrition, water and sanitation and education, among other factors. Systemic barriers also propagate gender-based vulnerability. This vulnerability analysis focuses on the relationship between climate change and gender-based socio-economic vulnerability in Saint Lucia and uses the Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets 2016 (SLC-HBS 2016) as the data for undertaking this analysis.

High levels of poverty and dependence on weather/climate-based subsistence, such as agriculture and fisheries, coupled with generally low capacities to plan for, cope with, and respond to disasters, are underlying factors shaping gender-centred socio-economic climate-based vulnerability in Saint Lucia. This vulnerability analysis provides evidence from the Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets 2016 (SLC-HBS 2016) and other relevant surveys and reports to inform policymaking (structures, legislation, measures, rules, and regulations) and ensure that women's and men's vulnerability interests are addressed.

Given the recent pandemic crisis and the socio-economic and climate change vulnerability landscape of Saint Lucia, the analysis calls for a social protection system that is sustainable long-term, inclusive and that addresses poverty, vulnerability and inequality across a wide variety of dimensions (e.g., food security, income, employment, human capital, productivity, etc.). In this regard, there is a need for social protection policies and programmes that can address risks faced by individuals and households along their lifecycle. This can be addressed by a shock-responsive social protection system designed to cover different types of risks that often impact households and individuals (e.g. natural hazards, economic and health crises, e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic). In short, shock-responsive social protection systems will have a higher capacity to support vulnerable populations in different risk contexts.

Therefore, the analysis focuses on the degree of diversity in population, economic growth, poverty rates, as well as gender and human development indicators, labour-force participation, the informal economy, female-headed households, older women, widows, women's health, gender-based violence and vulnerable social groups (e.g., people living with disabilities and survivors of gender-based violence) who are largely excluded or ignored by social protection programmes and policies.

Further, it outlines the types of socio-economic and climate-based vulnerabilities and explores the extent to which national social protection systems may incorporate a gender-responsive approach in policy reform, program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The key dimensions of gender-responsive socio-economic and climate-based vulnerabilities covered in the analysis are realising human rights, as well as addressing economic and social risks and climate-based vulnerabilities.

The report concludes by presenting key findings from a gender responsive socio-economic and climate change risk analysis and identifying a way forward with specific recommendations for promoting gender-responsive adaptive social protection through legislation, policies and programmes in Saint Lucia. These entry points are informed by an analysis of key features of vulnerability, as well as examples of innovative and effective practices to meet the country's needs and for supporting the Government of Saint Lucia in building shock-responsive social protection efforts.

Vulnerability context

According to the SLC-HBS 2016 survey, poverty rates in Saint Lucia are high with wide variations in terms of gender, child and maternal mortality rates, low literacy and high school drop-out rates, and low labour force participation. Gender-based vulnerabilities are high across poverty, unemployment, education, income, living conditions, assets holdings, etc. and are exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The survey suggests that factors known to increase gender-centred vulnerability in Saint Lucia include poverty, low per capita household consumption, low education,

under-employment or no employment, wage disparity, a high wage dependency ratio and a low asset base. The current COVID-19 pandemic crisis has exacerbated women's situations in many of these areas and, as a result, it is likely that the number of people living in poverty has increased since the last 2016 survey was conducted. Keeping the survey data in mind, women and men in Saint Lucia are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and typically have limited resources such as assets or quality housing, among others, to help them mitigate risks or cope with the aftermath of weather-related crises.

A gender responsive socio-economic and climate change vulnerability analysis

This vulnerability analysis adopts a gender-responsive¹ approach that recognizes and works with gender differences and actively attempts to identify the root causes of vulnerabilities such as socio-economic inequality, shocks (e.g. COVID-19) and climate change risks. When a gender-sensitive analysis of socio-economic and climate change vulnerabilities is undertaken, it can help future social protection measures take a more nuanced and intersectional approach to risk reduction.

Vulnerabilities and risks that affect Saint Lucian women and men

The analysis of SLC-HBS 2016 suggests that in Saint Lucia, a multiplicity of gender-centred vulnerabilities² and risks exist. These may be co-variant, idiosyncratic³ or both. Saint Lucia's poor are also highly vulnerable to idiosyncratic shocks. If a threshold of US \$1.90 a day is used as a measure of poverty, a measure internationally benchmarked for moderate poverty, 0.7 percent of the population are considered poor. With a threshold of US \$4.00 purchasing power parity, 4.4 percent of the population are considered poor, whereas if the multi-dimensional approach was used, 24.2 percent of the population are considered poor. This means that any kind of shock — natural, political, economic, health or any combination of these (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) — is likely to push a large proportion of Saint Lucians into poverty.

The data analysis found the following types of gender-centred vulnerabilities in Saint Lucia:

- a) **Macroeconomic vulnerability:** Due to its size, location and openness, Saint Lucia is exposed to a variety of risks. Saint Lucia is affected by changes in the international markets, as evident in the decline in agriculture (banana export) and the global lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a recent study,⁴ the pandemic impacted socio-economic conditions because of border closures, trade disruptions, international market prices, and the government's national lockdown and other pandemic response measures. As a result, Saint Lucia experienced supply shocks (e.g., decreasing tourism, rising costs of imports, increased financial risks and debt servicing costs, hampered economic activity, social distancing measures, enhanced hygiene requirements, etc.) and demand shocks (e.g., shortfalls in government revenues, reduced public spending on goods and services, reductions in demand for tourism services due to border closures and reduced international commercial air travel, falls in disposable income affecting the sector's working populations, etc.). The study estimates that the projected 2020 GDP growth will decline by 7.2 percent while 70 percent of respondents reported a decline in their household income since the COVID-19 outbreak, and the services sector reported a 30 percent loss in jobs (e.g., wholesale, retail, restaurants, hotel, etc.).
- b) **Poverty and vulnerability:** Poverty is a major risk. Those who lived in rural areas and households with larger families were more likely to be poor. Over 38.1 percent of the rural population is poor. One in four persons still lives in poverty. Both poverty and vulnerability reflect gender disparities: 21 percent of women live in poverty compared to 14 percent of men, and 12.9 percent of women are vulnerable compared to 9.5 percent of men – and

¹ Gender-responsive is referred to gender focused socio-economic conditions, norms and inequalities.

² The concept of vulnerability is complex in development, and highly policy driven and relevant. The term is multi-dimensional in nature, which contributes to the challenges in defining and measuring it. Hence, vulnerability as a notion involves many interpretations depending on the perspectives of the organizations. Please see annex for details. Considering the purposes of this analysis, differentiated gender impacts of socio-economic and climate change – all definitions are used and adopted in this report. Please see Annex 1 for details.

³ Covariant risks can be regional or international (e.g., macroeconomic shocks) and idiosyncratic risks occur at the micro level and usually affect a portion of the population (e.g., unemployment, illness, widowhood).

⁴ The Socio-Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saint Lucia: Findings from the Saint Lucia COVID-19 High Frequency Phone Survey (COVID-19 HFPS), World Bank, 2020.

the trend is worsening. About 57.1 percent of those households within the lowest consumption per capita quintile are headed by women. The poorest 63.8 percent of women have primary education which means about 36 percent have no education. Around 2 percent of households were classified as food insecure based on the single Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

- c) **Labour market risks:** The unemployment rate stood at 24.1 percent in 2016 with women and youth unemployment being a major concern (lower labour force participation rates among women were 81.8 percent compared to men at 68.1 percent and unemployment among women was 17.5 percent and 16.9 percent for men as per SLC-HBS 2016). For example, 60 percent of the poor and the non-poor were wage employees pre-COVID, and approximately 10 percent of them could not go to their work and 63.1 percent of the poor wage workers were seasonal (informal workers)⁵.
- d) **Natural hazards:** The country, because of its location, is very prone to natural and environmental risks. Hurricanes, storms, heavy rains, landslides and flooding have resulted in extensive damage. According to the SLC-HBs 2016, poor women and men, female headed households in particular, are more prone to climate change and weather-based events due to their housing quality and living conditions (based on affordability).
- e) **Human development risks in a life cycle context:** Some risks are age specific. These risks have implications for survival and the ability to avoid or break the cycle of poverty. For example, low birth weight, low enrollment rates at school and child neglect are risks associated with the early childhood (0- to 4-years) age group. Among the working age group (16- to 60-years), the main risks are unemployment, inadequate access to education and low levels of education. Among the elderly (55-years and older), the risks identified are low/no income, poor health, unemployment, social isolation and limited access to health insurance.
- f) **Vulnerability to external shocks such as COVID-19 pandemic:** Saint Lucia's vulnerability to external shocks is a key factor in understanding labour market, economic, health and social risks. The critical issue to note is that some sectors have been particularly affected by the crisis and public mitigation measures, such as the accommodation (hotel) sector and the services sector. Employment in these sectors is primarily of women such that they are most affected by this sectoral vulnerability.

Key findings of the analysis

This vulnerability analysis suggests that the majority of the vulnerable population of Saint Lucia lack any social protection coverage, leaving them vulnerable to poverty, inequality, ill-health, and social exclusion. In addition, specific vulnerable groups of women (e.g., different types of female-headed households, disabled, and older women) in the country face particular vulnerabilities that are largely ignored by social protection programmes and policies. Some of the gender-centred socio-economic vulnerabilities are as follows:

- **Socio-economic vulnerability:** Poverty rates are higher in female-headed households (42.3 percent) and the share of poor children living in female-headed households increased from 48.6 percent in 2006, to 58.2 percent in 2016. Unemployment increased substantially among women and youth. Lower labour force participation rates among women exist — 81.8 percent in 2006 compared to 68.1 percent in 2016 as an example of economic vulnerability.
- **Children:** According to the survey, one in three Saint Lucian children were poor. In absolute numbers, nearly 17,000 children were poor, and they accounted for 39 percent of the poor population. The child poverty rate for female headed extended families is also much higher than in those headed by men, at 50.5 percent compared to 35.5 percent.
- **Climate change vulnerability:** Some of the evidence that emerged in the process of analysis is as follows: Nearly 7.8 percent of households were affected significantly by three key climatic events. The Gini coefficient⁶ of inequality remain almost same (43.1 in 2006 compared to 43.2 in 2016). At US \$4.00 purchasing power parity, 4.4 percent of the population was poor while 24.2 percent of the population was considered poor (multi-

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Gini coefficient is a single number aimed at measuring the degree of inequality in a distribution. It is most often used in economics to measure how far a country's wealth or income distribution deviates from a totally equal distribution. If all people have non-negative income (or wealth, as the case may be), the Gini coefficient can theoretically range from 0 (complete equality) to 1 (complete inequality); it is sometimes expressed as a percentage ranging between 0 and 100. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini_coefficient#Definition)

dimensional approach). Hence, their economic coping capacity is very limited as were their living conditions and household assets.

COVID-19 pandemic

The analysis as well as a study on the COVID-19 pandemic⁷ has exposed the precarious situation of women and men, including people working in the informal economy. Though the Government responded with a variety of measures in food and social support measures, the provision was not enough to manage risks of vulnerable populations. Specifically, the pandemic has uncovered many vulnerable situations like:

- **Poverty:** Poor households were affected more severely by the pandemic as they lack the capacities to properly fight COVID-19 and the related economic impact. All this is happening in an already challenging context, where 38.1 percent of the rural population and 61.9 percent of the urban population live in poverty. Households, with three or more children, that are already under the poverty line are at highest risk while child poverty increased with the number of children in the household, from 14 percent in single child households to 66 percent in households with four more children among others.
- **Children:** During the pandemic, many children were negatively affected by the closure of schools, including the fact that they no longer received school meals. According to a COVID-19 survey, pupils in all age groups were affected by the lockdown and school closure and not able to evenly access quality education due to, among other things, a lack of the technology needed in such crises.
- **Food security:** The survey suggests that a national school feeding programme (SFP) was being implemented before the crisis and that it had a pro-poor focus with students being selected upon request by parents to the Principal or teacher in charge of the school feeding programme: 76 percent of poor children had access compared to 69 percent of the non-poor. The SFP was available to approximately 19,000 school age pupils, equivalent to just over half the total number of children (3- to 16-year age group). Therefore, for many children, school feeding programmes were an important part of their daily food intake. School closures, coupled with reduced incomes, may mean a worsening of the country's malnutrition rates.
- **NEET⁸ youth:** These NEET youth who make up an estimated 31.6 percent of the population have lost opportunities for employment. The lack of formal jobs or opportunities to learn, and of alternative solutions to ensure their livelihoods, coupled with a drop in remittances constrained them to a higher level of inactivity, increased mental stress, and anxiety.
- **Older people:** For older people (55+), just 32.6 percent women were employed while the remaining were already vulnerable because of their or no incomes, with those living in rural communities particularly struggling. Their access to public services has been limited and disrupted for vital goods and services.
- **Entrepreneurs:** The self-employed and small entrepreneurs were left without access to work, business opportunities and financial support. Those working in seasonal agriculture jobs were particularly affected⁹.

Delivering gender responsive social protection in Saint Lucia

The Government of Saint Lucia has established policy programmes and measures to mitigate the impacts of poverty on households and communities, enhance economic and social opportunities for low-income individuals, and remove the root causes of social disintegration and exclusion, economic deprivation, and cultural alienation¹⁰. Saint Lucia has social protection systems in place, but they typically only cover formal sector workers.

At the policy level, there are several policies and programmes in place (e.g. National Social Protection Policy 2014, Public Assistance Act, Social Protection Bill, etc.) that target vulnerable groups in Saint Lucia. However, the

⁷ COVID-19 Heat Report Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, Saint Lucia, UNDP, UNICEF And UN Women Eastern Caribbean, 2020 and The Socio-Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saint Lucia: Findings from the Saint Lucia COVID-19 High Frequency Phone Survey (COVID-19 HFPS), World Bank (August 2020).

⁸ NEET: Not in employment, education or training

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Social protection and poverty alleviation programme documents of Government of Saint Lucia.

Government acknowledges that the country is not meeting its own commitments regarding the provision of social safety nets when it comes to vulnerable women and men.

Therefore, the question remains, to what extent have these instruments covered the country's ability to prevent, manage and overcome gender responsive socio-economic and climate change risks?

Critical gaps in gender-centred social protection in Saint Lucia

The survey suggests that even though there is a wide range of social protection programmes and transfers delivered to members of households, the responses were too few, in terms of coverage, to be able to establish their efficacy in socio-economic and climate change vulnerability mitigation. A holistic view of social protection and an integrated approach to the delivery of social protection appears to be missing to address gender responsive multi-dimensional socio-economic and climate change vulnerabilities. Therefore, this vulnerability analysis provides evidence that social protection programmes in Saint Lucia suffer a lack of clarity and focus in their objectives when it comes to addressing gender-sensitive socio-economic and climate change risks. The vulnerability data also revealed that many approaches within the country remain gender-blind, reflecting policy, institutional and technical challenges involving:

- a) **Inadequate policy frameworks:** Despite the existence of international, regional and national frameworks for the integration of gender, the integration of gender in national governmental plans, policies and institutional structures for social protection, including disaster risk reduction (DRR) or climate change adaptation (CCA) seems rudimentary.
- b) **Inadequate institutional capacity and coordination:** This could be partly because of the lack of coordination between ministries and focal points responsible for gender mainstreaming from inadequate technical capacity in understanding gender issues (socio-economic and climate change vulnerability and risk perspective), to fully mainstream gender within institutions and programming for DRR, CCA and other sectors.
- c) **Women's voices in decision-making:** Overall, the general approach to DRR/CCA lacks women's voices and has little consideration of women and gender balance resulting in gender blind DRR/CC strategies that reinforce and perpetuate inequalities between women and men.
- d) **Lack of data:** Gender inequalities are often unseen due to the lack of sex-disaggregated data that could highlight these inequalities. This both reflects and reinforces a related problem — the abstract nature of the concept of gender.

Gender specific constraints

Some of the constraints identified in relation to gender-sensitive vulnerability are as follows:

- a) Few social protection policies and strategies are guided /informed by a gender lens in Saint Lucia.
- b) Moreover, this vulnerability analysis shows that:
 - Social protection measures are not designed to protect and mitigate the impact of climate change events and pandemic on relevant at-risk groups.
 - Social protection measures are not gender responsive. They do not recognize women's unequal burden of unpaid care work and their over-representation in the informal economy.
 - Measures in place do not ensure sufficient food, especially for the most vulnerable.
 - Measures are not in place or inadequate to protect the jobs, pensions, and other health and social benefits of workers, including of self-employed workers.

The way forward

There are several social protection instruments provided by the government, non-governmental organizations, and development partners. At the policy level, there are several policies and programmes in place that target vulnerable groups in Saint Lucia. The Government of Saint Lucia envisioned that the existing relevant policy and legislation reform, with regard to social protection, will contribute to the substantial and equitable reduction of socio-economic vulnerability, climate change, disaster risk, and loss of life and livelihoods, as well as personal assets including small businesses. The vulnerability analysis provides evidence to advocate for and support recognition of the urgency of the severe socio-economic and climate change issues that affect society, particularly women and men differently. In this regard, the analysis calls for strengthening gender-responsiveness of social protection systems to address the specific

vulnerabilities faced by adults and children; and to leverage new technologies to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of social protection in Saint Lucia. This should:

- a) Revise social protection systems and policies to enhance socio-economic resilience by taking measures aimed at directly supporting vulnerable groups and households, including gendered vulnerabilities.
- b) Strengthen livelihoods to protect against gendered vulnerabilities.
- c) Revise macroeconomic policies to reduce gender vulnerabilities and devise gender-sensitive, shock-responsive economic policies to minimize the systemic risks that arise from economic crises like COVID-19.
- d) Promote mainstreaming of gender budgeting in government spending, taxation and monetary policy to help secure financing in support of gender-responsive social protection systems and services, to extend coverage and improve adequacy.
- e) Invest in (i) gender poverty and vulnerability assessments; (ii) improved data disaggregation, collection, quality, and analysis; and research and evidence on policy design features to improve social protection effectiveness.
- f) Support local, national and international women's rights organisations and movements to articulate demand for improved design and delivery of social protection for all women and girls, and to strengthen the demand for accountability.
- g) Build the capacity of government to design and deliver gender-responsive social protection systems and provide linkages to complementary services and programmes.
- h) Emphasize good governance and embed social dialogue at all steps from design and implementation to follow-up and evaluation.
- i) Promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
- j) Take advantage of new technology to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility of social protection.

2. INTRODUCTION

Saint Lucia is an island with an estimated population of 178,696 in 2017¹¹ up from 165,595 (51.1 percent female and 48.9 percent male) in 2010.¹² The economy of Saint Lucia went through several periods of rapid expansion and contraction from 2000 to 2016. The tourism sector of Saint Lucia serves as a key engine of growth for the economy. The construction sector acts as a catalyst of growth for the economy of Saint Lucia, accounting for roughly 60 percent of real GDP growth in 2016.

A range of challenges continue to hinder the growth potential of the economy, including but not limited to its vulnerability to natural disasters (including the COVID-19 pandemic), its significant reliance on imported energy, low labour productivity and a narrow production base. Poverty in Saint Lucia is primarily a rural phenomenon and poverty data from the Census Report (2010)¹³ show prevalence rates for poverty in excess of 35 percent in the rural districts of the south and south-west of the island (Anse-la-Raye/Canaries, Choiseul, Vieux Fort), with some pockets in the north-east of the island. The SLC-HBS 2016 survey used a number of approaches to measure poverty (e.g., monetary and multi-dimensional poverty)¹⁴ and found the head count poverty level was 25 percent. Based on the multi-dimensional approach, 24.2 percent of the population was found to be poor. The Gini coefficient of inequality did not change much from 43.1 percent in 2006 to 43.2 percent in 2016. Further, 40.3 percent of the population was deemed at risk of poverty.

The economically active population is estimated at one third of the population. Unemployment increased substantially over the period and, with that, women and youth unemployment. Lower labour force participation rates¹⁵ among women pervade – 81.8 percent from 68.1 percent, which also mirrors the share of the population out of the labour force. Overall, higher unemployment rates for women also exist at 17.5 percent for women compared to 16.9 percent for men.

However, the country is committed to addressing food insecurity, poverty, inequality, and livelihood vulnerability, as it affects all members of the population, including women and girls. An analysis of the 2016 Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets (SLC-HBS 2016) could inform policy and programming decisions to address these issues.

¹¹ Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2017.

¹² Population and Housing Census 2010, Government of Saint Lucia. Available online at <https://www.stats.gov.lc/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/StLuciaPreliminaryCensusReport2010.pdf>

¹³ GOSL. 2010. Population and Housing Census Preliminary Report, updated April 2011. Central Statistics Office

¹⁴ According to SLC-HBS 2016: a) monetary poverty: food expenditure for 2,400 kilocalories (kcal) and non- food expenditure, b) multi-dimensional poverty index includes education, living standards and security, employment, health, and environment and climate change vulnerability and designed to measure poverty through the measurement of deprivations.

¹⁵ The labour force participation rates are calculated as the labour force divided by the total working-age population. The working age population refers to people aged 15 to 64. This indicator is broken down by age group and it is measured as a percentage of each age group. OECD (2021), Labour force participation rate (indicator). doi: 10.1787/8a801325-en (Available online at: <https://data.oecd.org/emp/labour-force-participation-rate.htm>. Accessed on 13 March 2021))

3. METHODOLOGY

The gender-responsive socio-economic and climate change vulnerability analysis (VA) is a qualitative study completed using the SLC-HBS 2016 and other equivalent survey reports,¹⁶ administrative information, and household survey data, and in close collaboration with the Ministries of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports, and Local Development and the Saint Lucia Central Statistics Office (CSO).

Purpose

The mandate of this consultancy is to conduct a gender-responsive and multi-dimensional socio-economic and climate-based vulnerability analysis to inform policy and legislative reform and the design of integrated systems and programmes for adaptive social protection. The study will have two key dimensions: a gender responsive socio-economic and climate change vulnerability analysis and, based on findings, steps towards enabling a shock-responsive social protection system.

The evidence derived from this analysis will be used to inform policy and legislative reform and the design of integrated systems and programmes for adaptive social protection, including for pilot initiatives such as:

- a) Strengthening resilience through adaptive social protection from the business-as-usual approach to risk-informed basis of action, strengthen resilience, and coordination and capacity across scales and sectors.
- b) Support the shock-responsive instrument/s for an adaptive social protection policy foundation, disaster risk management and to undertake a gap analysis related to climate and economic shocks to: i) Improve targeting of beneficiaries by using climate and disaster risk information, ii) Adopt integrated solutions that reduce risk and strengthen adaptive capacity, iii) Introduce flexible design features to strengthen the programme's shock responsiveness, and iv) Secure financial resources needed for social protection programmes to deliver on resilience.
- c) Programme mainstreaming (e.g., integrating risk across all stages of the programming cycle including in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)/climate change in social protection).
- d) Analysis and innovation: linking vulnerability analysis with risk mapping and adaptation social protection planning.
- e) Inter-agency and process engagement.

Conceptual framework of analysis

The framework below will be used to understand how social protection systems relate to disaster risk management and could be used in emergency response.

- a) **System preparedness:** The extent to which social protection systems are prepared to respond to shocks.

For system preparedness, the study will analyse Disaster Risk Management (DRM) systems and the level of preparedness of the social protection system to play a role in responding to emergencies based on six aspects that are essential for a prompt and effective response¹⁷:

- **Institutional arrangements and capacity:** Legislation, policies and mandates of key DRM and social protection institutions, as well as the organisational structure that affects services delivery in these areas.
- **Targeting system:** Protocols, processes and criteria for identifying people and families that should receive social protection or DRM support.
- **Information systems:** Socio-economic, disaster risk and vulnerability information to enable decision making before and after a shock. This includes social and beneficiary registries, DRM information systems and issues related to accessibility, sharing protocols, data collection mechanisms, data relevance and accuracy, and security and privacy protocols.

¹⁶ 2010 Census, COVID-19 Heat Report Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women, 2020, The Socio-Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saint Lucia: Findings from the Saint Lucia COVID-19 High Frequency Phone Survey (COVID-19 HFPS), World Bank (August 2020).

¹⁷ Beazley et al., 2016.

- **Delivery mechanisms:** Mechanisms in place for delivering cash or in-kind assistance to social protection beneficiaries and/or people affected by shocks.
 - **Coordination mechanisms:** Mechanisms and protocols for coordinating DRM activities before and after a shock. These include the coordination of different government agencies, government levels, and of humanitarian agencies. The role of the social protection sector is of particular interest.
 - **Financing mechanisms:** Strategies and mechanisms such as budgetary instruments, contingent credit and market-based instruments like parametric insurances, including any financing of responses through social protection.
- b) **System responsiveness:** The ways that social protection systems could play a role in emergency assistance and other aspects of DRM. The study will use five main ways¹⁸ that social protection systems can directly provide assistance or play a supportive role in an emergency response, which can be used in any combination:
- **Vertical expansion:** Increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing social protection programme or system.
 - **Horizontal expansion:** Temporarily extending social protection support to new households.
 - **Piggybacking:** Utilising elements of an existing social protection programme or system for delivering a separate emergency response.
 - **Alignment:** Aligning some aspects of an emergency response with the current or possible future national social protection programmes.
 - **Design tweaks:** Making small adjustments to the design of a core social protection programme.

Sources of data

The SLC-HBS 2016 covers a wide array of subjects and provides comprehensive information on the socio-economic status of the population of Saint Lucia. This survey was a multi-topic household study to quantify poverty and living conditions, including household composition, consumption per capita and the food consumption score (FCS). The survey collected data from a randomly selected sample of 1,493 households, which represented 2.7 percent of the population of Saint Lucia. The sample is representative at the national level, as well as the urban and rural distribution. Households were measured on the basis of eighteen indicators and five dimensions: education; living standards and security; employment; health; and environment, climate change and vulnerability.

This analysis builds a profile of the status of gender-centred poverty and vulnerability in Saint Lucia and builds a profile of the status of gender-centred poverty and vulnerability in Saint Lucia. The analysis discusses income and non-income dimensions of well-being in Saint Lucia. While the focus is to understand the situation of the least well-off sections of the population (gender based), the analysis provides valuable information on the overall level of wealth and well-being for the whole of Saint Lucia. The analysis presents poverty and inequality figures at the national level.

¹⁸ OPM, 2015.

4. ANALYSIS OF GENDER-CENTERED SOCIO-ECONOMIC VULNERABILITIES

Although Saint Lucia has made significant socio-economic progress in recent years (2006 to 2016), the SLC-HBS 2016 survey indicates that women and men are still vulnerable to various macro- and micro-level risks. In Saint Lucia, a high percentage of the population lives along the coastal area and are thus exposed to a range of natural shocks and stressors. Most of these settlements have very little room for expansion except through hillside residential development areas that are highly susceptible to the ravages of extreme events such as hurricanes. Poor land use, planning, and associated squatter developments, as well as deforestation and developments in disaster prone areas have exacerbated vulnerabilities, while the absence of approved building codes and standards has resulted in a housing stock prone to damage by floods, landslides, and high winds.¹⁹

Among other factors, risks range from unemployment, especially among women, household vulnerability and poor housing and sanitation facilities to the lack of household assets to provide a buffer against unforeseen events – risks that are generally associated with high levels of poverty and illiteracy. The level of exposure to such risks is more severe among the vulnerable women and men population. For example, women unemployment not only leads to loss in productivity but also to a higher prevalence of households at risk.

This analysis will demonstrate how men and women in Saint Lucia face overlapping structural constraints that affect their ability to cope with emergent shocks. Social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities may differ in their origins, but their consequences tend to be interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

4.1 Environmental context

Saint Lucia is exposed to high levels of risk from meteorological and geological hazards, which have significant negative impacts on its economic and fiscal stability. Since 2010, two major natural disasters have hit Saint Lucia: Hurricane Tomas in 2010, resulting in an estimated loss of 40 percent of GDP, and severe flooding in 2013, resulting in the estimated loss of 8 percent of GDP.

The survey findings show that the poorest 20 percent of households were the most disadvantaged and deprived of water and electricity. Five percent of Saint Lucian households still rely on coal or wood, which has potential health and environmental implications; 38.9 percent of poor households still rely on pit latrines; and one in every twenty households has no toilet facilities. In terms of climatic vulnerability, 7.8 percent of households were affected significantly by three key events in the past five years: the Christmas Eve Trough (December 2013), Hurricane Tomas (October/November 2010), and the drought of 2009-2010.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

Most of the country's population is located along the coastal belt, where lowland agriculture, coastal resources, reefs, fisheries and tourism are the main livelihood sources. About 41 percent of the total population lives in the city of Castries and 55 percent in the Castries-Gros Islet corridor. Urbanisation is rapidly occurring, resulting in denser populations living in unplanned or informal settlements, which makes them more vulnerable to all risks.

The population distribution indicates that women were a larger percentage of the 25-34 age cohort (16.7% percent). Women's higher life expectancy means they comprise a higher percentage of the over 55 age group (19.8 percent). Their greater longevity guarantees that women are more likely to be left as widows than men as widowers. In other words, due to their higher life expectancy, women who are on the brink of poverty (vulnerable or at risk of falling into poverty) while married women may become even more vulnerable upon the deaths of their husbands. Further, Table 1 shows Saint Lucia's population is still very youthful (ages 15-44 represent almost 44.7 percent). The population profile indicates declining birth and death rates, and lower fertility rates while the change for those 55-years and older seem to continue. This demographic behaviour manifests in an increase

¹⁹ Saint Lucia: Country Document for Disaster Risk Reduction, NEMO, 2014.

in old-age dependency²⁰ and a fall in child dependency including implications in living conditions (e.g. housing, drinking water, etc.) for the elderly as well as other poor. Also, the composition varies across age groups with men dominating the youthful cohorts, while women dominate the older age cohorts, given that life expectancy is higher for women.

Table 1: Distribution of males and females in the population

	All (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Age			
0-14	23.1	23.8	22.3
15-24	16.8	16.9	16.7
25-34	14.8	13.8	15.7
35-44	13.1	13.3	12.9
45-54	12.9	13.2	12.6
55+	19.4	18.9	19.8
Marital status			
Never married	65.1	67.1	63.1
Married	20.9	21.3	20.6
Widowed	5.1	2.9	7.2
Legally separated	1.4	1.5	1.4
Divorced	2.1	2.1	2.1
Not stated	5.3	5.0	5.6
Education			
No education	15.6	16.8	14.6
Primary	35.3	38.4	32.4
Secondary	34.3	32.8	35.6
Post-secondary	14.8	12.0	17.4

Source: SLC-HBS 2016.

In addition, issues associated with the aging population include the cost of health care where noncommunicable diseases like diabetes and hypertension are prominent, and their physical inability to access health care due to issues of immobility and transportation.

Children. The children's population in Saint Lucia is 23.1 percent of the total population. As a result, the realities of child poverty's impact on the well-being of families, women, and entire households, particularly where one in three children live in poverty and 4 percent live in extreme poverty. More specifically, poverty is higher among (vulnerable) those children living in households with four or more children, where rates are twice as high (about 60 percent) and children living in female headed households (UNICEF 2017).

The elderly. The population of adults 60-years and older comprised 15,690 persons, or 9.4 percent of the total population in 2006, with males accounting for 7,136 (45.4 percent) and females for 8,554 (54.6 percent). By 2010 this age group numbered 19,751 (11.9 percent), of whom 9,105 (46 percent) were males and 10,646 (54 percent) females²¹. In 2016, the total population of 15,612 older persons population included 44 percent men and 56 percent women, and only 43 percent are covered by old age pensions. In addition, older Saint Lucians are still vulnerable to socio-economic conditions.

Persons with disabilities. According to the 2010 national census, there were 1,528 persons with disabilities, 688 of whom were male and 840 female.²² By comparison, the 2001 census found 9,313 persons with disabilities, 43.7 percent

²⁰ The dependency ratio is the ratio of the population aged 0-19 and that aged 65+ to the population aged 20-64. The child dependency ratio is the ratio of the population aged 0-19 to the population aged 20-64. The old-age dependency ratio is the ratio of the population aged 65 years or over to the population aged 20-64.

²¹ Saint Lucia, Central Statistics Office. 2010 Population and Housing Census, Preliminary Report (Updated April 2011) [Internet] 2011. Available at: <https://www.stats.gov.lc/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/StLuciaPreliminaryCensusReport2010.pdf> Accessed on 16 February 2012.

²² St. Lucia, Central Statistics Office. 2010 Population and Housing Census, Preliminary Report (Updated April 2011) [Internet] 2011. Available at: <https://www.stats.gov.lc/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/StLuciaPreliminaryCensusReport2010.pdf> Accessed on 16 February 2012.

male and 52.7 percent female.²³ The Census reported 1 percent of children (0- to 14-years of age), with a disability and 0.9 percent of youth, 15- to 24-years of age with a disability. Children with disabilities represent 0.2 percent of the national population. Fifty-two percent of children with disabilities were male and 48 percent female.

The disabled have also been identified as a vulnerable group. According to the 2010 census, 6 percent of all Saint Lucians have at least one disability. From the 2010 census of Saint Lucia, different types of disabled people (completely disabled) were as follows (in percent):

- a) Population by Difficulty Seeing: 0.3
- b) Population by Difficulty Hearing: 0.1
- c) Population by Difficulty Walking: 0.5
- d) Population by Difficulty Remembering: 0.2
- e) Population by Difficulty Self Care: 0.5
- f) Population by Difficulty with Upper Body Function: 0.2
- g) Population by Difficulty with Communicating: 0.3

Figure 1: Youth with Disabilities (YWD) as percentage of children and national population

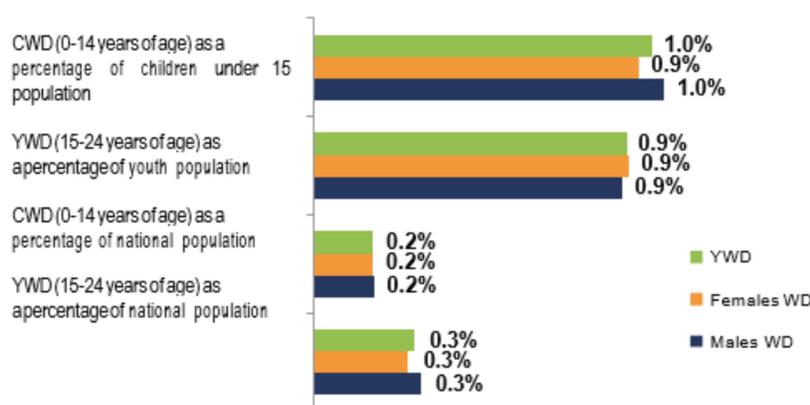


Table 2: Youth with Disabilities (YWD) as Numbers and percentage of Children and National Population

2010 Preliminary Census Data	Total
Males (0-18 years)	1259
Females (0-18 years)	1328
All children with disabilities (0-18 years)	2587

The National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities, which receives an annual government subsidy, addresses the needs of the population with disabilities. Older and disabled persons have higher unmet basic needs, specifically health care and most cases are not recognized often as part of an inclusive society but instead seen as a burden to social services and systems. Treatment for this particular group has not been equitable.

Household composition. In Saint Lucia, according to the SLC-HBS 2016 survey, households comprise of three members on average and are headed by females in two out of every five households. Female heads of households are disproportionately represented in one parent households, and women are also heading over half the extended family households that have the highest child poverty rates. Conversely, nuclear families, where poverty is lower, are rarely headed by women. The average poor, female-headed household has 4.7 persons, while the national average is 3.1 persons.

The gender differences were even more stark for rural and poor heads of households: rural households

²³ St. Lucia, Government Statistics Department. 2001 Population and Housing Census Report [Internet]; 2001. Available at: <https://www.stats.gov.lc/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2001-Population-and-Housing-Census-Report.pdf> Accessed on 16 February 2012.

headed by males had on average 2.8 persons compared to 3.1 persons for those headed by females, and among poorer populations, male-headed households had 3.4 persons on average compared to 4.8 persons for female-headed households, which was 1.7 persons above the national average. This suggests a higher probability of female-headed rural households comprising of extended multi-generational families with women, children and grandchildren all residing together, and may also suggest that the need to engage in the unpaid care of children, persons with disabilities, and ill and elderly family members may be a barrier to employment for older women.

Table 3: Mean household size in Male and Female headed households (HH)

Total	Total		Rural		Poor	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
3.1	3.0	3.2	2.8	3.1	3.4	4.8

Table 4 further illustrates how household heads are on average 53-years old and a majority have never been married. Regarding education, three of every five heads of households have not advanced beyond a primary school level of education, while the average total years of completed education is 10.75. More female heads of households had no education as compared with male household heads.

On the other hand, 31.4 percent of female headed households have secondary education but are still poor, and this is accentuated in rural areas.

Table 4: SLC-HBS 2016 Distribution of male and female headed households (HH)

	Total		Rural		Poor	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
HH's age						
15-24	1.1	2.6	0.9	1.1	1.4	4.9
25-49	44.8	43.8	42.2	35.9	42.7	52.4
50+	54.0	53.6	56.8	62.9	55.9	42.7
HH marital status						
Never married	44.8	61.3	47.0	66.4	61.6	73.2
Married	44.3	11.0	45.0	9.3	28.8	11.1
Widowed	4.0	16.4	3.8	20.2	4.1	8.7
Legally separated	1.7	2.0	1.3	1.6	1.6	0.0
Divorced	2.4	4.4	1.7	2.3	0.7	0.7
Not stated	2.7	5.0	1.3	0.2	3.2	6.4
Education of HH						
No education	6.7	8.5	9.0	18.8	8.7	10.4
Primary	52.8	44.7	59.2	49.3	72.5	51.3
Secondary	24.4	29.7	20.5	21.5	16.6	31.4
Post-secondary	16.1	17.1	11.3	10.4	2.3	6.9

Social and gender dynamics. Gender inequality is evidenced by higher poverty levels among women-headed households with children compared to households headed by men, pay gaps in the labour market and pervasive domestic violence.

Moreover, the survey suggests inequality for women due to teenage pregnancy and consequent childbearing (often with no support from absent fathers), contributing to dropping out of school and limited time and opportunities for work, further reinforcing gender gaps in the labour market. According to a study conducted in Saint Lucia, 11 percent of female respondents had experienced "violent sexual victimization, including rape and sexual assault and 12.2 percent of respondents feared being sexually assaulted "all of the time" or "most of the time."²⁴ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the domestic violence of persons has been increasing.²⁵

²⁴ UN 2012.

²⁵ National Report to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21 Saint Lucia, 2020.

Statistics from the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force (RSLPF) indicate that in 2006, there were 67 cases of rape reported to the police, 19 cases were investigated, 21 men arrested, and one case addressed by the court (RSLPF 2006). In 2007, there were 77 cases of rape reported to the police, 18 cases investigated, 12 men arrested, and no cases addressed by the court; for attempted rape there were 9 cases reported, one investigated, one man arrested, and no cases addressed by the court (RSLPF 2007). The statistics indicate the magnitude of various effects including physical and mental health effects impacting the lives of women: a) experiencing a trauma like sexual violence may interfere in their ability to work, b) women are forced to leave their homes to find safety because of violence, and c) women with children may stay with an abusive partner because they fear losing custody or contact with their children. This also shows the capacity constraints for growing crimes. Also, women who are survivors of domestic violence tend to show low self-esteem, reduced social and political participation, weak interpersonal relationships and low productivity at work—all factors that narrow their capabilities, life opportunities, and options.

4.3 Poverty

According to the survey, Saint Lucia recorded a reduction in poverty from 2006 to 2016 from 28.8 percent to 25 percent. This decline was most marked in rural areas, with a decrease from 41 percent to 32.9 percent. The poverty gap fell nationally by 1.5 percent between 2006 and 2016 from 9.0 percent to 7.5 percent²⁶. According to the Labour-Force Survey (LFS) Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI)²⁷ in 2017, 45 percent of persons were deprived in at least 25 percent or more of the eleven deprivation indicators.

The SLC-HBS 2016 Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) included dimensions of citizen security, food security, and health insurance, along with three indicators²⁸ of climate change vulnerability.²⁹ Findings are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5: 2016 SLC-HBS MPI in Saint Lucia

Classification	% of population	Per capita adult equiv. Cons.
Multi-dimensional poor	21.4% (36,780)	Below the poverty line
Vulnerable due to social deprivation ³⁰	54.3% (77,760)	Above the poverty line
Vulnerable due to consumption/income	3.6% (6,440)	Below the poverty line
Not multi-dimensional poor /not vulnerable	29.9% (51,660)	Above the poverty line

The Enhanced Country Poverty Assessment (ECPA, 2016), another multi-dimensional poverty measurement, defines the poor as persons living below the 2016 annualised poverty line of EC \$6,443.00 (i.e., approximately 43,000 Saint Lucians). This falls below the consumption-based poverty rates, defined as the proportion of individuals with household-level per-capita consumption lower than the international poverty line EC \$5.13 (US \$1.90 a day in 2016 PPP).

²⁶ The Poverty Gap measures poverty by looking at household per capita income and consumption (e.g. calculating the cost of living for basic food, clothing, and shelter), i.e. the difference between a household's expenditure and the poverty line for all poor households. For example, the World Bank is using US \$4 - a day PPP for intra-regional comparison. Based on this, the poverty line for Saint Lucia is US \$4 a day PPP is $4 \times 1.952 \times 365 = \text{EC } \$2,890$ per year or EC \$237 per month. On this basis, the poverty headcount in Saint Lucia is 4.4 percent using the US \$4 a day PPP line.

²⁷ The MPI is an index designed to assess poverty through the measurement of deprivations. Multi-dimensional poverty refers to two main characteristics. Firstly, it includes people living under conditions where they do not reach the minimum nationally agreed standards in indicators of basic functioning, such as being healthy and being educated and informed. Secondly, it refers to people living under conditions where they do not reach the minimum standards in several areas at the same time. Thus, the MPI combines two key pieces of information to measure acute poverty, the incidence of poverty (the proportion of people within a given population who experience multiple deprivations), and the intensity of their deprivation—the average proportion of (weighted) deprivations they experience.

²⁸ As per SLC-HBS 2016 survey (page 75), first indicator refers to a household being deprived if it did not receive a regular supply of water, defined as receiving water less than four times a week in the past twelve months, the second indicator refers to a household as being deprived if it had not paid dwelling related insurance to assist the household in recovering from a shock event to the household in the past year, households who are renters or living in a dwelling unit with a wall roof would not have this deprivation or vulnerability and the third indicator in this dimension defines a household as being deprived if it experienced the effects of a natural hazard or shock in the past five years.

²⁹ Enhanced CPA Report (2016: 209).

³⁰ The SLC-HBD 2016 survey defines poverty as a pronounced deprivation in well-being while social deprivation as social exclusion.

The indigence line was EC \$2,123 in 2016. At US \$4.00 purchasing power parity, 4.4 percent of the population was poor while 24.2 percent of the population was considered poor using the multi-dimensional approach. The ECPA (2016) also reveals increasing urban poverty (poverty in urban areas being almost half of the level in rural areas) due to migration from rural areas, with poverty concentrated among single female households with children under five years.

SLC-HBS 2016 findings suggest that 5.3 percent of households and 7.1 percent of individuals were indigent: based on their reported expenditures, they did not have the wherewithal to ensure that their basic food requirements for healthy existence could be met. According to the survey, indigence or food poverty fell to 1.3 percent in 2016 from 1.6 percent in 2006: it was 7.1 percent in 1995.

The data collected by the CSO after 2016 suggests that women in Saint Lucia continue to account for the larger percentage of the poor. The child poverty rates in Saint Lucia dropped from 36.7 percent to 34.5 percent between 2006 and 2016, while child poverty rates increased in rural areas to 41.4 percent compared to 32 percent in urban areas. Child poverty increased sharply with the number of children in the household, from 14 percent in single child households to 66 percent in households with four more children. These households account for over 40 percent of children in poverty. Although the poverty rate for single child households has decreased since 2006, it has risen for households with more children. The decrease in the overall child poverty rate is thus due primarily to a reduction in the proportion of children living in households with three or more children rather than a decrease in poverty rates.

The survey shows that the child poverty rate was higher in female-headed households than in those headed by males at 42.3 percent compared to 27.4 percent, a difference of almost 15 percentage points. That is, the share of poor children living in female-headed households (58.2 percent) was higher than the proportion living in male-headed households (41.8 percent). Despite the higher poverty rate in female-headed households and the increase in the number of poor children living in them, it was noted that over 40 percent of poor children continue to live in male-headed households.

Table 6: Child poverty by sex of head of household

Sex of HoH	Poverty Status			Poverty Rates		Child Shares of Female and Male HH Households			
	Poor	Not Poor	Total	2016	2006	Poor Households		All Households	
						2016	2006	2016	2006
Female HoH	9,800	13,369	23,169	42.3%	37.9%	58.2%	48.6%	47.4%	47.6%
Male HoH	7,031	18,642	25,673	27.4%	36.4%	41.8%	51.4%	52.6%	52.4%
Total	16,831	32,011	48,842	34.5%	37.1% ³¹	100%	100%	100%	100%

The survey found that the poverty rate for female-headed households has increased, while it has fallen for male-headed households. As a result, the share of poor children in female-headed households has risen from approximately 49 percent to 58 percent. In other words, this indicates that the average number of children in poor female-headed households barely changed between 2006 and 2016 (from 2.9 to 2.8), whereas in poor male-headed households, this ratio decreased from 3.0 to 2.3. Despite this change, the respective shares of all children living in female- and male-headed households (47.5 percent and 52.5 percent) remained constant between 2006 and 2016. Female poverty rates are high in single-parent households (32.9 percent), which are predominantly headed by women. Moreover, the child poverty rate for female-headed extended families is also much higher than for those headed by men (50.5 percent compared to 35.5 percent). Conversely, if female-headed households are nuclear families, the child poverty rate is much lower.

Gender inequality. In addition to high levels of income disparity and multi-dimensional poverty, inequality continues to be a concern, particularly among females, many of whom are heads of poor and/or vulnerable households. There was zero progress in inequality between 2006 and 2016. The income Gini index was estimated at 51.3, with the bottom

³¹ The survey explains that there is negligible difference due to missing values in 2006 data (page 84, table 5.4, SLC- HBS 2016).

40 percent of the income distribution earning slightly more than 10 percent of the total income of the country.³² The low-income groups have lower access to services such as improved sanitation, insurance coverage, and financial support.

In addition to the above, just over half of Saint Lucia's housing stock (52.5 percent) was constructed between 1980 and 2004, with 20.5 percent of the housing stock built during the 1990s. Close to a third of the households did not know when their dwelling was built (29.6 percent). The survey suggests that there is a clear trend that the wealth status of households does influence the choice of housing construction materials as well as the size of the house used in Saint Lucia and poor households especially women headed households with large family size are vulnerable to poorly built homes.

Poverty gap. The SLC-HBS 2016 survey suggests that the poverty gap in the country was 8.6 percent. The poverty gap index estimates how far, on average, the poor are from the country's poverty line, or minimum level of income deemed adequate to meet essential needs.^{33,34}

Poverty in Saint Lucia has traditionally been a rural phenomenon. According to the SLC-HBS 2016 survey, over 36 percent of the rural population are poor. In other words, poverty is highest in Dennery and Vieux-Fort (above the national rate by 45 percent and 34.6 percent, respectively), and lowest in Gros Islet (11.8 percent below the national rate) while the poverty rate has increased in the capital, Castries, at 27.6 percent (2016) against 13.1 percent (2006). Table 7 provides poverty headcount rates by district in detail.

Table 7: Poverty Headcount Rates by District 2006 compared to 2016

	SLC-HBS 2006	SLC-HBS 2016	Change
Castries City	13.1	27.6	14.5
standard error	3.59	5.15	6.28
Castries Sub-Urban	22.2	19.0	-3.2
standard error	3.15	2.96	4.32
Soufriere*	42.5	25.5	-16.9
standard error	16.18	8.66	18.35
Vieux Fort	23.1	34.6	11.5
standard error	7.05	5.91	9.20
Gros Islet	24.4	11.8	-12.6
standard error	4.74	3.80	6.07
Anse la Raye/Canaries	44.9	38.0	-6.9
standard error	9.09	8.20	12.25
Choiseul*	38.4	16.9	-21.6
standard error	7.17	4.55	8.49
Laborie*	42.1	23.4	-18.7
standard error	10.08	5.68	11.57
Micoud	43.6	31.2	-12.4
standard error	7.57	6.64	10.07
Dennery	34.2	45.0	10.9
standard error	5.82	6.15	8.47

³² World Bank, 2020.

³³ Grusky, David B.; Kanbur, Ravi, eds. (2006). Poverty and Inequality. Studies in Social Inequality. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. ISBN 978-0-8047-4843-8

³⁴ Ravallion, Martin Poverty Freak: A Guide to Concepts and Methods. Living Standards Measurement Papers, The World

Total	28.8	25.0	-3.8
standard error	2.03	1.74	2.68

The disparity drives migration to Castries, with accompanying social consequences such as rural depopulation and loss of established social networks including social impacts on the family resulting from poverty, e.g. break up of families, domestic violence and abuse of women and children.³⁵

Table 8: Poverty Gap Measure by Subnational Regions (2006 and 2016)

District	SLC-HBS Poverty gap			Contribution to Overall Poverty			Distribution of Population		
	2006	2016	Change	2006	2016	Change	2006	2016	Change
Castries City	3.4	10.3	6.9	3.8	22.6	18.8	10.1	16.5	6.5
Castries Sub-Urban	6.7	6.2	-0.5	23.0	20.1	-3.0	31.0	24.6	-6.4
Anse la Raye/Canaries*	17.7	12.5	-5.3	12.3	8.3	-4.0	6.2	5.0	-1.2
Soufriere*	12.4	8.0	-4.3	7.8	5.6	-2.2	5.7	5.2	-0.5
Choiseul*	9.7	4.5	-5.2	3.5	1.9	-1.7	3.3	3.2	-0.1
Laborie*	10.6	5.4	-5.1	5.1	2.9	-2.3	4.4	4.0	-0.4
Vieux Fort	10.2	8.1	-2.2	9.8	9.5	-0.3	8.6	8.8	0.3
Micoud	14.1	11.9	-2.2	17.2	16.0	-1.2	11.0	10.1	-0.9
Dennerly	11.4	10.6	-0.9	9.3	9.4	0.2	7.3	6.7	-0.6
Gros-Islet	5.9	1.8	-4.0	8.2	3.8	-4.4	12.6	15.9	3.3
Total	9.0	7.5	-1.5	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0

Table 9 illustrates differences in the poverty gap by urban and rural contexts. The gap for the urban poor was 6.1 percent, compared to 9.9 percent for the rural poor. Also, 18.7 percent of households and 25 percent of individuals were poor on the basis of their reported expenditures on food and non-food items, respectively.

Table 9: SLC-HBS Poverty situation in rural and urban contexts

Context	Poverty Headcount Rate			Distribution of the Poor			Distribution of Population		
	2006	2016	Change	2006	2016	Change	2006	2016	Change
Urban	23.1	21.8	-1.3	54.4	61.9	7.6	67.9	71.0	3.2
Rural	41.0	32.9	-8.0	45.6	38.1	-7.6	32.1	29.0	-3.2

More than 50 percent of the poor are under 20-years of age and poverty is slightly higher among men than women: 29 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The largest percentage of poor males are engaged in agriculture and forestry.

4.4 Food and Nutrition Security

According to the survey, one-quarter of households' experience food insecurity, which appears to be closely linked to the level of poverty. There was no improvement in terms of inequality between 2006 and 2016 (43.1 percent compared to 43.2 percent Gini coefficient). Farm holders make up 22 percent of the national population (Census of Agriculture, 2007). The average age of farmers is 55-years of age and the most productive farmers are between 45- and 55-years old. Female farmers are normally over 30-years of age, with the average age estimated at 55-years.

The crop subsector is the largest and most productive, with most farmers growing leafy vegetables, vine fruits, root crops and tree crops to a lesser extent. There are 300 listed livestock farmers, of whom an estimated 52 percent are female. Most of these farmers husband small ruminants and pigs and nearly all grow crops. Registered small-scale fisherfolk number 1,700. There is a smaller number of inland fishery or aquaculture farmers. Many farmers are involved in all three subsectors.

Sex-disaggregated data for the agriculture sector is unavailable or outdated. The most recent information, which comes from the Census of Agriculture Saint Lucia 2007,³⁶ suggests a disparity between male and female farm holders, with females at 30 percent and males at 70 percent.

³⁵ Saint Lucia CPA 2006 and 2018.

³⁶ Paul, Rufina (2007). Gender Dimensions of the Agricultural Sector.

4.5 Earning potential

4.5.1 Labour-Force Participation

The labour-force participation rate is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work; it provides an indication of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services relative to the working-age population.³⁷

According to the SLC-HBS 2016 survey, in Saint Lucia, the working-age population consisted of 143,635 individuals, with roughly equal proportions of males and females. Still, women face lower labor force participation rates at 68.1 percent compared to men at 81.8 percent. Gender gaps in labour force participation in Saint Lucia have continued for a long time for both youth aged 15- to 24-years and for older adults.

The 2017 poverty assessment survey confirms that teenage pregnancy and the burden of childcare, although declining, are still barriers to the labour-force participation of younger unskilled women. Moreover, engagement in the unpaid care of children, persons with disabilities and ill and elderly family members is a barrier to employment for older women.

Labour force participation is also affected by the level of education. For example, the majority of those in the labour force with post-secondary and tertiary education in Saint Lucia are women, suggesting that for women, higher levels of education can lead to greater levels of labour force participation. On the other hand, gaps between men and women are larger for the employment-to-population ratio than for labour force participation (SLC-HBS 2016). This may indicate systematic discrimination against women and other barriers to labour force participation. According to a study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)³⁸ in small island countries, discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, or other characteristics, during or at the job application stage, recruitment and or working conditions, prohibits many women in the workplace. According to a World Bank study,³⁹ disparities in labour force participation, especially in African labor markets, is caused mainly by very limited job prospects, differences in education, power dynamics in the household and other human capital variables. Also, in many small and middle-income countries, marriage cancels job opportunities for women, especially in the private sector, however, it is protected because of legal provisions in developed countries while marital status, single or married, is a very good proxy for female household responsibility.

Survey findings also suggest that between 2006 and 2016, the labour-force participation rate increased from 31.4 percent to 36.7 percent for those 15- to 19-years-old, while workers 55 and over, both male and female, also showed a substantial jump. In terms of age, labour-force participation rates were highest among males and females aged 25- to 54-years. Table 10 shows the change in labour force participation between 2006 and 2016.

Table 10: Labour force and labour force participation rate, by sex and age group (2016)

	SLC-HBS 2006			SLC-HBS 2016			Change		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Labour force ('000s)									
15-19	3.8	1.7	5.4	3.1	2.3	5.4	-0.7	0.7	0.0
20-24	4.9	4.5	9.4	7.3	5.5	12.7	2.4	1.0	3.3
25-29	4.7	3.4	8.1	5.3	6.4	11.7	0.7	3.0	3.6
30-34	4.3	4.2	8.5	5.5	5.5	11.1	1.2	1.3	2.5
35-39	4.8	5.3	10.2	5.9	5.1	11.1	1.1	-0.2	0.9
40-44	4.8	3.9	8.7	4.8	5.4	10.2	0.0	1.6	1.6
45-49	3.4	3.6	7.0	5.3	4.6	9.9	1.9	1.0	2.9
50-54	2.3	2.0	4.3	5.3	5.0	10.3	3.0	3.0	6.0
55-59	2.3	1.2	3.5	4.1	3.4	7.5	1.8	2.2	4.0
60-64	1.4	0.8	2.1	2.7	1.9	4.6	1.3	1.2	2.5
65+	2.0	0.7	2.7	2.9	1.8	4.6	0.9	1.0	1.9
Total	38.7	31.2	70.0	52.2	46.9	99.2	13.5	15.7	29.2

³⁷ Gender and Work in The Caribbean – St. Lucia (2018)

³⁸ ILO study on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), 2015

³⁹ Gender Disparities in African Labor Markets Caused by Jobs Scarcity, Not Discrimination – World Bank, 2010.

	SLC-HBS 2006			SLC-HBS 2016			Change		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Participation rate (%)									
15-19	41.0	20.5	31.4	47.2	28.4	36.7	6.2	8.0	5.4
20-24	82.5	63.8	72.3	94.8	83.9	89.7	12.3	20.1	17.5
25-29	90.3	65.9	78.1	94.4	86.8	90.1	4.1	20.9	12.0
30-34	92.5	76.5	83.8	93.3	84.4	88.6	0.8	8.0	4.8
35-39	95.4	78.5	85.8	96.3	88.5	92.5	0.9	10.0	6.8
40-44	92.6	68.4	80.0	95.9	95.8	95.8	3.3	27.4	15.8
45-49	91.9	75.7	82.8	96.0	87.6	91.9	4.1	11.9	9.1
50-54	78.7	60.5	69.1	96.2	84.2	90.0	17.4	23.7	20.9
55-59	76.4	45.4	62.3	91.1	69.0	79.6	14.7	23.6	17.3
60-64	70.4	24.8	42.5	78.3	54.5	66.3	8.0	29.7	23.7
65+	28.3	8.1	16.9	36.1	19.1	27.0	7.9	11.0	10.1
Total	71.8	51.1	60.8	81.8	68.1	74.7	10.0	17.0	13.9

As the labour-force participation of women has increased, so has the occupational segregation between women and men. According to the SLC-HBS 2016 survey on the distribution of women and men across industries and occupations, a higher percentage of men worked in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing, transportation, storage, communication and construction. Most employees in the growing service industries—accommodation and food service, education and public services were women. Of note, these sectors have been deemed highly vulnerable to the impacts of extreme climate related events such as increased rainfall variability, land degradation and storm events largely because of the impact these events can have on service demand and availability.

Furthermore, even though women may be involved in highly skilled professional fields of employment such as clerical support workers, sales and services while men are involved in skilled agricultural work, craft and related trades in plant and machine operations, earnings of women are still lower compared to men. Table 10 also shows 5.3 percent (52.2 percent male and 46.9 percent female) gender gaps in the labour force in Saint Lucia.

Comparing poverty to rural labour force participation and unemployment (see Table 11), there is significant difference in participation with 63.5 percent of women participating and 80.1 percent of men participating, leaving 28.4 percent poor women compared to 25.9 percent poor men.

Table 11: Male and female labour force participation, employment and unemployment rates

	Labour force participation rate		Unemployment rate	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	81.8	68.1	16.9	17.5
Household head's sex				
Male	82.0	70.1	14.9	18.1
Female	81.2	66.5	22.2	17.1
Area of residence				
Urban	82.5	69.9	16.7	16.4
Rural	80.1	63.5	17.2	20.4
Poverty Status				
Poor	75.1	62.1	25.9	28.4
Non-poor	83.6	69.8	14.3	14.4
Residence and Poverty				
Urban – poor	77.2	62.9	29.3	30.3
Urban – non-poor	83.7	71.6	14.0	13.0
Rural – poor	72.5	60.6	21.5	25.4
Rural – non-poor	83.5	64.8	15.3	18.3

4.5.2 Employment

The share of the working poor in total employment fell for men but not for women in all age groups, a sign of the inferior labour-market experience for women in both survey years. In 2006, most of the working poor were in sectors such as agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing, while this shifted to finance, insurance, real estate and business services in 2016.

Table 12: Working poor and share of working poor in total employment and by sex

	SLC-HBS 2006			SLC-HBS 2016			Change		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Working poor ('000s)	8.5	4.5	13.0	6.9	5.2	12.1	-1.6	0.7	-0.9
% of working poor in total employment	24.7	16.9	21.3	16.6	14.9	15.9	-8.1	-1.9	-5.5

More men than women are engaged in paid employment in Saint Lucia. In 2015, there were 28,141 male employees and 25,983 female employees, compared to 30,073 male and 29,154 female employees in 2016.⁴⁰ The pattern of overall employment shows a shift among the major economic sectors.

Still, according to the survey, the share of the working poor in total employment fell for men but not for women in all age groups, again indicative of the inferior labour-market experience for women in both survey years. Gaps between women and men are larger for the employment-to-population ratio than for labour-force participation. This may indicate barriers to workforce participation, such as occupational discrimination against women. The average male employment-to-population ratio was 73.5 percent, 33.9 percent higher than the average older adult female ratio of 54.9 percent.⁴¹ Table 13 below presents labour force trends.

Employment rates were highest among males aged 35- to 54-years-old. In almost all age categories, the gender gap can be observed. Unemployment rates were highest among males and females aged 15- to 24-years-old and were particularly acute among men in this category (34.5 percent).

Table 13: Labour force trends (based on sex)

Labour force indicators	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Labour force	101,608	104,625	102,364	102,005	100,976
Male	55,786	56,685	53,727	54,929	52,672
Female	45,821	47,940	48,637	47,076	48,304
Employed labour force	77,131	82,379	81,718	81,416	83,977
Male	43,884	45,694	43,998	44,750	44,824
Female	33,247	36,685	37,720	36,666	39,153
The unemployed	24,477	22,246	20,646	20,589	16,998
Male	11,903	10,993	9,729	10,179	7,848
Female	12,574	11,254	10,917	10,410	9,150
Unemployment rate %	24.1	21.3	20.2	20.2	16.8
Male	21.3	19.4	18.1	18.5	14.9
Female	27.4	23.5	22.4	22.1	18.9
Labour force as a percentage of total population (%)	58.8	60.1	59.0	59.9	59.1
Labour force as a percentage of population 15 years and over OR Labour force participation rate (%)	72.2	72.7	71.4	71.4	71.0

Gender-based income inequalities. The SLC-HBS 2016 survey suggests substantial differences in the levels of inequality among women and men as wage and salary workers, including a huge disparity from the highest to the lowest-paid female workers. According to the survey, females earned less or the same as males in 2006 and less than males in every educational category in 2016. In fact, the survey suggests that women in Saint Lucia are likely to earn less than men regardless of their occupation, industry, employment status, or educational achievement. Between 2006 and 2016, men experienced a larger increase in median earnings than women. Table 14 provides the gender earning situation.

Table 14: Gender and earnings

	Median Earnings by Groups		
	SLC-HBS 2006	SLC-HBS 2016	percentage change
Total	1,075.0	1,510.3	40.5

⁴⁰ ILO.

⁴¹ Gender at Work in the Caribbean, ILO (2018).

Male	1,075.0	1,600.0	48.8
Female	1,000.0	1,400.0	40.0

The share of female low earners⁴² was 6.4 percent against 3.5 percent of males, representing a 2.9 percent difference. This is more evident in the age 55 to 64 category, especially in rural areas, where 6.8 percent of females are low earners or underemployed. Recent UN Women findings suggest women also receive lower pay in the less monetarily valued service-oriented industries and occupations⁴³. Table 15 presents the composition of low earners.

Table 15: Composition of low earners (based on sex and age)

	SLC-HBS 2006	SLC-HBS 2016	Change
Total	3.2	5.3	2.1
Gender			
Male	2.9	4.4	1.5
Female	3.5	6.4	2.9
Age group			
15-24	4.0	3.9	-0.2
25-54	3.0	5.4	2.4
55-64	2.9	6.1	3.2
Area of residence			
Urban	3.8	4.7	1.0
Rural	1.7	6.8	5.1
District			
Castries City	9.6	5.6	-4.0
Castries Sub-Urban	3.4	6.7	3.3
Anse la Raye/ Canaries*	3.0	7.7	4.7
Soufriere*	0.0	1.2	1.2
Choiseul*	0.0	5.1	5.1
Laborie*	0.0	6.2	6.2
Vieux Fort	0.8	3.3	2.5
Micoud	3.1	2.2	-0.9
Dennerly	0.0	14.0	14.0
Gros-Islet	3.2	2.8	-0.4
Completed Educational Levels			
None	24.8	12.8	-12.0
Primary	3.0	5.8	2.8
Secondary	3.1	4.8	1.7
Tertiary	2.9	5.4	2.4

Where there were disparities by sex, they were smaller for secondary and tertiary levels of education. This indicates that education alone does not eliminate the gender wage gap except for the very educated and that other gender-associated variables affect income, such as equity in the labour market. For example, there are policy/legal gaps in parental leave. If men were legally granted parental leave or if care services were more accessible and affordable, then women could return to paid full time work at higher rates, if they choose to.

Pay inequity also means that women's ability to pay for care services is limited, especially if care services such as eldercare or childcare are costly or inaccessible. Additional challenges are the sociocultural norms that have men doing less care work in the home than women and the lack of family-friendly leave policies, e.g. only providing women access to parental leave, instead of both parents. Table 16 provides the situation of income based on educational attainment.

Table 16: Income based on educational attainment and sex

Completed Educational Levels	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Not Stated
SLC-HBS 2006					
Male	1,600.00	1,075.00	1,075.00	1,600.00	1,075.00

⁴² The survey defines low earnings as people earning less due to short working hours.

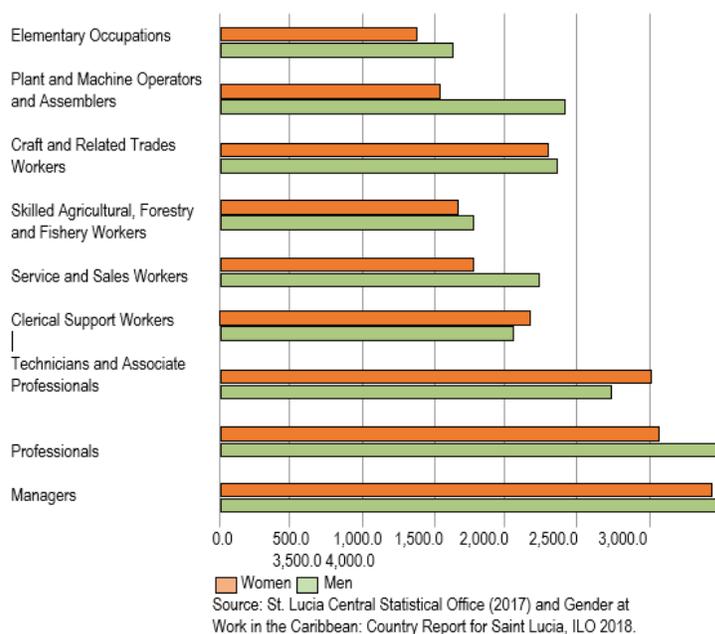
⁴³ Gender and Labour in St Lucia: Evidence from Household Surveys, Brief UN Women.

Completed Educational Levels	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Not Stated
Female	1,075.00	1,000.00	1,075.00	1,600.00	600
Both sexes	1,075.00	1,000.00	1,075.00	1,600.00	1,075.00
SLCHBS 2016					
Male	1,000.00	1,500.00	1,510.30	3,000.00	2,000.00
Female	500	971	1,200.00	2,800.00	1,500.00
Both sexes	1,000.00	1,200.00	1,400.00	2,800.00	1,800.00
Change					
Male	-600	425	435.3	1,400.00	925
Female	-575	-29	125	1,200.00	900
Both sexes	-75	200	325	1,200.00	725

In 2006, males and females with no education earned more than those with a primary and secondary education, which suggests that equal pay for work of equal value was not a case in Saint Lucia; however, the situation seems stabilized in 2016 to a large extent, suggesting education (primary and secondary compared to no education) started to play a role in determining earnings.

According to the survey, the highest-paid employees in Saint Lucia are managers and professionals and in both categories, men earned more than women in 2016. This suggests structural issues are responsible for the earning gaps across sectors that cannot be explained by differences in occupation or educational attainment between women and men.

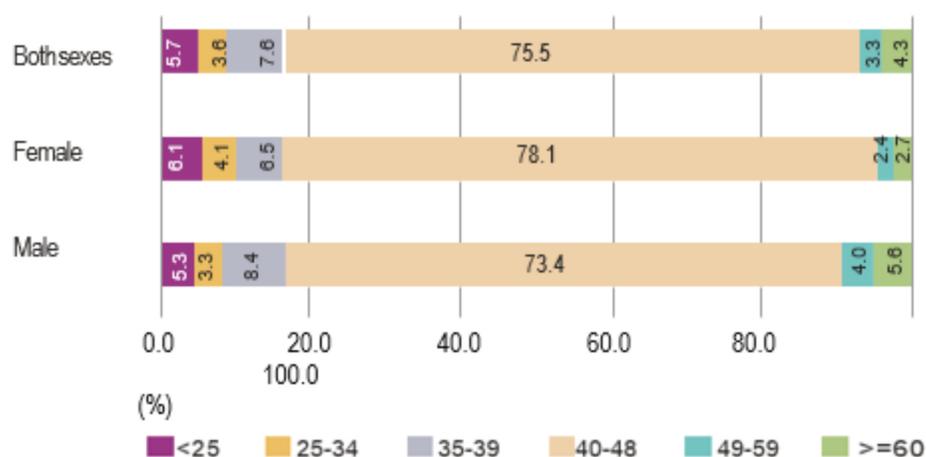
Figure 2: Average wages in Saint Lucia, by occupation and sex (2016)



The survey shows that median earnings improved as poverty declined between 2006 and 2016, but unemployment increased substantially, particularly for females and youth. The rise in median income may be due to other sources to a significant extent.

Men generally work longer hours, with 9.6 percent of male employees and 5.1 percent of female employees working more than 48-hours per week. The differences are not significant, as both sexes work 40- to 48-hour weeks, which may mean there may be few part-time employment options in Saint Lucia. The following figure illustrates the working-hours situation.

Figure 3: Hours of work and sex (2016)



Source: Saint Lucia Central Statistical Office (2017) and Gender at Work in the Caribbean: Country Report for Saint Lucia, ILO, 2018.

Gender and Entrepreneurship. Most senior managers and owners of small to medium-sized companies are women. According to the World Bank Group Enterprise Survey (2011), though women’s participation in business has been increasing, there are still gaps in certain sectors. For example, just 32.1 percent of Saint Lucian firms have female participation in ownership, compared to 40.2 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean and 35.2 percent in all countries. According to the ILO, female-owned and managed businesses are most likely to be very small and not in the major towns. Men own and are the top managers of most of the small and medium enterprises that characterize the rest of the Saint Lucian economy.

However, a separate study found that women own only 10 percent of businesses, with 1 percent or less predominantly or equally owned by women and men or predominantly owned by women.⁴⁴ According to the World Bank, the proportion of self-employed people is relatively high among men in Saint Lucia. The self-employed make up 39.8 percent of males compared to 28.8 percent of females in the employed labour force, with an average of 35.1 percent.⁴⁵

Informal employment. The informal sector in the labour market in Saint Lucia is not a new phenomenon. According to a 2004 study, workers in this sector are usually without insurance and access to social protection instruments and the informal sector in Saint Lucia has grown continuously over the years, i.e., 26.9 percent (1994), 28.6 percent (1998) and 30.5 percent (2000).⁴⁶ However, there is little (or no) sex-disaggregated data on informal employment and part-time work in the labour market and with the world of work.

The 2016 SLC-HBS survey provides insight that informal and part-time work help women balance their family and income-generating activities. The survey also suggests there has been a substantial increase in the share of wholesale and retail trade due to an increase in informal sector activity among the active population, and most importantly, women.

According to the World Bank database, the Informal employment for females (percent of total non-agricultural employment) in Saint Lucia accounted for 20.5 percent in 2017 while it has gone up to 22.45 percent in 2019.⁴⁷ In another World Bank Group Enterprise Survey (2011), 32.1 percent of Saint Lucian firms have female participation in

⁴⁴ Status of women and men report productive employment and decent work for all, UN Women and Source: in Moore et al. (2017).

⁴⁵ World Bank Database, World Development Indicator.

⁴⁶ Ying, Neville (2004) Social Protection: Policy Guidelines and Recommendations for the New Caribbean Economy

⁴⁷<https://data.worldbank.org/country/st-lucia?view=chart C>

business ownership. According to the ILO, female-owned and managed businesses are most likely to be very small and not in the major towns and very informal, i.e., businesses are not registered. In 2006, agriculture, hunting, forestry and the fishing sector had the highest share and number of working poor however, finance, insurance, real estate and business services had taken over in 2016. In Saint Lucia, according to ILO, female-owned businesses are primarily one-person operations in low growth sectors. Again, this is primarily attributable to the caring role expected of women and the need to balance income-earning with family responsibilities. The challenges are especially grave for single mothers, representing a substantial proportion of the population.

There are different reasons why women in Saint Lucia end up in informal employment. According to a study, the burden of domestic chores is primarily shouldered by Saint Lucian women, preventing them from engaging fully in the formal sector⁴⁸ and another study suggests that unpaid work in the home contributes up to 39 percent of a country's GDP.⁴⁹ Also, there are other reasons include pay inequity limits women's ability to pay for care services, especially if care services such as eldercare or childcare are costly or inaccessible. In addition, sociocultural norms have men doing less care work in the home than women and the lack of family-friendly leave policies, e.g. only providing women access to parental leave, instead of both parents. As a result, women who engage in this work are at a disadvantage (unequal division of paid and unpaid labour between men and women plus the opportunity get educated/skilled), the only option for them is to engage in informal employment, if they cannot secure employment in the formal sector.

In 2016, occupations in which women predominate are mostly in the services sector. The data reveals that there are more than twice as many women as men in "activities of households as employers" (domestic workers); real estate; education, health and social work; and finance and insurance. Women are also the majority in wholesale and retail. The two largest contributors to overall employment in Saint Lucia are service industries: wholesale and retail at 16.5 percent; and accommodation and food services in tourism at 16.3 percent.⁵⁰ Table 17 indicates the vulnerable labour force, i.e., with non-contributing employees.

Table 17: Labour force trend (based on age and sex)

	SLC-HBS 2006			SLC-HBS 2016		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Working poor ('000s)						
15-29	3.2	1.2	4.4	2.1	1.7	3.8
30+	5.3	3.2	8.5	4.8	3.5	8.2
Total	8.5	4.5	13.0	6.9	5.2	12.1
Share of working poor in total employment (%)						
15-29	31.5	17.8	26.0	21.7	19.5	20.6
30+	21.9	16.5	19.5	15.1	13.4	14.3
Total	24.7	16.9	21.3	16.6	14.9	15.9

Table 18 presents the composition of employment of women and men in different sectors. Poor female, 6.9 percent, have the highest participation in other services which includes unprotected jobs.

Table 18: Employment by industry and occupation

	Total		Rural		Poor	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Sector						
Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry and Fishing	7.8	1.3	13.9	2.1	7.8	1.3
Manufacturing	3.5	2.0	3.9	2.8	2.2	0.4
Construction	7.8	0.4	7.7	0.1	5.9	0.4
Wholesale and Retail Trade	6.0	8.4	4.3	7.3	3.0	5.4
Accommodation and Food Service	6.2	7.1	2.1	3.5	5.3	3.8

⁴⁸ A. Ranjitsingh: Country gender assessment: Saint Lucia. (Willey, Barbados, CDB, 2016).

⁴⁹ Stuart: The Beijing Platform for Action: Twenty years of implementation in the Caribbean (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2014).

⁵⁰ ILO.

	Total		Rural		Poor	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Transport, Storage and Communication	3.9	0.8	2.3	0.7	1.2	0.3
Other Services	6.9	11.0	7.2	9.6	5.9	6.9
Public Administration and Defense	4.6	4.0	4.3	4.3	1.3	2.5
Educational Services-Govt/Private	1.1	3.1	0.9	3.3	0.4	1.9
Activities Not Adequately Defined	52.2	61.9	53.3	66.3	67.1	77.0
Occupation						
Managers	5.3	7.6	1.4	6.0	0.9	2.4
Professionals	7.1	11.7	2.7	11.3	2.8	3.9
Technicians and associate professionals	7.2	9.4	3.9	7.1	4.4	5.5
Clerical support workers	2.1	10.8	2.5	9.9	1.5	2.7
Service and sales workers	17.9	41.6	19.9	43.3	17.9	60.6
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery	14.9	2.8	26.9	5.8	23.3	4.0
Craft and related trades workers	20.9	2.4	23.3	1.9	20.0	1.5
Plant and machine operators, assemblers	9.2	1.6	6.8	2.5	2.3	0.4
Elementary occupations	15.4	12.1	12.7	12.2	26.8	18.9

When probing occupation levels, the data shows that a higher percentage of women were involved as professionals, clerical support workers and sales and service employees. More female employees held highly skilled or professional occupations than male employees, while more of the men held jobs with medium levels of skill. More women had jobs with low skill levels.

4.5.3 Unemployment

The survey found unemployment rates had increased since 2006, remaining consistently above 10 percent from 2006 to 2016 and unemployment among women was consistently even more pronounced. Women's unemployment in Saint Lucia is high by international standards as women are more likely to be unemployed and youth unemployment was much more acute than in other age groups.

The SLC-HBS 2016 survey also noted that the poor were disproportionately impacted by unemployment: the disparity was far more pronounced in 2016. The consequences of unemployment manifest themselves in a number of ways – from reduced consumption to continued dependency, domestic abuse, stress, depression and even suicidal thoughts.

Unemployment was particularly severe for the poor and therefore for those in the lowest quintile in 2016. The majority of the poor who live in rural communities are disadvantaged, as jobs for semi-skilled and unskilled workers are in urban areas far from their homes, making the cost of transportation and the risks associated with working on a shift system a barrier to employment.

The share of people working and living in poverty in total employment fell for men but not for women among all age groups. Unemployment among females was more evident, with an inverse relationship being observed between the highest level of education attained and rates of unemployment.

A disparity between male and female unemployment and labour force participation rates is clearly visible. According to the CSO, in 2017, the female and male unemployment rate was 18.1 percent and 19.4 percent respectively with the male-female gap of 1.3 percent. In cohorts up to the age of 34, the unemployment rate is lower for women than men, suggesting increased access to jobs among younger women. Unemployment rates for women and men, respectively, were 21.3 percent and 27.4 percent in 2015.⁵¹

Women remain unemployed for much longer periods than men. It can be seen that the percentage of unemployed women increases as the duration of unemployment lengthens. Most of those who are unemployed have been out of a job for more than six months (CSO).

⁵¹ World Bank.

Table 19 provides a summary of unemployment rates based on gender, age groups, marital status and education. Higher unemployment among females compared to males can be observed in all ages except for 55-years and older.

Table 19: Unemployment rates by selected individual characteristics

	Unemployment rate		% Pop. out of the labour force	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	16.9	17.5	18.2	31.9
Age				
15-24	34.5	25.1	27.1	47.1
25-34	15.0	21.2	6.4	14.3
35-44	13.8	17.2	3.9	7.9
45-54	9.2	19.2	3.9	14.2
55+	10.0	7.4	39.1	60.0
Marital status				
Never married	20.8	22.5	13.3	23.9
Married	7.4	10.3	21.9	34.1
Widowed	7.1	2.1	62.2	69.6
Legally separated	19.7	5.5	22.6	30.1
Divorced	5.2	2.4	23.1	37.0
Not stated	19.6	27.7	13.2	21.0
Education				
No education	9.2	5.4	47.5	80.6
Primary	15.4	15.7	18.5	38.7
Secondary	23.1	23.7	15.6	28.0
Post-secondary	8.1	11.6	12.9	17.9

Table 20: Youth unemployment

	SLC-HBS 2006	SLC-HBS 2016	Change
Youth unemployment ('000s)	5.9	11.2	5.4
Youth unemployment rate (%)	25.6	37.6	12.0
Youth NEET share of youth population (%)	33.3	31.6	-1.8

Youth in Saint Lucia, according to national standards, are defined as 10- to 35-year-olds. This group, and female youth in particular, experience high unemployment of 37.6 percent according to the survey (rate increased by 12 percent since 2006). Gender disaggregation for youth unemployment based on 2016 estimates, was 51 percent among young women and 42.6 percent among young men Rates of youth NEET (not in education, employment and training) was 31.6 percent in 2016. The survey observed a substantial increase of youth unemployment over the period. For example, youth unemployment jumped from 25.6 percent in 2006 to 37.6 percent in 2016. Unemployment was specifically severe on the poor and therefore on those in the lowest quintile in 2016. Table 20 presents the youth situation and change.

For those aged 15- to 29-years, unemployment is substantially higher overall: in 2016, it affected 35.4 percent of male youth and 42.1 percent of female youth, as opposed to 19.4 percent and 23.5 percent of women and men, respectively. The ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment is higher among men than women, at 3.9 for males and 2.2 for females (2017). The adult-to-youth ratio has increased by 1.2 for males and 0.1 for females.

4.5.4 Social Assistance Grants

Saint Lucia has a range of social protection programmes. The main Public Assistance Programme (PAP) under the Ministry of Equity covers about 2,446 households (2015) or 3,356 people (2019) with cash transfers between EC \$215-\$465 depending on household size.⁵² The PAP focuses on elderly and disabled citizens as these two categories fall

⁵² Shock-Responsive Social Protection: Scaling up Social Assistance to Mitigate Secondary Impact of COVID-19 on Children, UNICEF, 2020.

into the programme's definition of "needy."⁵³ Hence, for over 70 percent of the Saint Lucia population aged 60-plus years, many of whom are women not covered for retirement pensions by the NIS,⁵⁴ the PAP is an important economic resource,⁵⁵ particularly for women who generally work in lower paying jobs and, who on average, live longer than men. Meanwhile, disabled people with hearing, visual, mobility and speech impairments, or those with learning disabilities, also make up a significant proportion of PAP recipients.⁵⁶

Other small-scale social programmes include the Child Disability Grant with current coverage of 286 children under the Saint Lucia Social Development Fund, covering 100 beneficiaries (households) in 7 pillars of support (criteria or the basis for providing integrated support to families in situations of vulnerability): personal identification, health, education, family dynamics, housing, employment and income.

As of 2015, the data indicates that 80 percent of households on public assistance receive benefits for only one person (\$215 monthly), irrespective of the number of members in the household. In the case of social assistance, coverage of the poor was only 7.8 percent.⁵⁷ Table 21 provides the PAP programme as of 2015.

Table 21: Number of Recipients of Public Assistance per Household (April 2015)

Age Range	Female		Male		Age Group Total	% of Total
	Number	%	Number	%		
14-25	15	1.3	20	1.7	35	2.9
26-35	57	4.8	27	2.3	84	7.0
36-45	82	6.9	42	3.5	124	10.4
46-55	113	9.5	72	6.0	185	15.5
56-65	79	6.6	76	6.4	155	13.0
66-75	81	6.8	81	6.8	162	13.6
76+	267	22.3	183	15.3	450	37.7
Total	694	58.1	501	41.9	1195	100

Source: Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment, Saint Lucia.

However, accessing assistance is not easy. The average waiting time was about one year and two months. The largest group of persons on the waiting list are female applicants who are poor (as opposed to indigent) and who fall between the ages of 26- and 45-years.⁵⁸

Table 22: Age and sex of main Public assistance programme (PAP) recipient per household, 2013

Age Range	Female (%)	Male (%)	% of Total
14-25	1.3	1.7	2.9
26-35	4.8	2.3	7.0
36-45	6.9	3.5	10.4
46-55	9.5	6.0	15.5
56-65	6.6	6.4	13.0
66-75	6.8	6.8	13.6
76+	22.3	15.3	37.7
Total	58.1	41.9	100

Source: Gender aware beneficiary analysis of Saint Lucia's public assistance program, UNICEF and UN Women, 2015

Healthcare coverage. The public health system is financed by the government's consolidated fund, the Ministry of Health and the National Insurance Corporation. For those seeking private healthcare, private insurance schemes and

⁵³ Gender Aware Beneficiary Analysis of Saint Lucia's Public Assistance Programme, 2015.

⁵⁴ Gender at Work in the Caribbean: Country Report for Saint Lucia, 2018.

⁵⁵ Blank, L. 2009. Saint Lucia Social Safety Net Assessment. Castries, Ministry of Social Transformation, with the support of UNICEF, the World Bank and UN Women.

⁵⁶ Gender Aware Beneficiary Analysis of Saint Lucia's Public Assistance Programme, 2015.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Gender aware beneficiary analysis of St. Lucia's public assistance program, UNICEF and UN Women, 2015.

payments from personal savings were the main sources of financing. Coverage for healthcare insurance is considered a form of social security and a significant percentage of poor women and men still lack a medical plan. Access to personal health insurance is quite low (18.2 percent), with the non-poor (22.1 percent) more likely to be insured than the poor (6.6 percent).

Table 23: Personal Health Insurance Coverage by Socio-economic Status and Quintile

		Poverty Status			Expenditure quintiles			
		Poor	Non-poor	Poorest	2	3	4	Richest
Have health insurance	yes	9.0%	91.0%	6.1%	12.4%	15.9%	25.9%	39.7%
	no	28.5%	71.5%	23.0%	21.7%	20.9%	18.7%	15.7%
Total		25.0%	75.0%	19.9%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.1%

The survey indicates 18.2 percent of households had members covered by personal health insurance, while more than 90 percent of the poorest individuals did not have health insurance coverage. No sex aggregation data exists.

Table 24: Proportion of Households Covered by Health Insurance

Have Health Insurance	Household Wealth Status	
	% Poor	% Non-Poor
Yes	6.6	22.1
No	93.4	77.9

4.6 Education

The analysis of the SLC-HBS 2016 shows that the total number of students attending primary school has steadily decreased from 31,372 in 1995/96 to 15,463 in 2015/16. The number of primary schools in operation fell from 86 in 1995/96 to 74 in 2015/16 even though the enrolment of male pupils increased. The survey indicates that in terms of the socio-economic status of education achievers, poor men (82 percent) and women (90.5 percent) had lower levels of literacy compared to non-poor men (93 percent) and women (94.8 percent), while rural poor men (76.0 percent) and women (85.2 percent) exhibited the lowest levels of literacy. This means women are behind in educational achievement. The survey also found that a larger proportion of poor individuals attained either no education or primary education compared to their non-poor counterparts.

The vast majority of heads of households in the lowest quintile had attained primary education (91.0 percent). Female heads of households in the lowest quintile were almost totally limited to the primary level (97.2 percent). The higher the quintile, the more gender disparities in education tended to disappear.

The percentage of adolescents in the bottom quintile enrolled in secondary schools was the lowest of all the quintiles (48.4 percent, as compared to 84.0 percent for the highest quintile). Moreover, there was also a higher probability that youth in the lowest quintile did not enrol in vocational and technical education and training. A lower percentage of pre-school-age children in the bottom quintile were enrolled in pre-schools (34.0 percent as against a national average of 48.2 percent). According to the 2018 Saint Lucia CPA report, only 32.8 percent and 35.6 percent of male and female respectively attained secondary education.

The survey shows a clear relationship between educational achievement and labour-force participation. The attainment of higher levels of education was associated with higher levels of employment. Workforce participation rates were lowest among females with no education and highest among males with a post-secondary education. Interestingly, unemployment rates were highest among females (23.7 percent) and males (23.1 percent) with a secondary education and lowest among males with a post-secondary education (8.1 percent) and females with no education (5.4 percent).

The enrolment of males was higher than that of females at the primary level (see

Table 25 below). Net primary school enrolment was higher among poor males and females. Male-headed households showed notably higher net enrolment rates of females at the primary level, while female-headed households showed notably higher male net enrolment. Though female enrolment was higher overall at the secondary level, higher net enrolment was observed among both males and females in male-headed households.

Table 25: Level of education and gender

	Literacy		No education		Primary		Secondary		Post-secondary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	90.6	93.8	6.1	5.6	39.4	30.5	38.9	41.5	15.7	22.4
Area of residence										
Urban	91.8	95.4	5.2	4.0	37.4	28.1	38.9	43.6	18.5	24.4
Rural	88.0	90.0	8.1	9.7	43.9	36.4	38.7	36.4	9.4	17.5
Poverty Status										
Poor	82.3	90.5	9.9	8.6	48.6	33.5	38.8	51.4	2.7	6.5
Non-poor	93.0	94.8	5.0	4.7	36.8	29.6	38.9	38.6	19.4	27.0
Urban - poor	87.0	93.7	6.1	4.4	47.1	29.1	42.7	59.4	4.1	7.2
Urban – non-poor	92.8	95.8	5.0	3.8	35.2	27.8	38.1	39.7	21.7	28.6
Rural - poor	76.0	85.2	14.9	15.6	50.5	40.8	33.8	38.4	0.8	5.3
Rural – non-poor	93.4	91.9	5.1	7.2	40.9	34.6	40.9	35.6	13.2	22.6

The data above shows that poor women (90.5 percent) and men (82.3 percent) had lower levels of literacy when compared to non-poor women (94.8 percent) and non-poor men (93 percent) when socio-economic status was considered. Women and men in the lowest two quintiles had notably lower levels of literacy when compared to their counterparts in the third to fifth quintiles. Among the poor population, females with secondary and post-secondary education were more common than were males with a similar level of schooling.

4.7 Health

Saint Lucia's health system offers primary, secondary and some tertiary care. The survey was clear that those who were better-off in the population had access to quality health services such as private clinics and could seek attention from private doctors, dentists and therapists, while the vulnerable were likely to rely on home remedies. The survey indicates that patients and providers acknowledged the relatively high prevalence of diabetes and other chronic illnesses and recognized the impact of socio-economic status on access to health services and outcomes. Little evidence is available on health disparities at the national level.

The survey provides insights on the access of vulnerable women and girls to quality health and family planning services. The drop in the fertility rate seems to be due to the delaying of first pregnancies as a result of increased education for women, better family planning interventions and higher socio-economic status.

According to the survey, 92.5 percent of Saint Lucians felt deprivations related to health insurance coverage. Additionally, there are only 0.11 physicians per 1,000 people living in the country. The survey reflects the occurrence of diseases such as gastroenteritis and dysentery/diarrhoea, which are related to the potable water supply. Lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and hypertension were also significant. There was almost universal immunisation for measles and diphtheria, which implies that children in the lowest expenditure quintile had access to this aspect of primary healthcare. Less than 10 percent of the population had private health insurance, which is concentrated among the higher-income quintiles (MOHW, 2014).

With regards to child well-being, the survey found that the average child in Saint Lucia is worse off than the average female adult, behind especially, those living in rural areas, large households and households headed by a single adult (see Table 26).

Table 26: Gender based children well-being rates, housing domain, as a percentage of all children

Area Housing indicators			Gender of HH		Gender of the child		Household size				# children in the HH	
			Male	Female	Male	Female	2	3	4	5<	1	2
	Urban	Rural										
Well-being rate children under 18 years of age	60.1	64.9	66.4	61.3	64.5	63.3	67.2	61.7	65.9	63.4	68.5	67.0

Source: Mapping of Child Well-Being in Saint Lucia UNICEF, 2015

4.8 Physical Living Conditions

Though poor and non-poor households have equal home ownership (73 percent), poor households were 10 percentage points less likely than their rich peers to hold title deeds to their properties. Gender-related differences appear in the ownership of land and vehicles, the land-square rate and the house rental rate. For land and vehicles, female-headed households faced a deficit of 5 and 14 percentage points respectively and were 15 percent and 31 percent more likely to occupy land through squatting or to be house renters, respectively, than their male peers. With regard to other household assets, poverty-related and gender-related ownership gaps can be observed for female-headed households.

According to the survey, poor households have lower levels of education, marry at a lower rate, have more mouths to feed at home, own fewer assets (except for homes) and live-in houses that are less well built with limited basic amenities. These gaps expose poor households to greater socio-economic vulnerability and pose challenges to their ability to cope with emergent shocks.

Dwelling area. Female-headed households face tighter conditions in the home, adding an additional burden of 0.07 persons per room when compared to male-headed households or 0.69 persons per room compared to the richest 20 percent.

Water access and use. According to the survey, almost all households (95 percent) have a piped main water supply (either to the dwelling or yard), but fewer households utilize piped water for drinking (77 percent); 7 percent relied either on standpipes, rainwater, or surface water (rivers, streams, etc.), with the remainder purchasing bottled water or accessing water for drinking from tankers and carts. This represents potentially a costly and/or an unpaid burden on female-headed households.

Cooking and lighting facilities. Though clean energy is well established, 5 percent of Saint Lucian households still burn coal or wood. Poverty and gender-related differences determine access to and use of publicly provided electricity for lighting. For example, the survey revealed that the gap between female and male in publicly provided electricity was 2.1 percentage points. Though small, it indicates that access to electricity and income are interrelated.

Sanitation (toilet facilities). According to the survey, three out of every four households had water closet-type toilet facilities, while another one in five households relied on pit latrines. Some districts suffer heavily from a lack of these basic amenities, especially by bottom-quintile and poor households, which are four times more likely to report having no toilet facilities than their top-quintile and non-poor peers. Poverty- and gender-related differences influence the use of modern toilet facilities, with almost four in every five female-headed households having access to water closets.

4.9 Security

Citizen security, violence and crime are development issues. Discrimination, societal abuses, trafficking in persons, rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment remained problems. According to Saint Lucia National Crime Victimization Survey (SLNCVS) 2020, 18 percent⁵⁹ of the population, 18-years and over, has been the victim of at least one crime⁶⁰ between September 2018 and August 2019. According to the SLNCVS, persons were victims of at least one crime based on sex: male 54.7 percent and female 45.3 percent. The SLNCVS also estimates that a person could be the victim of more than one crime, i.e., an average of two crimes per victim: Females: 2.1 percent and Males: 1.9 percent.

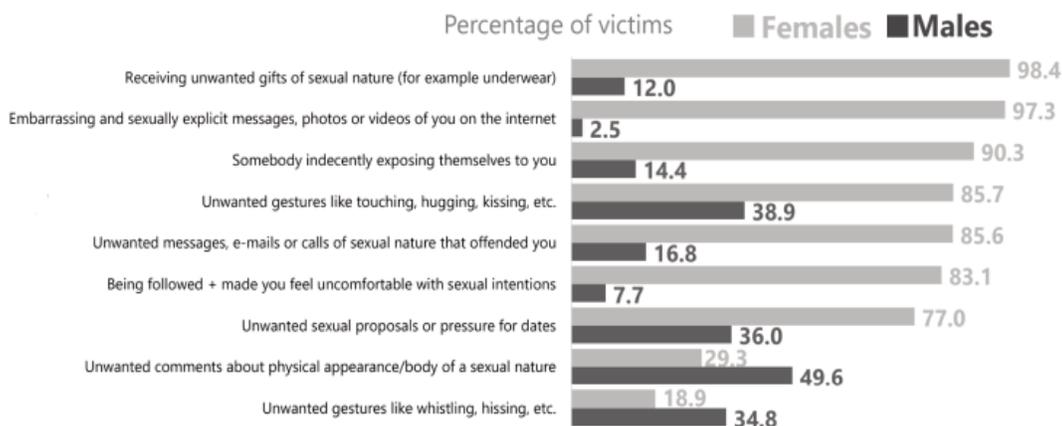
The SLNCVS estimates that 10.9 percent of the population, 18-years and over, in Saint Lucia were victims of

⁵⁹ Meaning a total of 24,255 victims of 134,901 persons of 18 years or older estimated for Saint Lucia. No intersex persons were victims of any of the fourteen (14) types of crime, only sexual harassment.

⁶⁰ SLNCVS measures 14 different types of crime, including: Motor-vehicle theft, Theft of motor-vehicle parts, Theft of objects inside the motor-vehicle, Motorcycle theft, Domestic burglary, Robbery, Theft, Bank fraud, Cybercrime, Bribery, Assault and Injury, Threats and Extortion. Sexual harassment is measured separately for this estimation.

at least one type of cybercrime, however, no sex disaggregated data is available in this area. Further, the SLNCVS estimates that 10.3 percent of the population, 18 years and over, in Saint Lucia experienced at least one type of situation related to sexual harassment (incident) out of which 81 percent were women, 17.6 percent were men and 1.4 percent were intersex.

Figure 4: Different types of sexual harassment experienced by females and males



Source: Saint Lucia National Crime Victimization Survey (SLNCVS) 2020

The fear of crime varies by socio-economic status and per-capita consumption and is more pronounced among non-poor households, with households in the fourth and fifth quintiles expressing this fear most strongly. However, the survey suggests that the poorest people - the majority of whom are women, were exposed to greater violence than the more affluent. For example, 7 percent of the households with victims of theft were from the first quintile while 4.5 percent of households contained one or more victims of assault, with proportionately more non-poor households experiencing this type of assault when compared to poor households.

Among the households surveyed, 4.5 percent contained one or more victims of assault, with proportionately more non-poor households experiencing assault compared to poor households. More than 50 percent of the households with members who were victims of theft were among the fourth and fifth quintiles, while less than 7 percent were from the first quintile. The data indicates that single/widowed/displaced women, those living in vulnerable areas, older women and women with disabilities are particularly at risk of violence and are likely to be disproportionately affected by it.

Crises can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and risk factors, leading to a rise in gender-based violence (GBV), abuse and neglect, as well as an increased lack of access to professional care and support services for survivors. Some measures required to contain COVID-19 (lockdowns/stay-at-home policies) also exacerbated GBV risks.

5. COVID-19 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON VULNERABLE GROUPS

The COVID-19 pandemic started as a health crisis but has quickly taken on a socio-economic dimension. COVID-19 is also a humanitarian and development disaster that is threatening to leave deep social, economic and political scars for years to come. Saint Lucia, which depends on tourism, faced an unprecedented challenge to its economy. Tourism makes up half Saint Lucia's GDP, 45 percent of its jobs and the country is vulnerable to external shocks and natural disasters. The pandemic will reduce GDP (by an estimated 9 percent to 15 percent and cause a surge in debt by 12 percent in 2020⁶¹), put almost 45 percent of the labour force out of work (CSO, 2020) and increase the poverty headcount index by about 3 percent points. Given the country's economic and social inequalities, the pandemic has disproportionately affected the economic, social and health circumstances of the vulnerable fixed-income and informal segments of the population, particularly women.

The comparative analysis of data emerging from the survey as well as study reports on the COVID-19 pandemic⁶² has exposed the precarious situation of both women and men, including people working in the informal economy. Attempts to contain the spread of the coronavirus through restrictions and lockdown measures have disrupted supply chains, consumer demand and economic and financial stability, highlighting the critical role of social protection in Saint Lucia. However, the efficiency in the operation, management and outcomes of various economic and social systems was not the response of the whole system as required to address areas such as income, employment, food, etc. This has brought much to rely upon complex and interconnected systems to deliver services. Though this approach has many benefits, the COVID-19 reports show how the resilience of key systems to shocks was not strong enough and allowed failures to cascade from one system to others. For example, COVID-19 exposed development risks like how direct health effects due to the disease and socio-economic effects in the form of rising unemployment, increased levels of poverty and other adverse determinants of health outcomes. The net effect on living conditions and livelihoods in terms of access to basic needs and services, employment, income and food security was huge: 15 percent of households experienced difficulty in accessing basic needs such as food and medicine, 20-30 percent job losses in the wholesale, retail, restaurants and hotel sector and nearly 30 percent particularly poor, suffered severe food insecurity.⁶³ Women in the informal sector are often engaged in more vulnerable work (e.g., as caregivers, as street and market vendors and in agriculture)—sectors in which earnings are below national averages and their economic activity are usually not accounted. Based on the survey, social protection—particularly in terms of social assistance for poor families and unemployment compensation for workers who have lost their jobs appears not covered. In particular, coverage should embrace informal sector participants. While this may be due in part to weaknesses in the country's social protection systems, the pandemic is also an opportunity to strengthen these systems to ensure an inclusive, collaborative effort to address the multi-dimensional impact of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable people's needs and rights, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups and people at risk of being left behind.

This provides evidence that a shock-responsive approach based on resilience is needed to prepare socio-economic vulnerability for future shocks. The casualty of this pandemic were vulnerable women and men. Small businesses, especially informal ones, reported being heavily affected with many on the verge of shutting down. The impact of the crisis was transmitted mainly through unemployment and rising prices (affecting consumption) as job losses impacted both employers and employees, especially vulnerable (poor, marginalised, women and girls). In addition, the pandemic has a wide range of impacts at the personal and household level: psychological/emotional, employment-related, business, health and educational. Though, the Government responded with a variety of measures in food and social support measures, the provision was not enough to manage risks of vulnerable populations.

According to the Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey carried out by the World

⁶¹ World Bank (PID 2020).

⁶² COVID-19 Heat Report Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, St. Lucia, UNDP, UNICEF And UN Women Eastern Caribbean, 2020 and The Socio-Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in St. Lucia: Findings from the St. Lucia COVID-19 High Frequency Phone Survey (COVID-19 HFPS), World Bank (August 2020).

⁶³ Ibid.

Food Programme in April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The data exposed the potentially devastating costs of job losses and income reversals as well as the need for protection of vulnerable people at the time of shock. According to this World Food Programme (WFP) survey, the vast majority (88 percent) of respondents changed their shopping behaviour to adapt to disruptions caused by COVID-19, mainly by buying larger quantities than usual, with 28 percent of respondents eating less preferred foods and 21 percent skipping meals or reducing consumption. Disruptions to livelihoods observed widely (reported by 80 percent), primarily due to movement restrictions and concerns about the outbreak. Fifty-three percent reported loss of jobs or reduced salaries and 5 percent had to resort to alternative income sources.

Findings from the World Bank COVID-19 HFPS⁶⁴ suggest a significant number of households, especially the poor, reported limited access to food and basic services. About 9 percent to 22 percent of households that needed rice, ground provision,⁶⁵ flour, or medical treatment could not access these necessities. For all basic needs, poor households were worse off than non-poor households. About one-tenth of households that needed to buy either flour (11 percent) or rice (9.2 percent) were unable to do so and this was worse for poor and rural households. While one-tenth of non-poor households did not have access to food, almost one-fifth of poor households did not have access to either flour or other ground provisions. About 74.1 percent of poor households could not purchase flour because of a lack of money or access to cash, only 66.7 percent of non-poor households gave the same reason. This survey also noted that rural households were affected to a larger extent in their ability to purchase flour, ground provisions and rice compared to urban households. Urban households had more difficulty accessing medical treatment when needed.

Additional findings from the World Bank study suggest that:

- About 15 percent of households experienced difficulty in accessing basic needs such as food and medicine and poor households, approximately 10 percent suffered more than non-poor.
- The biggest job losses occurred in the wholesale, retail, restaurants and hotel sector with almost 30 to 20 percent post-COVID.
- More than 70 percent of respondents reported income declines and the situation was worse for poor households and rural residents.
- Nearly 90 percent of non-farm family businesses/household enterprises were particularly affected by income losses and almost 30 percent of these households had not received any income since March 20, 2020.
- Almost 30 percent households, particularly poor, suffered severe food insecurity while poor households, with nearly 50 percent experienced the same.

According to the COVID-19 Heat Report Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, Saint Lucia (UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women Eastern Caribbean), 2020:

- The government may face a deficit of 2.6 percent to 6 percent of GDP, and in a worst-case scenario it could increase to 10 percent of GDP and a 37 percent contraction of government's revenue due to contraction in tourist arrivals (travel restrictions).
- Employment will contract by 11 percent best case and 18 percent worst case (best-case unemployment of 29.6 percent and a worst-case unemployment of 34.7 percent for 2020).
- The Saint Lucian Government will need an additional 2.6 percent of GDP to maintain the projected 2020 expenditure plus the resources to provide the additional expenditure needed in health, unemployment relief, social protection and business support necessitated by the COVID-related impacts.
- Female unemployment will increase from 18.9 percent post-COVID-19 to 28.5 percent and male unemployment from 14.9 pre-COVID-19 to 24 percent with a worst-case contraction for women of 33.9 percent and males 29.7 percent with a net effect to female workers that will suffer the worst employment fallout as a consequence of COVID-19.

⁶⁴ The Socio-Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saint Lucia: Findings from the Saint Lucia COVID-19 High Frequency Phone Survey (COVID-19 HFPS, 2020).

⁶⁵ Ground provisions are referred to traditional root vegetable staples such as yams, sweet potatoes, dasheen root, and cassava.

- Private sector workers will be affected more, especially those involved directly or indirectly in the tourism sector.
- Saint Lucia has no unemployment relief programme for persons not registered with the National Insurance Corporation (NIC). In other words, the financial burden to government would be EC \$44.8mn to provide a 3-month stipend (EC \$500 per month) for the total unemployed population.⁶⁶
- The net effect will be measured in poverty. The poverty rate will move upward from the current 25.1 percent to 47.1 percent, an estimated 84,777 persons, almost half of the population.

Poverty: Poor households were affected more severely by the pandemic as they lack the necessities to properly fight COVID-19 and the related economic impact. All this is happening in an already challenging context, where 38.1 percent of the rural population and 61.9 percent of the urban population live in poverty. Households with three or more children who are already under the poverty line, are at high risk.

This situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic. For example, according to a survey, 38 percent of respondents reported difficulties having enough food, one-third skipped meals or ate less than usual, and 7 percent of respondents went one whole day without eating. Respondents in the 26-40 age group more frequently reported skipping meals or eating less than usual (40 percent) when compared to the 41-60 age group (23 percent).⁶⁷

The self-employed and small business entrepreneurs were left without access to work, business opportunities and financial support. Those working in seasonal agriculture jobs were particularly affected.⁶⁸ According to the COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey in Saint Lucia, non-farm households are nearly twice as likely to expect their livelihoods to be more severely impacted in the future (27 percent), compared to households engaging in farming (14 percent).

The net effect of COVID-19 will be an increase in unemployment for female workers from 18.9 percent post-COVID-19 to 28.5 percent.⁶⁹ This will be further exacerbated by the absence of an unemployment relief programme for persons unregistered with the NIC in Saint Lucia. A large proportion of individuals are unregistered and operate in the informal tourist economy, 42 percent of whom are female, with the majority of the enterprises being sole proprietorships.⁷⁰ According to WFP, the impacts of COVID-19 were disruptions to livelihoods, loss of income or reduction in salaries and changes in normal eating habits due to food insecurity.⁷¹ The SLC-HBS 2016 survey suggests that a school feeding programme is being implemented. For many children, school feeding programmes are an important part of their daily food intake. School closures, coupled with reduced incomes, may mean a worsening of the country's malnutrition rates.

NEET youth, who make up about 31.6 percent of the population have lost opportunities for employment. The lack of formal jobs or opportunities to learn, and of alternative solutions to ensure their livelihoods, coupled with a drop in remittances constrained them to a higher level of inactivity, increased mental stress, and anxiety.

Older people (55-years and older), just 32.6 percent women were employed while the remaining were already vulnerable because of their low incomes, with those living in rural communities particularly struggling. Their access to public services has been limited and disrupted for vital goods and services.

⁶⁶ EC \$500 monthly stipend is less than the monthly per capita poverty line of EC \$537.

⁶⁷ Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey SAINT LUCIA Summary Report | October 2020.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ COVID-19 Health Report: Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, UNDP, UNICEF, and UN Women, 2020.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ WFP survey, May 2020.

6. GENDERED VULNERABILITIES TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Saint Lucia is vulnerable to climate change due to its small geographical area, which means that disasters take on country-wide proportions. Its location is one of the highest-risk areas on the planet. Saint Lucia's agricultural sector provides the main source of livelihood security, household food security and incomes for 22 percent of the population. This constitutes an estimated household population of 32,919, on 11,000 farm holdings. Change and climate variability could be strong determinants of the well-being of vulnerable and marginalised rural populations.

A study commissioned by the World Bank indicates that climate change could cost the country 12.1 percent of its GDP by 2025, rising to 24.5 percent by 2050 and 49.1 percent by 2100.⁷² Therefore, Saint Lucia's 2015 Social Protection Policy acknowledges that within the context of climate change, vulnerable populations are most likely to be harmed by shocks, whether natural or anthropogenic.⁷³

The analysis of the SLC-HBS 2016 survey data found that nearly 7.8 percent of households were affected significantly by three key climatic events. Saint Lucia has suffered repeated and severe hurricanes and other natural disasters affecting sectors and vulnerable populations. For example: the Gini coefficient of inequality remain almost the same (43.1 in 2006 to 43.2 in 2016). At US \$4.00 purchasing power parity, 4.4 percent of the population was poor while 24.2 percent of the population was considered poor based on multi-dimensional criteria.

The survey confirmed that poor households have inadequate resources which makes it difficult for them to readily adapt or reduce the heightened level of risk their households faced in light of the anticipated impacts of climate change. This means that poor households are less likely to recover from extreme climatic events if they do not receive external support. Such a situation can push these households further into poverty.

The survey suggests that female-headed households face tighter conditions in the home, adding an additional burden of 0.07 persons per room when compared to male-headed households. Some 8.7 percent of the population were categorised as deprived because their households experienced significant shocks as a result of a climatic event in the past five years. A lack of home insurance was the largest contributor to the environmental dimension of the MPI. Overall, 65.4 percent of the population in Saint Lucia was deprived because they lived in homes not covered by homeowner insurance.

In addition, based on the SLC-HBS 2016 survey data, some of the findings are:

- a) **Poverty and insecure employment:** The data suggests that shocks and disasters in Saint Lucia can push the non-poor into poverty and push the poor into destitution. Great losses can be suffered to a household's asset base and houses (wooden homes 35.9 percent and 52.5 percent housing stock was constructed between 1980 and 2004 and 29.6 percent building date unknown), and for women this can mean significant loss as their asset holding is less than that of men (female-headed households faced a deficit of 5 percent in terms of land and poor households own almost 50 percent less household assets). While these losses often go unrecorded, they are very important to women, as they are used to generate income by making food to sell in the streets or door-to-door. Women's longer-term poverty status is dependent on their access to income generating activities post-event and how quickly these can be re-established.
- b) **Health:** While the public and private health institutions offer a wide range of health services, gaps do exist in respect of health coverage and adequacy. Poverty continues to act as a key barrier to the access of quality health care. For example, 23.0 percent of the poorest and 28.5 percent poor have no health insurance whereas the entire population irrespective of income level are affected by lifestyle diseases like diabetes. In addition, women in Saint Lucia suffer disproportionate levels of mortality and injury following disasters and extreme weather events.⁷⁴ This is a direct result of pervasive discrimination and inequalities in access to adequate healthcare, food and nutrition,

⁷² World Bank.

⁷³ Government of St. Lucia, 2015

⁷⁴ National Adaptation Plan, St. Lucia.

- water and sanitation, and education. Patriarchal structures and systemic barriers uphold the higher risk of women's and girls' vulnerability in the face of climate change.
- c) **Water:** According to SLC-HBS 2016 survey, 11 percent of the population are deprived because they do not have a regular water supply. Poorer communities, particularly women, are disproportionately affected by water scarcity because they lack infrastructure. When water is not available at the premises, women are more often responsible for water collection than men.
 - d) **Sea-level rise:** Traders in coastal communities are highly vulnerable as their livelihoods depend on weather and may suffer when markets flood, because they cannot sell their goods. Also, it reduces the potable water availability and the local resources for agriculture and more people imply an increase in food needs, housing and modes of transportation.
 - e) **High winds:** Among fishing communities, women play an important role in producing food from fish and selling fish in the market. Men and women in this informal business are economically vulnerable when they cannot sell their goods.

There are notable trends in labour and employment implications for gender vulnerabilities to disasters in Saint Lucia based on ILO's estimates as in the table below.

Table 27: Gender employment by sector

	Agriculture			Industry			Services		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Employment	9.9	14.6	4.0	22.1	28.7	13.9	68.0	56.8	82.1

Source: ILO Estimates 2019

The following disaster data illustrates the sectors most sensitive to gender employment and their social elements.

Table 28: Damage and loss by sector (EC\$ millions)

	Damage	Loss	Total	Total Loss and Damage (%)	Damage EC\$	Loss EC\$	Total EC\$
Productive							
Agriculture	9.21	3.71	12.92	12.99	24.76	9.85	34.63
Tourism	0.00	2.11	2.11	2.12	0.00	5.66	5.66
Commerce	0.40	NE	0.42	0.42	1.13	NE	1.13
Social							
Housing	2.15	2.05	4.20	3.81	5.77	5.51	11.28
Education	0.80	0.19	0.99	1.00	2.15	0.51	2.66
Health	0.24	0.13	0.37	0.37	0.64	0.35	0.99
TOTAL	\$80.03	\$19.85	\$99.88	100.00	\$214.40	\$53.36	\$267.76

Source: Saint Lucia Joint Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, 2013.

- a) Some 8.7 percent of the population were categorized as deprived households as they experienced significant climatic shocks, while 65.4 percent of the population were deprived because they lived in homes not covered by homeowner insurance. The survey indicates that access to building materials depends on income. Damage to physical assets due to weather and climatic events is common for poor urban and rural settlements, which are often built on risk-prone floodplains and hillsides susceptible to erosion and landslides. For vulnerable groups, the loss of physical assets in these poor areas after disasters is significant.
- b) Poverty appears to be the key driver in the ownership of the 21 movable and immovable assets surveyed for women and men. It is possible that damage to assets and the erosion of financial resources is due to climatic stressors, especially for women working in agriculture and the informal economy due to the loss of farm income, fewer jobs, and increased cost of living (higher expenses for purchasing food). Also, based on their asset ownership, women have limited access to and control of environmental goods and services. Consequently, women are less able to confront climate change.
- c) The damage to human assets as a result of climatic and weather events, e.g. food insecurity, undernourishment, and chronic hunger due to failed crops or spikes in food prices, is most severe among poor urban populations.
- d) Small-scale farmers and subsistence food producers will experience the loss of their rural livelihoods directly or

indirectly, along with social instability, conflicts over access to land and water for food production and over beaches in fishing communities, and the inability to keep children in school due to shrinking incomes. Changes in agro-ecological and marine ecosystems could alter food production methods, requiring a whole new culture to cope and maintain welfare at the rural household level.⁷⁵

- e) Consumption poverty and malnutrition (almost 16 percent), both acute and chronic, are expected to increase in the most vulnerable population groups. This is especially true for children, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and the chronically ill.
- f) The gender gap in the labour market (23.5 percent against 19.4 percent) and earnings persists, despite women having equivalent education and professional experience. These lower wages have other implications for women. They face unequal access to land, productive assets and other resources. If they are the head of the household, the whole family is at risk of experiencing a lower standard of living or falling into the poverty trap.
- g) The adaptation burden is expected to be difficult for female head of households, including widows, who act as the sole income providers and main caregivers. The impacts are more obvious on vulnerable individuals who work in the informal sector and in subsistence agriculture.
- h) The survey confirms that persistent gender inequalities still exist in households, workplaces and the labour market (with 23 percent of all women unemployed and 40 percent of the lowest quintile in 2016). Gender inequalities threaten women's autonomy and tend to limit their control over decisions governing their lives, as well as their access to resources and basic services. As such, in times of disaster or extreme weather, women often bear the brunt of diminished access to and availability of these already limited resources. Women are more likely to be exposed to disaster-induced risks and losses relating to their livelihoods, and they are less able to adapt to changes in climatic conditions.
- i) According to the survey, women and girls were at an elevated risk of experiencing gender-based violence due to their greater exposure to unsafe infrastructure, locations, drinking water, sanitation facilities and health centres.
- j) The survey clearly demonstrates that women in Saint Lucia suffer disproportionate levels of mortality and morbidity following disasters due to inequalities in gaining access to adequate healthcare (90 percent of the poor have no health insurance), food and nutrition, and water and sanitation. The poorest quintile was more susceptible to mental disorders, home accidents, and most significantly, injuries from crime.
- k) According to the survey, rural migration to cities has been encouraged to allow people to pursue better prospects. This may increase the urban population. As the population continues to grow, it may exacerbate already existing vulnerabilities, particularly for the most at-risk groups, such as the poor living in sub-standard housing and informal settlements, in disaster-prone areas.

These heightened vulnerabilities can worsen existing social inequalities, which include the lack of autonomy among women. Women's autonomy can be viewed in three dimensions—economic, physical and political—which are mutually reinforcing and fundamental to achieving gender equality. Women's physical autonomy involves their control over their bodies, and it is mainly measured through reproductive rights and gender-based violence. Economic autonomy encompasses women's capacity to generate income and personal financial resources based on access to paid work under conditions of equality with men, and considers time use and women's contribution to the economy. Lack of autonomy can therefore exacerbate the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events, making women even more vulnerable and less able to adapt.

Table 29: Climate change risk 2019

	Rank	World Risk Index	Exposure	Vulnerability	Susceptibility	Lack of coping capacities	Lack of adaptive capacities
Climate change risk	123	4.52	10.24	44.15	21.72	75.19	35.55

Source: Barca et al., 2019 using data from: Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and Ruhr University Bochum – Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (2019)

According to the survey, a proportion of the population (25 percent) is food insecure and below the poverty

⁷⁵ Ibid.

line. Because they lack the coping capacity that could sustain them above the poverty line or a given food security threshold, they are at risk of falling below these indicators should an unanticipated event occur, such as a natural disaster, economic shock, or the death of the main income earner.

In view of the above, if the means to ensure economic security and health in the context of disaster management are in place, women in Saint Lucia can play a central role in addressing inequalities in terms of both policies and day-to-day practices and thus contribute to resilient communities.

Some of the areas for consideration are:

- a) Promote **women's economic empowerment** as an effective way to promote gender equality, reduce vulnerabilities and improve the adaptive capacities of households and communities to climate impacts and in displacement situations.
- b) **Create and build adaptive capacity at the household and community levels** to deal with increasingly difficult and unpredictable conditions and changes in weather and climate. This requires focusing on capacity development at all levels, recognizing the different needs and roles of men and women and recognizing their different knowledge to ensure that all knowledge is gathered and treated equally.
- c) Carry out a **gender-sensitive disaster risk assessment** to analyze potential hazards and evaluate the vulnerabilities that could threaten already vulnerable people, property, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.
- d) **Work to protect women's and girls' rights** against systemic discrimination, gender inequality and gender-based violence at all times and particularly in climate shock situations, including those in the context of the adverse effects of climate change and disasters, which exacerbate pre-existing risks of rights violations.
- e) **Work to secure women's well-being**, which as a multi-dimensional measure of human potential, is part and parcel of gender equality. Well-being involves, among other things, the promotion of mental health, a sense of purpose and the capacity to manage social and environmental stressors. In situations of climate- and disaster-related events, the well-being of women contributes directly to life quality and dignity.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusions

This section provides a concise synthesis of the main results and recommendations. Based on the analysis, a series of conclusions were reached in relation to vulnerability, poverty, social protection, disaster risk and climate change risk in Saint Lucia.

- a) According to findings, people in Saint Lucia are highly vulnerable to inequity, economic fluctuations, and natural disasters, and their impact on consumption/income and employment levels, which are sensitive to shock and economic forces. COVID-19 has exposed further vulnerabilities in food security, income, and employment, among others.
- b) Several studies indicate that the country is highly vulnerable to substantial natural hazards. Almost a quarter of the population is poor, and a significant share of the population is at risk of falling into poverty as a result of shocks. Much of the population is also vulnerable to large-scale economic, political, and health shocks.
- c) Saint Lucia has a number of social protection programmes including the public assistance programme (PAP), which, however, are not yet adaptive. The programmes are mostly categorical in nature and not designed to build resilience of the poor and vulnerable households or respond to shocks.
- d) The analysis, including COVID-19 reports, provide insights that the traditional reactive approach to social protection cannot address large-scale economic, political, and health shocks. A more comprehensive approach that integrates a disaster risk management (DRM) strategy that focuses on all stages of the disaster management cycle (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery) with linkages to social protection is required.
- e) In terms of climate change, poor and vulnerable people have limited capacity to cope, which raises the question of limited institutional and individual capacity within government agencies, to provide protection at the time of crisis.
- f) Capacity-building for response and other aspects of DRM remains a critical issue for shock-responsive social protection including in responding to and mitigating shocks, and in contributing to strengthening the humanitarian–development nexus. Other challenges include the cost of resources for DRM policy making, capacity building and reaching communities and the need to establish reliable arrangements for relief supplies. Several documents recognize that weaknesses can be found in social protection systems and policies at the national level.

The analysis suggests developing systems that require a range of capacity strengthening initiatives to support the Saint Lucia government to make national social protection systems more shock-responsive and risk informed. Also, the government has put in place social protection systems and programmes to reach people impacted by disasters (including disability and gender equity considerations). However, the existing social protection strategy should have a clear role of DRM and needs to ensure that mechanisms are in place to flexibly respond to the varied needs of expanding vulnerable groups, to prevent long-term unwanted outcomes.

Road Map for an Adaptive Social Protection Agenda in Saint Lucia

Social Protection (SP) systems, policies, and programmes help individuals and societies manage risk and volatility and protect them from poverty and destitution,⁷⁶ however, the vulnerability and crises caused by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters are not within its reach. In other words, social protection (SP), disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change adaptation (CCA) are interrelated in preventing risk, and reducing their impacts on individuals, households, communities. Hence, it has become important to have a social protection system in place in Saint Lucia, that is adaptive, adjustable to shocks and which fully integrates disaster risk management in a holistic manner.

Adaptive Social Protection builds resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable people to climate change by combining the elements of social protection (SP), disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change adaptation (CCA) in systems, policies and programmes. Such approaches can provide valuable lessons and insights for the

⁷⁶ World Bank, 2012. Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012-2022.

promotion of climate resilient livelihoods amongst policymakers and practitioners. Adaptive social protection helps to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households to prepare for (before), cope with (during) and adapt to (after) the shocks they face. Its convergence should be a focus on social protection, humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management.

The integration of the three domains (social protection, disaster risk management and climate change) is relatively weak in Saint Lucia. Yet, there are many key challenges driving social protection practice and defining needs in Saint Lucia, now and in the coming years. The analysis has identified the following overarching areas that seem pertinent to supporting adaptive social protection:

Building shock-responsive systems

There is an emerging consensus that strengthening national capacities to design, deliver, evaluate and finance social protection and disaster risk management systems is a prerequisite for establishing effective adaptive social protection systems and services. Depending on the level of government ability and readiness, this may require strengthening capacities in all three critical domains (social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management). This analysis provides socio-economic and climate change vulnerability evidence. In doing so, three important opportunities emerge for moving towards a shock-sensitive social protection system in Saint Lucia.

- a) Preparing and strengthening DRM to ensure that its roles in social protection is mainstreamed.
- b) Strengthening ongoing social protection systems and programming to ensure that vulnerable people continue to have access to protection.
- c) Developing social protection systems' shock responsiveness along with DRM based on evidence for using social protection in emergency response and recovery and in response to crises and shocks as a long-term strategy.

Approach to shock-responsive social protection system

Much of the conceptual and empirical work to date on social protection's role in relation to shocks has focused on the existing social protection interventions to scale up in response to climate shocks. While there has been less focus on social protection that can contribute to mitigating risks, anticipating shocks in order to build resilience, and supporting specific socio-economic vulnerabilities in the event of a crisis along with income poverty.

Therefore, the approach for shock-responsive social protection for Saint Lucia will dedicate promoting social protection's role across a whole cycle such as across the disaster risk management (DRM) cycle: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Using a DRM framework as a starting point will help to look at the long-term function of social protection in the context of increased climatic variability and assess the opportunities through social protection to the DRM goals. In this regard, the following framework has been considered for shock-responsive social protection systems to respond to major shocks in Saint Lucia:

- a) **Institutional arrangements and capacity:** the legislation, policies, and mandates of key DRM and social protection institutions.
- b) **Targeting system:** the protocols, processes, and criteria for identifying people and families that should receive social protection or DRM support.
- c) **Information systems:** the socio-economic, disaster risk and vulnerability information to enable decision making before and after a shock such as social registries and beneficiary registries, DRM information systems and issues related to accessibility, sharing protocols, data collection mechanisms, data relevance, etc.
- d) **Delivery mechanisms:** mechanisms for delivering cash or in-kind assistance to social protection beneficiaries and/or people affected by shocks.
- e) **Coordination mechanisms:** mechanisms and protocols for coordinating DRM activities before and after a shock, including the role of social protection.
- f) **Financing mechanisms:** strategies and mechanisms for funding DRM such as budgetary instruments, contingency financing, and insurance, including any financing of social protection responses.

Also, the following tools or instruments⁷⁷ will be explored for the social protection programmes systems strengthening to provide assistance or for a supportive role in an emergency response:

- a) **Vertical expansion:** increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing social protection programme or system.
- b) **Horizontal expansion:** temporarily extending social protection support to new households.
- c) **Piggybacking:** utilising elements of an existing social protection programme or system for delivering a separate emergency response.
- d) **Alignment:** aligning some aspects of an emergency response with current or possible future national social protection programmes.
- e) **Design tweaks:** making small adjustments to the design of a core social protection programme.

Towards a more shock-responsive social protection system

Developing shock-responsive social protection system is dynamic and requires long-term presence and commitment to reduce poverty, deprivations and vulnerability. Shock-responsive social protection should be strengthened as an ongoing effort by further reinforcing protection and prevention features. Also, improved outcomes for vulnerable groups, especially in crisis contexts, requires a cross-sectoral approach and the provision of a range of complementary services across sectors (e.g., health, education, protection, employment, food security, etc.) and across key thematic areas (e.g., financing for disability, children, unemployed youth or multi-dimensional poverty measurement and reduction, etc.).

Therefore, the objective of a shock-responsive social protection system in Saint Lucia is to meet the needs of the poorest, build resilience to shocks and climate change, and support early and effective emergency action when needed. Such a system will prioritise core social protection objectives, while also ensuring that the progress made is protected from shocks.

Rationale for the Joint Programme

This analysis presented that people in Saint Lucia are more vulnerable to the impact of crises when they live in poverty and lack assets to prepare for, withstand and recover from such events. Therefore, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women aim to support through their joint programming, the strengthening of shock-responsive social protection in Saint Lucia, linking it to disaster risk management and adapting to climate change – to ensure people have the means to prepare and access support during and after crises.

In Saint Lucia, the joint programme focuses on the following, among others, for strengthening shock-responsive social protection systems:

1. Policy and legislation framework to support shock-responsive social protection

Systems and capacity are crucial for implementing shock-responsive social protection. This analysis provided evidence that shocks are one of the key drivers of poverty and vulnerability, and a system is necessary to protect assets and increase resilience of the most vulnerable. In particular, there is need for relevant legislation as well as reviews of existing policy to make significant linkages with DRM at strategic, policy and institutional levels, including recognising the importance of climate risk management for poverty reduction and establishing institutional coordination with relevant actors.

⁷⁷ OPM (2015) and Beazley et al. 2016.

2. Institutional coordination

Shock-responsive social protection requires, at a minimum, coordination between key actors, DRM, and climate and emergency sectors to plan and prepare for shocks in advance to recovery.

3. Delivery mechanisms

The analysis suggests that the fragmented approach and inefficiencies in programme delivery may result in inclusion and exclusion errors, delays in delivering transfers on time, and lack of integrated MIS and M&E systems may hamper better coordination and harmonisation across the programmes. More work is needed at a national level such as early warning systems and weather services. In brief, there is significant potential for social protection information systems and delivery infrastructure to flexibly respond to unanticipated shocks through increased coverage.

4. Financing shock-responsive social protection

The financing of shock-responsive social protection must have a balance between achieving sustainable support for long-term programmes to reduce chronic poverty, and access to additional finance to support expansion of programmes in times of greater need. It should link to disaster risk, which includes funding for humanitarian and emergency response activities as well as longer-term interventions.

This analysis shows that social protection budgets are mostly donor-funded and domestic resources for the sector remains low. Multi-year commitments exist, but still depend on project-driven donor funding, which is highly fragmented. Key potential areas for long-term shock-responsive social protection financing (also social protection) include:

- Government commitment and ownership of the shock-responsive social protection system through domestic funds and resource delivery through government structures with sufficient implementation capacity.
- Multi-year funding commitments that are adequate to support fluctuating levels of need.
- Ensuring funding is available when needed and as planned.
- Donor coordination, ensuring external contributions are well managed and provide maximum benefit to the programme.

7.2 Policy Recommendations for Shock-responsive Social Protection

The recommendations presented here are intended to support a dialogue about options for making existing social protection more adaptive in Saint Lucia and discussions about the roles that various stakeholders (government, development partners and donors) might play in that process. While multiple pathways exist for adaptive social protection, some policy directions, as below, are significant based on evidence (from analysis) for Saint Lucia.

The vulnerability analysis findings call for a shock-responsive social protection system to be leveraged in collaboration with DRM (also humanitarian sector) that can:

- a) Promote resilience in anticipation of crises to prevent and mitigate the impact of shocks by reducing poverty, promoting household coping capacities and by diversifying livelihoods.
- b) Prepare for shocks by, for example, planning and coordinating interventions in advance.
- c) Support households to meet their immediate needs in response to shocks by, for example, scaling up social protection programmes to reach larger proportions of affected populations and increasing cash and in-kind transfers to programme participants when shocks occur.
- d) Support recovery efforts by whereby programmes support increases resilience to shocks (directly linked to prevention and mitigation).

Moving towards such a vision in the short and medium term will require both building on existing programming and systems, as well as a more radical shift in the programming and financing that reinforce the current social protection approach – both from the social protection and the humanitarian and DRM side. The recommendations presented here draw on the above considerations and vulnerability analysis of Saint Lucia.

1. Vision

Develop a vision for shock-sensitive social protection (how this will help households/individuals better deal with the root causes and impacts of vulnerability and shocks) and a five-year strategy developed to guide national-level policy and programming across different actors.

2. Evidence

Assess the risk profile building on available information and expertise from humanitarian and DRM perspective and incorporate evidence on risk and vulnerability into poverty analysis to inform planning and programming.

3. Systems and capacity

- a) Strengthen policies/strategies/legislation to provide an enabling framework for social protection to support the needs of those vulnerable to, and affected by, shocks.
- b) Strengthen coordination mechanisms to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall response in times of crisis, across all relevant actors, as well as longer term programming.
- c) Develop a financing strategy to a) ensure continuity of social protection service delivery in the aftermath of shock; b) potentially scale up to support emerging needs (via new or existing programmes); and c) support longer-term system strengthening and resilience building and in reducing poverty and vulnerability (including re-design of programmes with enhanced focus on resilience)

4. Programmes

- a) Review and strengthen ongoing social protection programme design features to address the risks, shocks and stressors that Saint Lucia faces, support the effective implementation and expand it based on shock vulnerability or emergency response, and support improved programme coordination at the household level.
- b) In the medium-to-longer term, develop 'scalable' mechanisms as part of social protection programmes to deal with exceptional periods of acute need that result from unanticipated climate extremes.

5. Delivery mechanisms

- a) Review and strengthen existing programme delivery systems to enable a) continuity of service delivery; and b) the potential for flexing and scaling up in response to shocks.
- b) Implementation partners effectively deliver core and shock based social protection, strengthening capacity and delivery systems for rapid response to scale up and coordinate in emergencies.
- c) Develop protocols for disaster responses (vertical expansions and piggybacking)
- d) Integrate forward planning and preparation into social protection programming, including climate information.

6. Monitoring

Establish and strengthen monitoring, evaluation to measure progress towards shock-sensitive social protection systems and outcomes and use the findings to inform operations.

Some examples for strategic actions

The following section outlines some examples of Strategic actions for shock-responsive social protection (Short, Medium, and Long term):

Table 30: Examples for Strategic Actions
(Short, Medium and Long term)

When/what	Details	
	Short	Medium and long-term
Before: prevention, mitigation and preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a vision for shock-responsive social protection that builds on existing systems, addresses climate change needs and enables expansion during disaster. Develop protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Develop clear strategies for financing for response via social protection. <p>Information systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess existing information systems and their potential for shock preparedness and response. Develop socio-economic, disaster risk and vulnerability information system, DRM information systems and issues related to the collection, sharing and accessing of data. Develop early warning information systems to inform planning for early shock response. Explore digital information system for supporting disaster affected households. <p>Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping the relevant actors for shock response and their current roles, responsibilities and capacity (e.g., stakeholder mapping). Strengthening coordination among social protection, health, disaster management, livelihoods, and climate change sectors to increase efficiency with clear roles and responsibilities and allow for cross-linkages at all levels for coordinated action. Consider incorporation of risk, vulnerability and post-disaster assessments under DRM activities in programme targeting under social protection. Develop a strategy which includes links to the role of social protection programmes in DRM. Enhance the vertical coordination structures between community, district and national levels, and improve accountability and information sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen institutional capacities for integrated service delivery that is evidence-based, gender responsive social and disaster risk management policy and legislation (institutionalize links between disaster risk management systems, and social protection programs and systems; and to address impact of disasters). Develop national system, policy and strategy to target and design programmes taking into account social, disaster and climate related vulnerabilities. Conduct institutional mapping assessment to make a dialogue among SP, climate change adaptation (CCA) and DRM. Guidelines and regulations for SP representation in DRM decision making at the national level. Strengthen provision (adequacy, coverage, effectiveness and inclusiveness) based on a solid understanding of risks and vulnerability to shocks. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on DRM capacity/tools/frameworks to better understand risks, vulnerability and potential impacts across population groups (food security, etc.). Where relevant, integrating this information into social protection information systems, to inform planning and implementation. Incorporating risk and vulnerability into targeting criteria (e.g., expanding coverage). Analyzing the likely impacts of various shocks on existing delivery systems and capacity and 'shock proofing' these systems. Piloting/testing of the chosen approach. Develop and implement policies and tools to target and design programmes taking into account social, disaster and climate-related vulnerabilities. Develop mechanisms to scale up cash transfer in response to shock/crises/weather-related shocks.

<p>Before and/or During</p>	<p>Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop /improve the design and implementation of programmes to extend the coverage of social protection programmes across people’s life cycles. • Scale up existing programmes to allow for vertical and horizontal expansion linked to DRM and actions during large-scale shocks. • Use hazard and vulnerability assessments to inform the design, implementation and links of programmes. <p>Financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a financing strategy to ensure continuity of social protection service delivery post shock, scale up to support additional needs (via new or existing programmes), and support longer-term system strengthening and resilience building. 	<p>Financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and supporting for innovative financing strategies to ensure fiscal sustainability including a long-term disaster risk financing with a mix of instruments, contingency budgeting and expanded coverage. • Develop a long-term disaster risk financing strategy with a mix of instruments, including contingency budgeting, and risk transfer products, such as insurance, among others. • Explore the possibility of contingency financing for disaster response including issue based vertical fund for resilience/ reserve fund for financing disaster losses. • Explore innovative financing strategies in areas like adopting a more accommodating macroeconomic framework, re-allocating public expenditures based on economic justice, expanding social security coverage and contributory revenues (self-employed/informal workers).
<p>After: early response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand social protection coverage and outreach to vulnerable people to avoid hunger and poverty (short-term). • Ensure continuity of service delivery for routine programmes ('business as usual'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the social protection system by identifying and integrating the most vulnerable people (e.g. poor families with children, households headed by women, people with disabilities or children, the elderly,) in the social protection framework and packages.
<p>After: response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise benefits and service package based on changing needs and continue early response efforts. 	
<p>Longer term recovery (and learning)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen systems feeding into future preparedness. • Use technology and innovative tools and practices to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of food markets and supply chains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance, policy, regulatory frameworks, and enabling factors for promoting gender equitable and sustainable employment and decent job creation including policies as well as incentives for businesses, informal economy and employment in relation to entrepreneurship/SMEs, and support measures that could maximize formal employment and narrow the gender gap. • Policy, regulatory and institutional measures to ensure uninterrupted production, supply chain and food security efforts.

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9. ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. Vulnerability concepts, audience and analysis

The concept of vulnerability is complex in development and is highly policy driven and relevant. The term vulnerability is multi-dimensional in nature, which contributes to the challenges in defining and measuring it. Hence, vulnerability as a notion involves many interpretations depending on the perspectives of the organizations. In a general context, vulnerability links the discussion of people, individuals or population groups, to external risks or threats, their capacity of reaction, and the consequences in terms of a decline in well-being⁷⁸. The level of vulnerability depends on the people's capacities to cope with external situations including the social, economic, political and environmental systems in which they live in.

Further, the perception of vulnerability is also generally used in development work so as to describe exposure to risks of being harmed, suffering a loss or being affected by the realization of an adverse event to communities, individuals, households, or groups of people due to a wide range of factors, such as location, status, age, socio-demographic characteristics, economic situation, among others. Therefore, the below mentioned definitions complement each other in the sense that all focuses on the multi dimensions on socio-economic and institutional factors, which are key aspects in understanding and confronting socio-economic and climate change issues.

Some of the definitions of vulnerability have been presented below:

- a) Vulnerability refers to proneness to damage from external forces: a) Economic vulnerability: refers to risks faced from exogenous shocks to systems of production, distribution and consumption. b) Environmental vulnerability: refers to the risk of damage to natural eco-systems. c) Social vulnerability: reflects "...the degree to which societies or socio-economic groups are affected by stresses and hazards, whether brought about by external forces or intrinsic factors (internal or external) that negatively impact the social cohesion of a country (UNDP).
- b) Vulnerability is defined as the probability or risk today of being in poverty or to fall into deeper poverty in the future. It is a key dimension of welfare since a risk of large changes in income may constrain households to lower investments in productive assets -when households need to hold some reserves in liquid assets- and in human capital. (WB 2015, Poverty Reduction and Equity, Measuring vulnerability).
- c) Vulnerability can be defined as the diminished capacity of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural or man-made hazard. The concept is relative and dynamic. Vulnerability is most often associated with poverty, but it can also arise when people are isolated, insecure and defenceless in the face of risk, shock or stress." (IFRC 2012, Disaster and Crisis Management).
- d) Vulnerability is the manifestation of social, economic and political structures, and environmental setting. Vulnerability can be seen as made up of two elements: exposure to hazard and coping capability. People having more capability to cope with extreme events are naturally also less vulnerable to risk. (UNEP 2003, Assessing Human Vulnerability to Environmental Change)
- e) The IPCC's 2nd Assessment Report defines vulnerability as the extent to which climate change may damage or harm a system; it depends not only on a system's sensitivity but also on its ability to adapt to new climatic conditions (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change -IPCC, Working Group 2, 2001. Third Assessment Report, Annex B: Glossary of Terms).
- f) The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) highlights the various dimensions of vulnerability, that begins with vulnerability as an internal risk factor (intrinsic vulnerability), which can gradually be widened to vulnerability as the likelihood to experience harm (human-centred). Vulnerability could also be conceived as a dualistic approach of susceptibility and coping capacity; it can be further widened as a multiple structure that considers susceptibility, coping capacity and exposure, adaptive capacity and, ultimately, vulnerability can be considered in a multi-dimensional context encompassing, physical, social, economic, environmental, and institutional features (The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2011) noted that the concept of vulnerability has several dimensions).
- g) The conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction)

⁷⁸ There is a general consensus among development organizations in the literature that vulnerability analysis entails a risk-related approach and is more dynamic and multi-dimensional than the analysis of poverty.

2. Disaster Risk Management (DRM)

The systematic process of using administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies and coping capacities of the society and communities to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. This comprises all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards. (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction)

3. Resilience

The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organizing itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures. (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction)

4. Risk

The probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses (deaths, injuries, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions. (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction)



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