



Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean Saint Lucia Case Study

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Preface

This report is part of a series of case studies on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP, www.wfp.org) and conducted by Oxford Policy Management (OPM, www.opml.co.uk). The OPM Project Manager is Rodolfo Beazley (rodolfo.Beazley@opml.co.uk) and WFP Project Managers are Regis Chapman (regis.chapman@wfp.org), Francesca Ciardi (francesca.ciardi@wfp.org) of the Barbados Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Caribbean, and Giulia Baldi (giulia.baldi@wfp.org) of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Executive summary

Introduction

There is global recognition of the promising linkages between social protection and disaster risk management (DRM) in responding to and mitigating shocks, and in contributing to strengthening the humanitarian–development nexus. It is in this context that the World Food Programme (WFP) and Oxford Policy Management (OPM) began a research project in 2016 on shock-responsive social protection in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In 2019 and 2020, the study focused on the Caribbean, where several governments have used social protection programmes and systems to reach people impacted by disasters. This report studies the case of Saint Lucia and identifies the factors that would allow the social protection system to be more responsive. The box below briefly summarises the theoretical framework for this case study.

Shock-responsive social protection: theoretical framework

This research explores two dimensions to analyse how social protection systems relate to DRM and could be used in emergency response. The first is the extent to which established social protection systems are prepared to respond to major shocks. This concerns:

1. Institutional arrangements and capacity: the legislation, policies, and mandates of key DRM and social protection institutions.
2. Targeting system: the protocols, processes, and criteria for identifying people and families that should receive social protection or DRM support.
3. Information systems: the socioeconomic, disaster risk, and vulnerability information required to enable decision making before and after a shock. This includes social registries and beneficiary registries, DRM information systems as well as issues related to accessibility, sharing protocols, data collection mechanisms, data relevance, and accuracy and security and privacy protocols.
4. Delivery mechanisms: mechanisms in place for delivering cash or in-kind assistance to social protection beneficiaries and/or people affected by shocks.
5. Coordination mechanisms: mechanisms and protocols for coordinating DRM activities before and after a shock, including the role of social protection.
6. Financing mechanisms: strategies and mechanisms for funding DRM such as budgetary instruments, contingency financing, and insurance, including any financing of social protection responses.

The second dimension relates to the ways in which social protection programmes/systems can directly provide assistance or play a supportive role in an emergency response. These can be used in any combination:

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

Sources: OPM (2015) and Beazley et al. (2016)

Disaster Risk Management in Saint Lucia

This section describes the disaster risk management (DRM) system in Saint Lucia, focusing on the institutional arrangements, information management, and financing mechanisms.

Institutional arrangements

The 2006 Disaster Management Act is foundational law governing Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Saint Lucia. This Act established the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) as the central coordinating body for disaster risk management in Saint Lucia. The DRM system is structured with three levels of committees: the National Emergency Management Advisory Committee (NEMAC), chaired by the Prime Minister; 13 National Disaster Committees; and 18 District Disaster Committees.

The District Disaster Committees (DDCs) play a crucial role during both emergency and non-emergencies periods. They raise community awareness about disaster preparedness in non-emergency periods and coordinate responses during emergencies, including shelter assessments, community alerts, and relief distribution. However, a significant challenge lies in maintaining consistent involvement among committee members, who serve on a voluntary basis.

To support relief efforts, Social Transformation Officers (STOs) from the Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, and Empowerment (referred to as the Ministry of Equity hereafter) assist the DDCs, particularly in conducting household assessments. These officers serve as a vital link between NEMO and the Ministry of Equity, bridging the gap between DRM and social protection.

Coordination of disaster responses is primarily managed from NEMO Headquarters and, if activated, from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC). However, coordination challenges have

been noted, with different agencies sometimes working independently, potentially leading to overlapping efforts or exclusion of affected households.

Information management

Saint Lucia has established systems to collect and report damage and loss data after disasters. District-level teams, coordinated by NEMO, conduct Initial Damage Assessments (IDAs), providing data to the NEOC for analysis by the national Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA) team. Household-level data is also collected through the DDCs and aid organisations (e.g. Red Cross, NGOs) involved in the response. Nevertheless, the government faces challenges in effectively coordinating, analysing, and disseminating assessment data.

Financing mechanisms

In an in-depth analysis of disaster risk financing in Saint Lucia, the World Bank found that existing mechanisms were not adequately tailored to address the country's vulnerability to various types of disasters. Typically, funds for disaster response are sourced from unplanned advances outside the regular budget cycle, reallocating resources within ministries cover response costs (World Bank Group, 2018).

For long-term recovery and reconstruction, Saint Lucia primarily relies on international assistance and post-disaster loans (World Bank Group, 2018). Between 2004 and 2014, international sources were the main funding avenue for recovery and reconstruction, mainly through loans, supplemented by grants and government revenues. However, this reliance on loans has contributed significantly to public debt across the Caribbean.

Saint Lucia is a member of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC), a parametric risk-pooling insurance fund providing prompt pay-outs to governments after major disasters. CCRIF pay-outs are administered by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Growth, Job Creation, External Affairs and the Public Service (referred to as the Ministry of Finance hereafter). CCRIF has provided Saint Lucia with the following pay-outs: USD 418,976 (Eastern Caribbean Dollar (XCD) 1,131 million) following an earthquake of 7.4 magnitude in 2007; USD 3.2m (XCD 8.6 million) after Hurricane Tomas in 2010; and USD 3.8m (XCD 10.21 million) for excessive rainfall as a result of Hurricane Mathew in 2016 (World Bank Group, 2018).

While Saint Lucia's DRM policies and legislation include provisions for a national contingency fund known as the Emergency Disaster Fund, this fund appears inactive. The Constitution mandates Parliament to establish a Contingency Fund managed by the Ministry of Finance for urgent and unforeseen expenditures, but no specific guidelines exist for annual allocations, and the fund is not designated exclusively for disaster-related expenses (World Bank Group, 2018).

Social Protection in Saint Lucia

The social protection sector in Saint Lucia has undergone a comprehensive reform process over the past decade with a focus on strengthening policy and legislative frameworks, improving programme harmonisation, and targeting and information management systems. Recent developments indicate a revitalised effort within this sector. Since the beginning of 2020, the World Bank has provided a USD 20 million loan to support the Human Capital Resilience Project, with USD 7.5 million allocated specifically to the Ministry of Equity. These funds are intended to strengthen the social protection policy framework and enhance the coverage and effectiveness of key social programmes.

Social assistance programmes in Saint Lucia encompass a range of initiatives, including cash and in-kind transfers, subsidies, and public works programmes, predominantly overseen by departments within the Ministry of Equity and the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development (referred to as the Ministry of Education hereafter).

While social protection encompasses various components such as social insurance, social services and labour market measures, this report focuses specifically on social assistance programmes that can be linked with disaster preparedness and response efforts i.e. the Public Assistance Programme (PAP) and the School Feeding Programme.

The PAP is Saint Lucia's primary poverty-targeted cash transfer programme, providing monthly payments adjusted according to household size. In 2018, the monthly transfer ranged from USD 80 (XCD 215) for a single-member household to USD 172 (XCD 465) for a household with five or more members. As of March 2019, 2,637 households benefitted from the PAP, which represents less than 2% of the overall population.

A key challenge facing the PAP is the lack of operation manuals, leading to variations in its implementation by Welfare Officers. Additionally, there are no clearly defined strategies for transitioning beneficiaries to economic independence. To address these issues, the Ministry of Equity is working to enhance existing PAP processes and establish new ones, including payments systems, grievance handling, case management, and monitoring and evaluation. Efforts have begun with the creation of a beneficiary registry for the PAP.

The School Feeding Programme, managed by the Ministry of Education, operates in 79 of 81 pre-schools and primary schools across Saint Lucia. This programme provides nutritious mid-day meals free of charge to selected students and at the subsidised rate of USD 0.4 per day (XCD 1) for paying students. During the 2016/17 school year, approximately 40% of students in public primary schools benefitted from this programme, serving a total of 6,640 students as of December 2018.

Institutional arrangements and capacity

The Ministry of Equity plays a leading role in social assistance, guided by a mandate to *promote rights-based human development and to facilitate the economic, social, cultural, political and spiritual*

advancement of individuals, households, communities, and the society through poverty reduction, social protection and empowerment' (GoSL, 2018a). The Ministry's departments include the Policy, Planning and Administrative Services Department; the Social Research and Policy Unit; the Community Services Unit; the Welfare Services Unit, the Accounts Unit, and the Department of Local Government. The Ministry of Equity is also responsible for the Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF), the Division of Human Services, the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund (BELfund), the Boys Training Centre (BTC), the New Beginnings Transit Home and the National Conservation Authority (NCA).

The Ministry of Equity is the only ministry with the mandate to administer cash transfers programmes. Since 2012, the Welfare Services Unit has managed the implementation of the PAP and the Child Disability Grant through Welfare Officers. Each Welfare Officer is responsible for overseeing nearly 1,000 clients or beneficiaries across these programmes, highlighting significant strains on human resources within the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education provides various forms of assistance to financially disadvantaged students, including the School Feeding Programme, transportation support, bursaries, and allowances (Soto, 2015). The Ministry's Student Welfare Department manages the School Feeding Programme and the Book Bursary Programme. The School Feeding Programme is overseen centrally by a single Student Welfare Coordinator alongside a clerk (GoSL, 2018a).

Targeting

While the draft National Social Protection Bill (2015) outlines a broad targeting process, the practical application of the PAP differs, lacking specific operational guidance on targeting. Applicants apply through Welfare Officers and submit supporting documentation, such as medical records or referrals from respected community members. Applicants National Insurance Corporation (NIC) number serves as a unique beneficiary identifier, although not possessing an NIC number does not prevent one's application from being processed.

During the PAP application process, Welfare Officers use either a paper or electronic Saint Lucia National Eligibility Test (SL-NET) form to collect applicant information. This data is then used to calculate a proxy means test (PMT) score to determine PAP eligibility. The application is conducted at the applicant's home, eliminating the need for a separate verification visit. A second visit is then conducted to inform the client of the approval, provide programme details, and collect additional information such as preferred payment method and bank account details if applicable. Currently, there is no formal appeals process for rejected applications, although plans are underway to develop a grievance and appeal mechanism as part of ongoing social protection reforms. An updated version of the SL-NET (SL-NET 3.0), approved in August 2019, is expected to enhance the targeting strategy by integrating both monetary and multidimensional poverty criteria into the assessment process.

PAP beneficiaries undergo a review process twice per year, during which they are given two months to come forward for review to update their files; failure to do so may result in suspension from the programme.

Recertification is planned every two years, where beneficiaries undergo SL-NET assessment. If they no longer meet the eligibility criteria, they should be graduated from the PAP. However, since there is no graduation strategy in place, beneficiaries simply exit the programme upon their passing.

In the School Feeding Programme, student selection for free meals primarily rests with school principals, who base their decisions on their understanding of children's circumstances and requests from parents. However, the lacks specific operational manuals and protocols documenting its processes and eligibility criteria, including beneficiary selection, and the criteria for eligibility for the fully subsidised component of the programme.

Payment mechanisms

PAP payments are made monthly through bank transfers to credit unions, or manual collection at sub-collectors' offices. Approximately 81% of beneficiaries receive their transfers through direct bank transfers.² However, the Ministry of Equity faces challenges in registering certain categories of beneficiaries with financial institutions due mobility issues related to health conditions and specific requirements imposed by the financial sector for opening bank accounts.

To date, PAP payments have not experienced significant disruptions during disasters. In the event of a major storm coinciding with manual payment schedules, the date is shifted by a few days, with public announcements made to inform beneficiaries. Nevertheless, beneficiaries sometimes face delays during non-emergency times, waiting up to two hours to collect or withdraw payments, or making multiple trips to credit unions due to payment schedule discrepancies.

PAP payrolls are compiled based on lists (in Excel files) provided by Welfare Officers to the Executive Officer of the Welfare Services Unit . These lists contain beneficiary numbers, bank account information, and PAP benefit amounts. The officer manually compares the benefit amounts with previous records to create a new payroll. Implementing an automated system for PAP payroll would streamline this process, saving time and resources.

Information management

The PAP currently utilises a basic information management system (IMS) in Excel, which maintains basic information households and clients but lacks capabilities for in-depth data analysis (e.g. disaggregated data by age, gender, household composition). Consequently, retrieving consistent data on coverage over time or determining the duration of enrolment for individuals is challenging.

² Author's calculations based on data from the Ministry of Equity.

As part of the long-term goals outlined in the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP), efforts are underway to establish a social registry. The Ministry of Equity has initiated work on creating a beneficiary registry through a revalidation exercise conducted in 2019. Information was being collected using the updated SL-NET 3.0 form, and entries are made into a database using NIC numbers as unique identifiers.

An upcoming project with the World Bank aims to support the application of the SL-NET, develop a robust IMS, and establish a registry includes information on poor and vulnerable individuals not currently covered by social programmes. Building a beneficiary registry will enhance the Ministry of Equity's ability to monitor and manage PAP and Child Disability Grant benefits. However, this initiative will require capacity building, including the establishment of an information technology department and consistent investment in data capturing and management infrastructure.

Shock-responsive social protection in Saint Lucia

In Saint Lucia, there are established linkages between the social protection and disaster management sectors. The Ministry of Equity actively participates in preparedness, emergency response, and recovery activities through its involvement in national disaster coordination mechanisms. Social Transformation Officers collaborate with NEMO both during emergencies and in community development initiatives during non-emergency periods.

However, the use of social assistance programmes or systems to assist populations facing shocks has been limited to date. Some examples provide insights on potential future applications of social protection programmes and systems:

- **Increase of PAP benefits (i.e. vertical expansion) for beneficiaries severely hit by a shock.** Welfare Officers have the discretion to propose increased PAP benefits for up to six months for beneficiaries facing particularly difficult circumstances. However, there is limited data available on the instances when such increases have been approved, and details regarding the frequency and specific circumstances of these adjustments are scarce. Despite the absence of formal procedures, this practice establishes a precedent for adapting transfer values based on shocks..
- **Provision of assistance through the Ministry of Equity to hurricane-affected Dominican citizens in Saint Lucia.** Following Hurricane Maria in 2017, the Ministry of Equity provided assistance to hurricane-affected citizens from Dominica arriving in Saint Lucia. An additional budget was allocated based on needs identified through a social assistance form administered at the ports of entry. Support included rental payments, school costs and food for affected children for 30 Dominican citizens.

Towards a more shock-responsive social protection system

There is growing recognition among key stakeholders in Saint Lucia that social protection systems and programmes could play a significant role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from

disasters and other shocks. Interest is emerging in defining and exploring this 'shock-responsive' role in policy and programming. The PAP and the School Feeding Programme, which are analysed in this research, each have certain characteristics that could lend them to playing a role in responding to shocks.

With broad geographical coverage, the School Feeding Programme already reaches areas affected by disasters or economic shocks. A future option could involve schools in impacted areas waiving co-financing requirements and expanding free meals coverage. This would require careful consideration of food supply chains to address potential disruptions, along with clearly defined processes for adding beneficiaries and waiving fees.

Stakeholders interviewed see the potential for the PAP to play a larger role in shock-response, as it targets poor people who are vulnerable to natural hazards and economic shocks. Given its status as the only cash transfer programme in Saint Lucia, it could serve as a starting point for providing cash assistance during shocks. Regional experiences, such as in Dominica, demonstrate the use of such programmes to assist disaster-impacted populations through increased benefits to existing beneficiaries and identifying new recipients for assistance.

Scaling up the PAP for shock-response requires further exploration of operational implications. For example, delivery mechanisms, targeting procedures, and capacity to handle increased responsibilities must be reviewed and adapted for efficiency and accessibility. Collaboration protocols with NEMO and capacity-building efforts for Welfare Officers are also important considerations as they are already stretched thin.

The plan for establishing a social registry in Saint Lucia presents interesting opportunities for implementing shock-responsive social protection. These registries include data on both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, recognising that individuals from both groups may require assistance during major shocks. As such, they can be a powerful tool for planning effective responses to crises.

It is important to note that while social registries are not an absolute prerequisite for shock-responsive social protection. Various methods exist to identify individuals at risk of being impacted by disasters and shocks. Leveraging data on poverty and disaster risk (e.g. census, national survey of living conditions, disaster risk mapping) can provide valuable insights. This data can facilitate the identification of vulnerable areas, communities, and livelihoods likely to be affected under different scenarios.

Recommendations


To better prepare social protection systems in Saint Lucia for supporting vulnerable populations in the face of disasters and other shocks, recommendations can be grouped into two main themes – (1) strengthening core functions with a risk-informed approach and (2) seizing opportunities for social protection to play a greater role in supporting disaster risk management.


An overarching recommendation for a more shock-responsive social protection system in Saint Lucia is to invest in the social protection sector’s capacity for regular programming and to “shock-proof” programmes to guarantee the regular provision of social benefits in emergencies. While the primary objective of these investments is to strengthen the social protection system, they should be made in a risk-informed manner to better support DRM. For instance, improving information systems or electronic payment mechanisms not only enhances the delivery of regular social protection programmes but also expands the ability to identify and assist individuals vulnerable to or affected by shocks. Additionally, automating the PAP payroll system is important for expediting disbursements and facilitating rapid scale-up of payments as part of emergency or recovery assistance.




A second theme of the recommendations is how social protection programmes and systems could play new and more direct roles in supporting people affected by disasters, through stronger linkages to disaster response and risk management. These recommendations outline investments to prepare social protection systems for these functions, such as developing protocols and processes to temporarily expand the PAP and waive beneficiary contributions for the School Feeding Programme during emergencies. Moreover, assessing the operational implications of temporarily scaling up the PAP and (over time) identifying and establishing predictable financing mechanisms for to fund responses linked to social protection are essential components of this strategy. Investing in these systems and establishing protocols does not imply that they are the only or best way to assist people facing shocks, nor are the processes set in stone. Rather the goal is to ensure that investments are strategically made to position the social protection systems to effectively provide support, rather than trying to develop these capacities in the aftermath of a disaster. This integration must be closely coordinated with the DRM sector to enhance overall preparedness and response capacities in Saint Lucia.

All recommendations are summarised in the below table, with some envisioned in the short-medium term and others over a longer horizon.

Recommendations to enable Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Saint Lucia

Preparedness category	Short/medium-term recommendations	Long-term recommendations
<p>Information management</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue investing in the creation of a beneficiary registry for the PAP, the Child Disability Grant and other relevant grants. Invest in the Ministry of Equity’s capacity to manage the beneficiary registry. Consider a staggered development of a social registry with greater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a social registry to bring together information from all public agencies delivering social assistance programmes and consider how to include programmes run by NGOs and faith-based organisations (FBOs). As part of the social registry, consider collecting information

	<p>proportions of the population registered in areas with higher prevalence of poverty and/or greater exposure to shocks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse existing data on poverty and disaster risk/exposure to inform scenario planning of needs and financing requirements for emergency responses linked to social protection. Invest in NEMO's capacity to collect, analyse and coordinate data collection. Establish data-sharing agreements with government organisations and NGOs and invest in the interoperability of registries and information management systems (IMS) 	<p>that makes it possible to assess vulnerability and exposure to shocks, and operational data that are useful for rapid responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use existing risk analysis to inform further registration efforts and geographic prioritisation. Create a National Unique Identifier Number (ID from birth) to enable tracking and to strengthen linkages across programmes, services and ministries. Ensure strategies are in place for information sharing at all levels.
<p>Targeting</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop streamlined targeting processes for using the PAP or other social assistance programmes to support emergency response and recovery. Continue to facilitate the acquisition of National Insurance Corporation (NIC) cards for applicants but also identify alternative ways of registering PAP applicants without NIC numbers. If PAP conditionality is introduced, put in place procedures to waive it during emergencies. Establish operation manuals that outline targeting, appeal and recertification processes and exit criteria. Continue to work on the inclusion of self-employed individuals in social insurance schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider making the targeting criteria and methodologies more risk-informed (i.e. SL-NET capturing not only the chronic poor but also the vulnerable).). <p>Implement SL-NET 3.0 across all government social assistance programmes to align targeting criteria uniformly and standardise eligibility standards.</p>

<p>Delivery mechanisms</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocols for increasing PAP transfer values in the event of disasters. • Review payment and delivery mechanisms to determine whether alternative mechanisms or processes need to be established in case the PAP is to be utilized for emergency/recovery assistance. • Facilitate the migration of PAP beneficiaries who receive their benefits through sub-collectors to bank/credit union transfer payments. Keep testing new approaches, including postal payments. • Automate the payroll system • Consider the introduction of a small honorarium or at least reimbursement of cost for District Disaster Committee members, to incentivise engagement. • Develop/establish protocols for adjusting payment cycles in the case of forecasted shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver all PAP transfers electronically and prepare the payment mechanisms for scale-ups. • Build redundancy into payment processes/protocols for cases of large-scale emergencies where electronic transfers may not be feasible.
<p>Coordination</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalise the National Social Protection Steering Committee as described in the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP). • Invest in the coordination role of NEMO/NEOC during emergencies and ensure responses linked to social protection are closely coordinated with NEMO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the coordination of social protection and disaster response programmes, including data management and sharing, across ministries and public entities.
<p>Financing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalise the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) based on an analysis of trends and forecasted financial requirements. • Establish safeguards to ensure that there are appropriate funds earmarked for disaster financing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mechanisms and protocols for the rapid disbursement of funds for shock-responsive social protection.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyse the costs and benefits of disaster-linked social protection schemes and their impact on budget.• Review possible risk financing mechanisms to support shock responsive social protection measures (e.g. expansion of PAP)• Assess implications of shock responsive social protection actions on staffing and resources (including for the Welfare Services Unit) and put in place plans to ensure adequate capacity.• Develop a financial framework for scaling-up social protection support.	
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Table of Contents

Preface ii

Executive summary iii

 Disaster Risk Management in Saint Lucia iv

 Social protection in Saint Lucia vi

 Shock-responsive social protection in Saint Lucia ix

 Towards a more shock-responsive social protection system ix

 Recommendations x

Table of Contents xv

List of acronyms xviii

1 Introduction 19

2 Research methodology 2

 2.1 Theoretical framework 3

 2.2 Research tools and fieldwork 5

3 Risk, vulnerability, and poverty in Saint Lucia 7

 3.1 Risks 7

 3.2 Poverty and vulnerability 8

4 Disaster Risk Management in Saint Lucia 10

 4.1 Institutional arrangements 10

 4.2 Coordination 13

 4.3 Targeting and information systems 14

 4.4 Delivery mechanisms 15

 4.5 Financing mechanisms 16

5 Social protection in Saint Lucia 19

 5.1 Main social protection programmes in Saint Lucia 20

 5.2 Institutional arrangements and capacity 25

 5.3 Targeting 26

 5.4 Payment mechanisms 29

 5.5 Information management and the creation of a social registry 30

 5.6 Coordination mechanisms 33

 5.7 Financing mechanisms 34

6 Shock-responsive social protection in Saint Lucia 36

6.1	Involvement of Ministry of Equity staff in DRM	36
6.2	Increasing the PAP transfer value (vertical expansion)	36
6.3	Provision of assistance through the Ministry of Equity to hurricane-affected Dominican citizens.....	37
7	Towards a more shock-responsive social protection system	38
7.1	Opportunities for more responsive social protection programmes and systems	38
7.1.1	School Feeding Programme	38
7.1.2	Public Assistance Programme.....	38
7.1.3	Beneficiary and social registries	41
7.1.4	Financing.....	43
8	Conclusion and recommendations.....	44
	References.....	48
	Annex A List of interviewees	50
	Annex B Social Assessment Form	52
	Annex C Research questions	56

List of tables, figures and boxes

Table 2:	Overview of the main social protection programmes	20
Table 3:	Active insured by sector (financial year 2017/2018)	24
Table 4:	Recommendations to enable Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Saint Lucia.....	45
Figure 1:	Typology of system preparedness for shock-responsive social protection	4
Figure 2:	Typology of shock-responsive social protection (system response)	5
Figure 3:	National structure for disaster management	12
Figure 5:	Copy of the front and back of the PAP welfare card.....	22
Figure 6:	Actual and budgeted expenditure on the PAP ('000 XCD and % of GDP)	35
Figure 7:	Social Assessment Form for humanitarian assistance post-disaster	52
Box 1:	National Emergency Management Organisation	11
Box 2:	CCRIF SPC	18
Box 3:	Lack of NIC card as a barrier to accessing the PAP	27
Box 4:	PAP PMT targeting model: evolution and performance.....	27
Box 5:	Development of a social registry	32
Box 6:	Enhancing the gender responsiveness of the PAP – UN Women.....	40
Box 7:	Social registries for emergency response	42

List of acronyms

CCRIF SPC	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company
CDG	Child Disability Grant
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
DANA	Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis
DDC	District Disaster Committee
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EDF	Emergency Disaster Fund
FBO	Faith-based organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoSL	Government of Saint Lucia
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KSL	Koudemain Ste Lucie
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MIS	Management Information System
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NDC	National Disaster Committee
NEMAC	National Emergency Management Advisory Committee
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organisation
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIC	National Insurance Corporation
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
NCD	Non-communicable disease
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PMT	Proxy Means Test
PAP	Public Assistance Programme
SL-NET	Saint Lucia National Eligibility Test
SSDF	Saint Lucia Social Development Fund
XCD	Eastern Caribbean dollar

1 Introduction

Investing in effective ways to address the impacts of disasters is an urgent priority. An important opportunity is linking social protection with Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Social protection programmes designed to assist vulnerable households, along with the systems that underpin these programmes, could have an important role in preparing for, responding to, and mitigating the impacts of natural hazards, such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and droughts as well as ‘man-made’ shocks like conflict, economic crises, and migration. This is referred to as ‘shock-responsive social protection’.

The potential for social protection systems to contribute more significantly to DRM is increasingly acknowledged by governments, multilateral donors, and aid agencies. At the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board committed to *‘support the further expansion and strengthening of social protection systems to continue to address chronic vulnerabilities and to scale up the utilisation of social protection as a means of responding to shocks and protracted crises.’* Additionally, the 2016 Grand Bargain, signed by 31 humanitarian donors and aid agencies, commits to increasing social protection programmes and strengthening national and local systems, as well as delivering humanitarian cash transfers through or linked with social protection systems. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, approved by the UN in September 2015, emphasises the establishment of social protection systems that ensure a basic standard of living for all.

Governments and aid organisations are increasingly utilising social protection systems in emergency responses globally and in the Caribbean, including in the aftermath of Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017 in Dominica and the British Virgin Islands, as well as Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas in 2019. However, the role of social protection systems in these responses, although important, was not necessarily planned. Maximising the potential added value of social protection systems depends on a number of factors, and analysing options before disasters occur is critical for preparing and informing the use of social protection systems and programmes in future responses.

To advance this agenda, WFP and OPM collaborated on the research project [Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin American and the Caribbean \(LAC\)](#) to generate evidence and inform practice to strengthen the linkages between social protection and disaster risk management, with the ultimate goal of improving disaster preparedness and response actions in the region. From 2016 to 2019, the project conducted a literature review on experiences in LAC (Beazley et al., 2016), undertook seven country case studies (Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Peru, Dominican Republic, and

Dominica), and drafted a synthesis report with key findings and policy recommendations (Beazley et al., 2019). Evidence generated by the project has been disseminated in conferences and webinars.³

In 2016, the research focus shifted to the Caribbean, recognising the unique vulnerabilities of Caribbean countries to large-scale shocks. The research conducted a literature review and five additional country case studies (Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago) to inform the emergency preparedness and response capacities and strategies of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and its Participating States.⁴ The selection of case study countries was a collaborative effort between CDEMA and the WFP Barbados Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Caribbean.

This case study specifically examines Saint Lucia, a country regularly exposed to natural hazards of varying intensity and severity. Saint Lucia has been working on strengthening its social protection over the years and is keen on making it more shock responsive. At the time of publishing this research, Saint Lucia, like many other Caribbean countries, was exploring ways to expand social protection to support individuals and households affected by the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next section of this report outlines the research methodology (Section 2). [Section 3](#) describe disaster risks and poverty in Saint Lucia. [Section 4](#) describes the country's DRM system, and [Section 5](#) describes the social protection system. [Section 6](#) highlights some embryonic attempts to use social protection in response to shocks in Saint Lucia, and [Section 7](#) provides recommendations for more responsive and flexible systems.

2 Research methodology

In this section, we present a framework that helps us to understand the two key dimensions of a shock-responsive social protection system: preparedness and responsiveness. We also present the overarching research questions and briefly describe the tools and fieldwork.

³ Reports and material are available at www1.wfp.org/publications/shock-responsive-social-protection-latin-america-and-caribbean

⁴ Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands and the Virgin Islands.

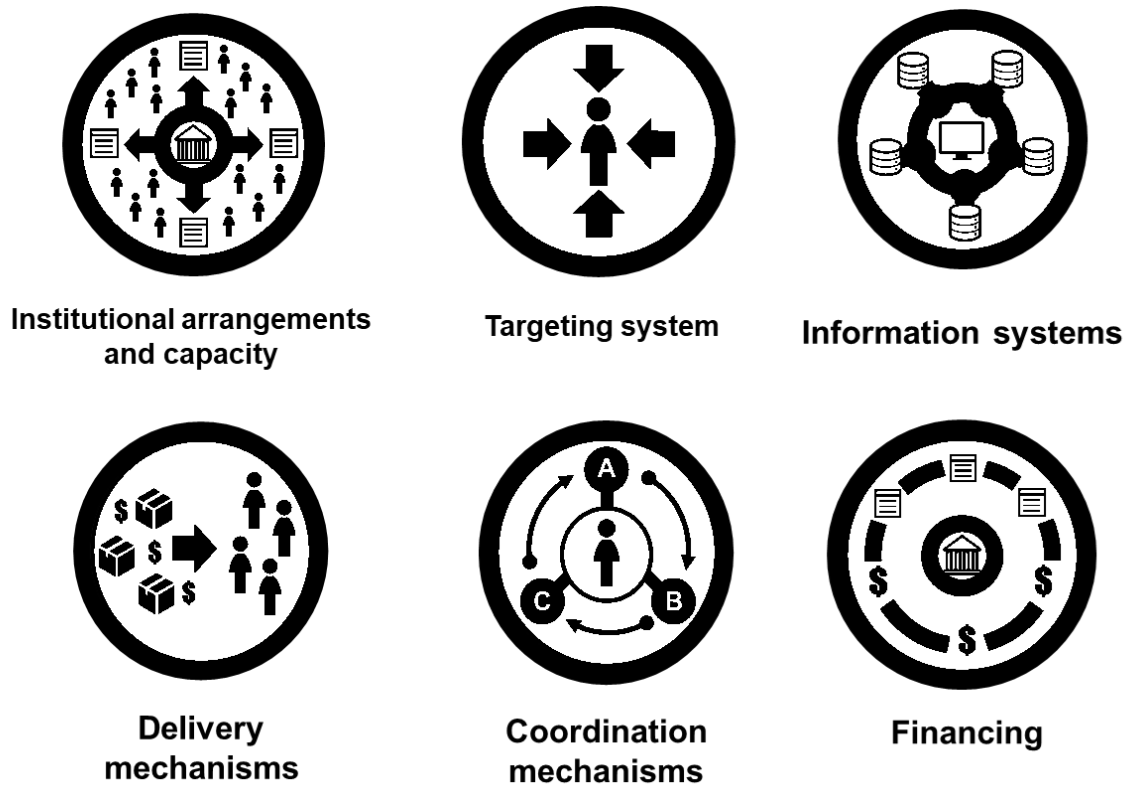
2.1 Theoretical framework

System preparedness

In this study, we analyse the level of preparedness of the social protection system based on six aspects that are essential for a prompt and effective response (Beazley et al., 2016):

1. **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.
2. **Targeting system:** protocols, processes and criteria for identifying people and households that should receive social assistance or DRM support.
3. **Information systems:** socioeconomic, 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 the collection, sharing and accessing of data.
4. **Delivery mechanisms:** mechanisms in place for delivering cash or in-kind assistance to social protection beneficiaries and/or people affected by shocks.
5. **Coordination:** mechanisms and protocols for coordinating DRM activities before and after a shock, including the role of social protection.
6. **Financing:** strategies and mechanisms for funding DRM such as budgetary instruments, contingency financing and insurance, including any financing of social protection responses.

Figure 1: Typology of system preparedness for shock-responsive social protection



Source: Adapted from Beazley *et al.* (2016).

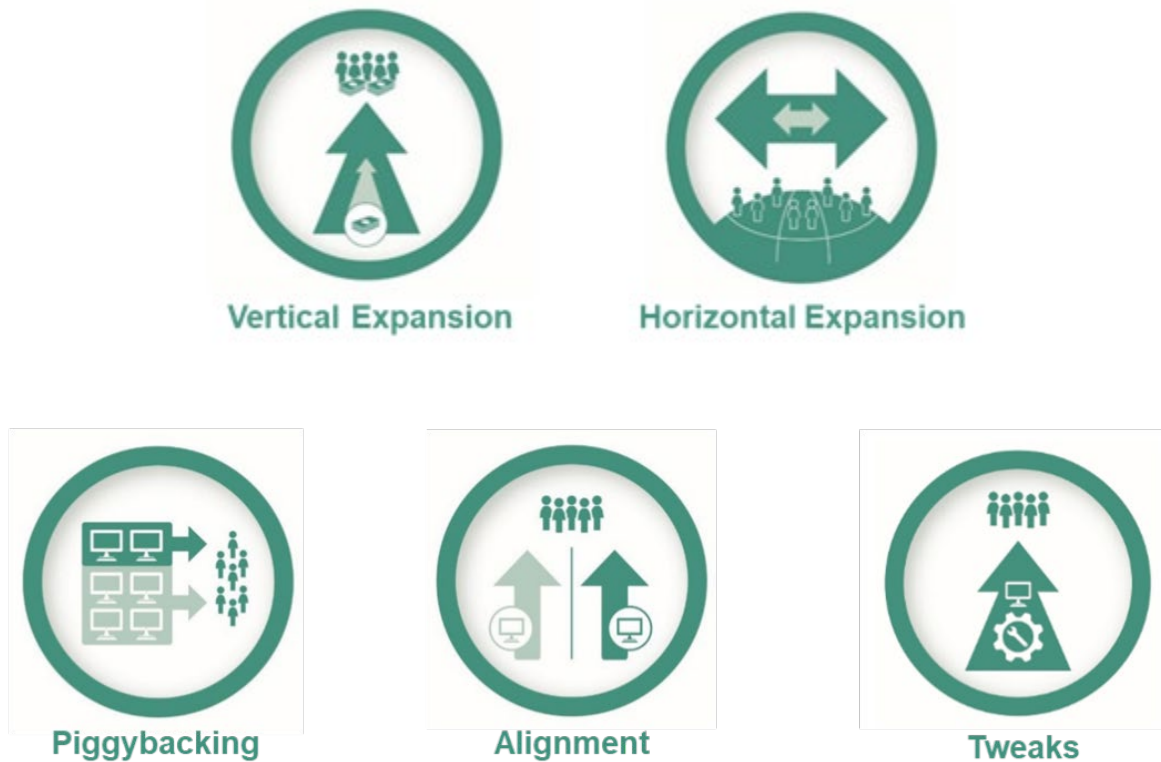
System response

When policymakers consider the use of a social protection system to address emergency needs, there are several strategies that they may employ to scale up the overall level of support that the system provides to vulnerable people. Based on OPM (2015) we consider five main ways which can be used in combination:

1. **Vertical expansion:** increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing social protection programme or system.
2. **Horizontal expansion:** temporarily extending social protection support to new households.
3. **Piggybacking:** utilising elements of an existing social protection programme or system for delivering a separate emergency response.
4. **Alignment:** aligning some aspects of an emergency response with current or possible future national social protection programmes.

5. **Design tweaks:** making small adjustments to the design of a core social protection programme.

Figure 2: Typology of shock-responsive social protection (system response)



Source: OPM (2015).

2.2 Research tools and fieldwork

The research approach for this study was qualitative and comprised a literature review, interviews and analysis. The review involved a thorough analysis of legislation, policies, plans, strategies, programme reviews, assessments, and evaluations related to social protection and DRM.

Fieldwork was conducted from 18 March to 22 March 2019 in Castries and Marc, Bexon, led by an OPM consultant and a WFP Programme Policy Officer. The fieldwork activities included:

- **Key informant interviews in Castries:** Ministry of Equity, Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF), National Insurance Corporation (NIC), NEMO, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economic Development, Housing, Urban Renewal, Transport and Civil Aviation (referred to Ministry of Economic Development hereafter), Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives (referred Ministry of Agriculture hereafter), Ministry of Finance,

Economic Growth, Job Creation, External Affairs and the Public Service (referred to Ministry of Finance hereafter), Central Statistical Office, the Saint Lucia Red Cross, Salvation Army, Caritas Saint Lucia and chairman of the Castries Southeast District Disaster Committee. These interviews served to triangulate the findings from other data sources. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews.

- **Key informant interviews in Marc, Bexon:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with beneficiaries of the PAP, and a school principal in charge of the School Feeding Programme.
- **Phone interviews:** These were conducted in the weeks following fieldwork with UNICEF and the World Bank. The full list of key informants who were interviewed can be found in Annex A.

The third phase of the research consisted of analysing the information collected and the findings of the literature review and answering the research questions. Research questions are outlined in Annex C. This report, which has been peer reviewed, is the output of this research.

3 Risk, vulnerability, and poverty in Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia is a small island nation in the Eastern Caribbean with a population of approximately 177,300. It is the second largest of the Windward islands, situated about 24 miles (39 km) south of Martinique and 21 miles (34 km) northeast of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

With a 'high' Human Development Index value of 0.747 in 2017, Saint Lucia ranks 90th globally and 7th among the CDEMA member states (United Nations Development Programme, 2018). As an upper middle-income country, Saint Lucia had a per capita gross national product (GNP) of USD 8,940 in 2017, placing it 11th among the CDEMA member states.⁵

Following a period of sluggish growth between 2008 and 2013, Saint Lucia's economy began to recover in 2014, with a recorded GDP growth rate of 3% in 2017 (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2018a).

3.1 Risks

3.1.1 Natural hazards

Saint Lucia, positioned within the Atlantic hurricane belt, faces significant vulnerability to a range of natural hazards including hurricanes, tropical storms, earthquakes, droughts, floods, and landslides, occur frequently (GoSL, 2018b; IMF, 2018b; World Bank Group, 2018). Major hurricanes strike the country approximately once every three to four years, placing Saint Lucia at the 5th most disaster-prone small state according to the IMF (2016). Over the period from 1980 to 2018, the International Emergency Events Database documented 16 climatological events affecting Saint Lucia between, primarily tropical cyclones. In addition to major disasters, small-scale flooding is a persistent issue in low-lying and coastal areas already burdened by socioeconomic vulnerabilities.

Saint Lucia's small size means that disasters tend to have countrywide effects. The majority of the population and economic activities are concentrated in low-lying coastal areas lacking adequate drainage and infrastructure to withstand flooding and storm surge impacts. Rapid urbanisation of formerly rural areas has led to about 60% of the population residing along the north-west corridor, often in unplanned or informal settlements (National Emergency Management Organisation, 2014).

Extreme hydro-meteorological events cause average annual losses roughly equivalent to 2% of GDP or USD 26 million (IMF, 2018b). Hurricanes cause an average annual loss of USD 9.5 million (XCD 25.7 million) and earthquakes cause USD 2.56 million (XCD 6.91 million) in losses (respectively 0.66% and 0.18% of GDP) (World Bank Group, 2018).

⁵ Estimates of the United Nations Statistics Division, 2017.

Severe disasters have had devastating and widespread effects. In 2010, Hurricane Tomas caused economic losses estimated at USD 336 million (XCD 907 million), equivalent to 43% of the country's GDP (ECLAC, 2010). Nearly the entire population was affected, with 5,972 people (3% of the population) severely impacted. The Christmas Eve Trough in 2013 affected 19,984 people and resulted in economic losses amounting to 8% of GDP (IMF, 2018b). In 2016, Hurricane Matthew caused damages to nearly 85% of the country's agricultural producers, significantly impacting the key export sector of bananas (Aon Benfield, 2017). Additionally, Saint Lucia has faces recurring drought conditions since 2012, leading to periodic water rationing.

Like many other island nations, Saint Lucia is grappling with climate change-related threats such as sea level rise, heightened tropical storm frequency and intensity, increased coastal erosion, and erratic rainfall patterns (GoSL, 2018b). Saint Lucia ranks 55th out of 181 countries in the Climate Risk Index for long-term climate risks between 1997 and 2017. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has high confidence that the effects of climate change will continue to intensify.

3.1.2 Economic shocks

In the absence of domestic market opportunities, the country's economy is quite susceptible to external shocks (Soto, 2015). The reduction in preferential access for banana exports to European markets since 1993 has significantly impacted Saint Lucia, with the banana export-to-GDP ratio dropping from 8% in 1995 to 1.5% in 2008 (Mlachila et al., 2010). The global recession of 2007/2008 further strained the economy, affecting sectors like construction, tourism, and agriculture. Recovery efforts are ongoing, with foreign direct investment in the tourism declining from an average of 12.5% to 9.2% between 2008 and 2013 (World Bank, 2015).

The crisis aggravated the country's high unemployment levels, as labour demand was unable to absorb the increasing labour force, leading to a spike in unemployment and underemployment. Two out of every three individuals who entered the labour force between 2009 and 2013 were unable to find jobs, and youth unemployment reached a high of 47% in the last two quarters of 2013 (ibid.).

3.2 Poverty and vulnerability

Saint Lucia is at an advanced stage of demographic transition (UNDESA, 2018). The median age in 2015 was 30.3 years, with the share of the elderly population (60+ years) and working age population (15–59 years) at 13% and 67%, respectively. Projections suggest a significant growth in the elderly population by 2040 (144% increase) alongside a decline in the working-age population (18% decrease). Compared to other countries in the region, Saint Lucia has a relatively older population, trailing behind The Bahamas, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago (Nam and Jones, 2018).

In 2016, the poverty rate in Saint Lucia was 25%, a fall from nearly 29% in 2006 (KAIRI Consultants Limited, 2018). Similarly, the poverty gap decreased from 9% to 7.5% during this period. Although the overall poverty levels align with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) regional average of 24%, rural poverty in 2016 remained high at 33%, despite an improvement from 2006 at 41%.

Extreme poverty remains low at 1.3% but there is considerable geographical variation in poverty levels with Choiseul, Laborie, and Soufriere districts showing poverty reduction, while Castries City, Vieux Fort, and Dennery exhibit worsening poverty levels.

Two in every five households in Saint Lucia are headed by women. Larger household sizes among poor female-headed households (average of 4.7 persons) compared to the national average (3.1 persons).

Historically, unemployment in Saint Lucia has been high and is largely driven by youth unemployment. Unemployment averaged at 20% between 1997 and 2017, with rates exceeding 20% during economic downturns, mirroring trends seen across the OECS region (World Bank, 2017). The gender gap in unemployment has narrowed over time, with male and female unemployment rates at 18.1% and 22.4%, respectively.⁶ Youth unemployment remains high at 38.4%, attributed to systemic issues in the education system and shifts from labour-intensive to skilled occupations (Kandil et al., 2014). Additionally, a sizeable informal sector accounts for 30.6% of total employment (Central Statistics Office of Saint Lucia, 2010).

Primary health indicators for women and children are positive, but the burden of non-communicable disease is growing (Blank, 2015; KAIRI Consultants Limited, 2018). The coverage of antenatal care services, institutional delivery, and child immunisation is nearly universal. There is almost no severe stunting or wasting, although child obesity is an evolving concern. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) pose a growing health burden, accounting for 71% of all deaths from defined causes in 2010 – although much of the NCD prevalence is concentrated among the non-poor. Personal health insurance coverage is relatively low (18.2%), with higher rates among the non-poor (22.1%) compared to the poor (6.6%).

In terms of education, gender parity is achieved at the primary and secondary levels, but significant gender disparities and lower participation rates among males from poor households persist at the tertiary level. In the academic year 2018/19, primary school gross enrolment rates increased from 95% to 96% (Ministry of Education, 2019). For secondary schools, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was 88%. Despite achieving gender parity at the primary and secondary levels, the education sector faces significant challenges of low participation and gender disparities in tertiary education. The World Bank reports that Saint Lucia's tertiary Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was only 15.4% in 2019, which is well below the global average of 38.8% and the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) average of 53%. Additionally, the Gender Parity Index at the tertiary level of education was 2.47 in 2018-2019, indicating a notable gender imbalance. Notably, gross enrolment rates are lowest among males from poor households at the post-secondary level (KAIRI Consultants Limited, 2018).

Although housing quality has improved over the last decade, the poor have more inferior living conditions. Between 2006 and 2016, there was notable progress in dwelling quality, evidenced by

⁶ Ibid.

and 18 percentage point increase (to 51.2%) in the proportion of dwellings with concrete outer walls, primarily driven by non-poor households. Although access to improved drinking water is nearly universal, one in four households still rely on unimproved sanitation facilities.

4 Disaster Risk Management in Saint Lucia

This section provides an overview of DRM structures and systems in Saint Lucia, examining institutional arrangements, coordination, targeting, delivery mechanisms, information systems, and financing.

4.1 Institutional arrangements



The Disaster Management Act, which was initially approved in 2004 and has been undergoing revision since 2019, serves as the principal operational statute for disaster management in Saint Lucia. Originally introduced in 2004 and subsequently revised in 2006, the Act, along with the National Hazard Mitigation Policy and the 2007 National Disaster Management Plan, signifies a transition from a reactive to a more proactive DRM framework. This shift is further detailed

in the 2009 Disaster Management Policy Framework (World Bank Group, 2018). The ongoing review of the Act is being supported by funding from the World Bank, potentially leading to the introduction of provisions for shock-responsive social protection.

The Act established NEMO, which is tasked with coordinating disaster risk management efforts, including planning, mitigation, and response functions (NEMO, 2014). The responsibilities of NEMO as outlined in the 2006 Act, include:

- developing national policies, programmes, activities, and public information campaigns towards the mitigation of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from emergencies and disasters;
- providing information on environmental trends and changes in relation to disasters risk;
- preparing disaster risk assessment maps and disaster simulations, as well as risk, vulnerability, and damage assessments;
- declaring disasters and activating the NEOC; and
- coordinating and overseeing agencies involved in emergency and disaster management (Weekes and Bello, 2019).

Furthermore, the Act instituted NEMAC, which functions as a technical working group chaired by the Prime Minister. NEMAC includes representatives from line ministries, the heads of the police and fire departments, the Saint Lucia Red Cross, the port authority, and private sector representatives (World

Bank Group, 2018). NEMAC operates with an open membership and engages specialised expertise as necessary.

The responsibilities of national and sub-national authorities and agencies are defined in the National Emergency Management Plan. According to this plan, the DRM system comprises three tiers: NEMAC, 13 National Disaster Committees and 18 District Disaster Committees (see Figure 3).

Box 1: National Emergency Management Organisation

Overtime, NEMO's mandate has broadened. Initially focused on emergency response until 2016, NEMO's responsibilities now encompass DRM, DRR, risk mitigation, community resilience support, capacity building, and skills development. In non-emergency times, NEMO engages in risk mitigation activities, training, preparedness, and advocacy. In preparation for the hurricane season, NEMO collects information on volunteers from the 18 District Disaster Committees for potential disaster assistance. Additionally, NEMO facilitates the drafting of MoUs with local suppliers to secure resources for response, if needed. During crises, NEMO coordinates disaster response efforts, assesses resource allocation, and provides initial supplies for short-term relief.

Despite its expanded role, NEMO operates with limited resources. An average recurrent budget of USD 190,000 (XCD 513,000) primarily covers NEMO's operating costs for disaster risk management, with a modest portion allocated to training (World Bank Group, 2018). NEMO is mainly financed through projects and grants, for which the agency independently applies. There are no specific allocations in the national budget earmarked for NEMO's risk reduction activities; however, allocations to the Ministry of Infrastructure typically cover DRR activities (Weekes and Bello, 2019). Since 2017, NEMO's national-level secretariat comprises a small team of nine staff, including the director, deputy director, communications manager, programme officer, inventories officer, administrative secretary, maintenance officer, telecommunications officer, and cleaner/janitor (GoSL, 2018b).

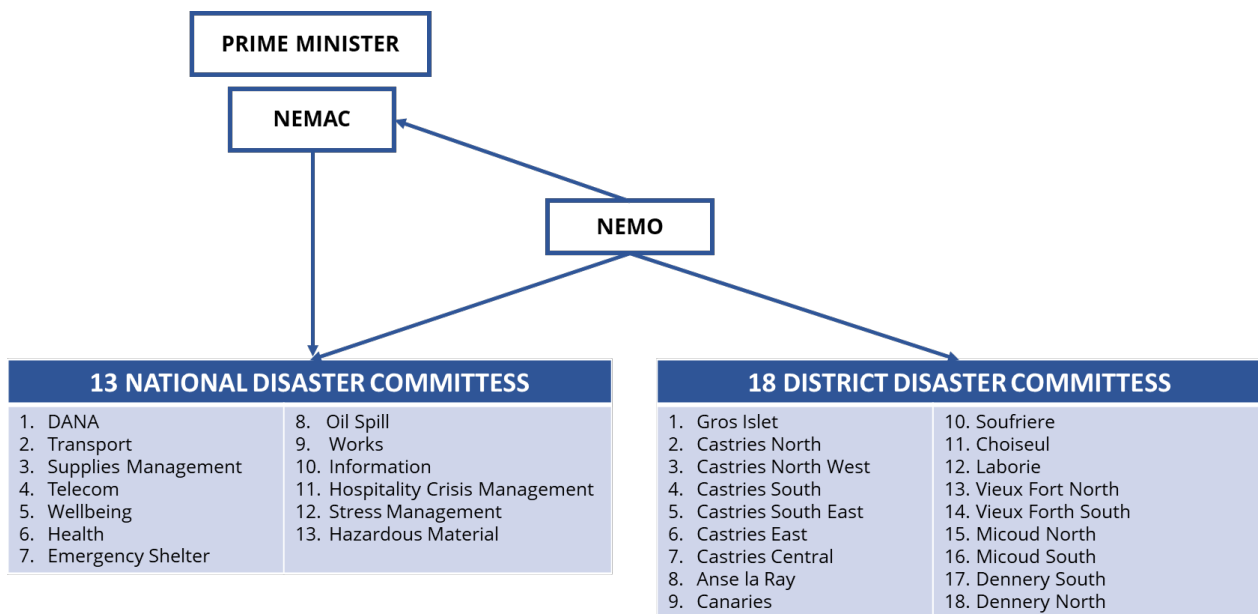
Source: Author, based on interviews with NEMO and Ministry of Equity. Figures for NEMO's staff are based on author's calculation using GoSL (2018b).

National Disaster Committees (DDCs) face capacity and resource challenges to fulfil their preparation and contingency planning roles. In practice some DDCs become active only in the presence of a threat and cease functioning after the emergency has passed. Some stakeholders suggested that challenges of low participation are due to the lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities of members.

The District Disaster Committees are NEMO's on-the-ground representatives. These committees operate on a voluntary basis and are open to individuals from the various communities within their respective districts. Typically, DDCs are overseen by a seven-to-nine-member executive team that directly liaises with the NEMO Secretariat for guidance and direction. Committee members are not paid but do receive some non-financial incentives, such as training, both locally and overseas. The committees have varying degrees of capacity and commitment, and some tend to be active only around the hurricane season. Given the geographical extent of some of the districts, DDCs sometimes form subcommittees in critical areas prone to disasters.

District Disaster Committees play an important role in risk reduction and disaster risk management. In non-emergency times, DDCs conduct awareness campaigns on disaster risk reduction through community meetings and workshops. When a disaster warning is issued for a specific area, the relevant DDC is notified by NEMO and activated. DDC members then assess the availability and condition of public shelters, alert communities, plan post-disaster medical and welfare services, and determine the financial and human resources needed for emergency response, in consultation with NEMO/NEOC (National Emergency Operations Centre). When disasters strike, DDCs collaborate with NEMO to distribute relief supplies and conduct initial damage assessments. Additionally, DDCs assist in managing shelters and coordinating relief efforts (Weekes and Bello, 2019).

Figure 3: National structure for disaster management



Source: Author, adapted from NEMO (2014).

District Disaster Committees face challenges due to their voluntary nature, leading to inconsistent member engagement. In certain communities DDCs are only activated during disasters, with limited focus on preparedness activities. Despite training initiatives for committee members, frequent turnover changes in membership often results in a loss of investment.

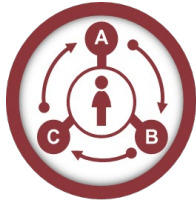
The Ministry of Equity chairs the Stress Management National Committee of NEMO through the Division of Human Services. Additionally, the Ministry is a member of NEMAC and plays a vital role in DRM through Social Transformation Officers, who serve as NEMO’s field officers during disasters.

In non-emergency times Social Transformation Officers (STOs) primarily engage in community development work. This involves assisting community development committees with elections, training, organising meetings and other community-building activities. In times of disaster, their focus

shifts to DRM responsibilities, where they support DDCs. However, there are currently not official manuals or guidelines specifying their roles and responsibilities.

While there should be 17 STOs (one per constituency), as of 2019 only 11 were funded through the recurrent budget (GoSL, 2018a). Given their involvement with NEMO, these Officers face challenges managing multiple and competing priorities due to their limited numbers.

4.2 Coordination



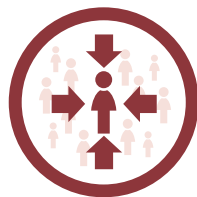
During national threats or emergencies, NEMO activates the NEOC. The NEOC primary role is to coordinate the three tiers of disaster management committees and involve them in emergency planning and response efforts. According to the NEOC standard operating procedure, decision-makers convene at NEMO/NEOC during a response to coordinate actions based on centrally collected information.

NEMO serves as a key liaison with international donors. It is tasked with compiling response-related information and sharing reports with funding agencies and CDEMA, which is the regional intergovernmental agency for disaster management and response for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Following Hurricane Tomas, coordination challenges were identified due to the NEOC's limited capacity to manage information flow and the tendency of responding agencies to operate independently within their specific mandate areas (Baptiste, 2011). An After-Action Review of Saint Lucia's response to Hurricane Tomas highlighted several coordination issues: including inadequate communication among government agencies assessing displaced persons' housing situations, limited coordination between DDCs and local councils in relief distribution, and gaps in coordination between DDCs and the Ministry of Infrastructure in managing volunteers with heavy equipment. Additionally, coordination gaps were observed between Saint Lucia Red Cross and NEMO in providing transportation assistance. Limited inter-sectoral coordination within the Rapid Needs Assessment Team, which included experts from CDEMA, the UK Department for International Development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), further hampered NEMO's ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation (Baptiste, 2011).

Once the response transitions to the recovery phase, the NEOC is deactivated, and national development agencies take the lead. However, the 2018 Disaster Management Audit identified the absence of recovery phase interventions as a significant issue in Saint Lucia. Currently, no single entity is responsible for coordinating recovery efforts, and different ministries lead their respective initiatives independently. Although the Ministry of Economic Development traditionally oversees this process, its role has not been formalised in regulations or laws.

4.3 Targeting and information systems



Data collected and used to inform emergency can be broadly categorised into main types: (1) Disaster Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) data and (2) household data collected through targeted assistance exercises. The emphasis is on needs assessment and targeting to generate information on affected households, which theoretically could be integrated with social protection IMS containing data on poor and vulnerable households.

Saint Lucia has established a system for collecting and reporting information related to damage and losses across various sectors resulting from high-intensity events. Coordinated by NEMO, 18 district-level DANA teams collection information that is then consolidated by a national DANA team to assess risks before and evaluate damages after disasters. However, the government lacks a specific methodology to independently quantify the economic impacts of all disasters consistently and systematically (World Bank Group, 2018).

Challenges persist in post-disaster assessment and reporting due to fragmented and non-uniform processes. As soon as the ‘Meteorological All Clear’ is given following a disaster, assessment teams comprising personnel from the police, infrastructure department, and Saint Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) conduct initial situation assessments within the first 24-48 hours to ensure the safety of affected areas for public access.

Moreover, a comprehensive damage assessment process includes multiple stages. Initially, an Initial Situation Overview is conducted through aerial reconnaissance for flyovers, involving a small team that may include the Prime Minister, the Director or Deputy Director of NEMO, representatives from GIS/NTN for video documentation, and a representative from the Cade Corps. Subsequently, sector teams and DDCs engage in the Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) to gather more detailed data on damages and needs. Lastly, detailed sector assessments or Post-Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs) are conducted to comprehensively evaluate the impact across various sectors.

Following these assessments, more detailed sector-specific evaluations occur approximately one to two weeks later, engaging a number of agencies and government bodies. For instance, local government and agricultural extension officers conduct assessments, sharing their findings with relevant agencies for ministries to inform response and recovery efforts.

Regarding household assessments, DDCs are the first point of contact for the communities and the direct link to NEMO. The DDCs focal person updates NEMO of the situation on the ground. Within the first week, STOs meet with DDCs to conduct household-level assessments using standard templates, reporting findings back to NEMO. NEMO, via the national DANA team processes received information into a report submitted to the Prime Minister. On the basis of the report, Cabinet disburses funds to relevant agencies and ministries to facilitate response efforts. For example, the Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF), under the Ministry of Equity reported actions such as constructing shelters and distributing water and supplies after Hurricane Tomas, based on the NEMO assessment. NGOs

and the Saint Lucia Red Cross may independently conduct their own needs assessments. However, DDCs may not always cover all affected areas due to lack capacity constraints.

NEMO requires substantial institutional capacity building to effectively coordinate data collection and analysis for disasters of all severities at local and national levels (World Bank Group, 2018). Currently lacking in-house analytical capacity, NEMO aims implement a structured data analysis system and data management framework to monitor, archive, and disseminate critical hazards and vulnerability information.

4.4 Delivery mechanisms



NEMO operates a central warehouse in Castries primarily stocked with basic equipment such as mattresses, wheelbarrows, and other essential supplies.

While some food items may be available at certain times, food storage is not a regular feature of the warehouse. Instead, NEMO has an MOU with Massy Supermarket to procure food items as needed during emergency situations.

In addition to the central warehouse and food procurement arrangements, NEMO maintains an imprest fund of XCD \$100,000 specifically designated for purchasing goods and services required for response activities.

NEMO is exploring options to expand its inventory to include additional supplies such as roofing material. Furthermore, DDCs manage small satellite warehouses across districts to store supplies such as radios, lights, and dinghies. However, these satellite warehouses tend to be small with limited supplies. NEMO also has MoUs with local suppliers in place.

In the 48–72 hours before an expected hurricane, NEMAC holds a pre-impact meeting to review plans and coordinate the response. During this time, relevant National Disaster Committees are activated along with DDCs. DDCs hold pre-impact meetings involving key stakeholders including local councils, to identify vulnerable areas, plan potential evacuations if necessary, and coordinate shelter management.

However, stakeholders have noted that in certain instances DDCs fail to activate prior to a disaster due to limited engagement from their members, which is attributed to the voluntary nature of the committees.

Disaster-affected households receive support from various ministries and agencies as part of a coordinated response system. NEMO, primarily a coordinating rather than a direct response agency, manages a limited emergency supply distribution for short-term relief lasting three to seven days, relying on pre-positioned stocks. The Ministry of Equity and the SSDF focus on providing shelter and housing solutions to people who have lost their homes.

DDCS, supported by the STOs, play a key role in the distribution of relief supplies to affected households. DDCs in charge of distributing supplies sent from the NEMO Headquarters. NEMO activates MoUs with local suppliers to procure commodities at the local level. DDCs are responsible for collecting items from suppliers within the districts and subsequently distributing same based on the needs of households.

Detailed sector assessments conducted by various ministries and agencies include cost estimates. These assessment reports are shared with the NEMO/NEOC, where they are compiled into a consolidated report. This comprehensive report is then submitted to the Prime Minister for discussion with the Cabinet, aiming to secure resources for funding response and recovery activities. Once resources are secured, they are allocated through the respective ministries/agencies to support different aspects of the response and recovery efforts.

The Saint Lucia Red Cross and the NGO sector play active roles in supporting DRM and risk reduction activities. For example, since 2011, Caritas manages a multi-country programme on youth emergency action committees. In 2019, this programme funded 10 young people per community in five communities across Saint Lucia to be trained as first responders. During Hurricane Tomas, these trained volunteers also provided assistance in managing the NEMO warehouse.

4.5 Financing mechanisms



Disaster response is typically financed through a combination of various methods, including new allocations from the Ministry of Finance, contingency funds, disaster insurance schemes, support from other governments, and contributions from organisations like the Red Cross, UN agencies and NGOs, which receive financial support from public and private donors.

Between 2004 and 2014, the majority of post-disaster recovery and reconstruction costs in Saint Lucia were covered by international loan financing, supplemented by grants and government revenues. During this period, the government borrowed USD 124 million (XCD 336 million) for post-disaster expenditures, with, USD 52.6 million (XCD 142.2 million) coming from international development partners. The government also used USD 6.4 million (XCD 17.27 million) of its own resources and received USD 5.64 million (XCD 15.25 million) in grant funds (World Bank Group, 2018).

4.5.1 Government funding

Government funding for disaster response includes provisions outlined in Section 81 of the Constitution, which establishes a Contingency Fund managed by the Ministry of Finance for urgent and unforeseen expenditure, for which no other provision exists. In 2016, this Fund was active with a

balance of USD 314,000 (XCD 847,500). However, there are no specific guidelines on annual allocations to the Contingency Fund—the amount is determined based on availability of funds.

The Contingency Fund is underutilised and not being replenished (World Bank Group, 2018). Since its establishment in 1997, the Fund has been used for only once, during a prison fire in the same year, which used up approximately 43% of the funds (World Bank Group, 2018).

The Emergency Disaster Fund, as proposed by the DRM Policy Framework (2009), was intended to provide relief after disasters. However, this fund does not appear to be active. The fund is intended to be rule-based: (I) The decision to release funds should be guided by established criteria and guidelines and (II) To prevent the fund from being used for recurring or foreseeable disasters in the same areas, a post disaster review should automatically be conducted whenever funds are drawn from the fund.' (GoSL, 2009a). This means that the fund should be used only for unforeseeable, non-recurrent disasters (World Bank Group, 2018). While the fund has been established by law, it is unclear whether it has ever been operational (Weekes and Bello, 2019).

The public financial management system does not facilitate rapid disbursement of funds for disaster response or allows easy tracking of disaster expenditures. NEMO's recurrent costs are funded through the Consolidated Fund, enabling NEMO to maintain an imprest account of XCD 100,000 for immediate disaster response. However, there is no explicit budget appropriation mechanism for immediate disaster response within the regular budget cycle (World Bank Group, 2018).

To address the urgent financial needs for disaster response, the government typically reallocates resources from various ministry budgets or makes additional allocations from the Consolidated Fund based on the scale of impact. This reallocation is accounted for outside of the regular budget cycle through advances. However, these are not necessarily designed for the type of exigency that an emergency creates and are not reconciled later through a supplementary budget process (World Bank Group, 2018).

Recognising the need for comprehensive financial strategies for disaster costs, Saint Lucia approved the National Disaster Risk Financing Strategy in 2018. The goal is to institutionalise data collection and reporting on damage and losses, ensure accessible financing for early disaster response, increase contingency reserves, account for disaster-related liabilities, support private insurance instruments, and establish sovereign disaster funds (IMF, 2018b; Weekes and Bello, 2019).

4.5.2 CCRIF SPC

Saint Lucia is a member of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC), which provides pay-outs to governments to finance response efforts in the aftermath of a disaster, ensuring immediate liquidity when needed. In 2016, the government paid an annual premium of USD 2.42 million (XCD 6.53 million) for coverage that included protection against tropical storms, earthquakes, and excess rainfall (World Bank Group, 2018).

Box 2: CCRIF SPC

In 2007, the CCRIF was formed as the first multi-country risk pool in the world and was the first insurance instrument to successfully develop parametric policies backed by both traditional and capital markets. It was designed as a regional catastrophe fund for Caribbean governments to limit the financial impact of devastating hurricanes and earthquakes by quickly providing financial liquidity when a policy is triggered.

It works by combining the benefits of pooled reserves from participating countries with the financial capacity of the international financial markets. It retains some of the risks transferred by the participating countries through its own reserves and transfers some of the risks to reinsurance markets where this is cost-effective. This structure results in a particularly efficient risk financing instrument that provides participating countries with insurance policies at approximately half the price they would obtain if they approached the reinsurance industry on their own.

The facility was restructured into a segregated portfolio company to facilitate expansion into new products and geographic areas and is now named CCRIF Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC). The new structure, in which products are offered through different portfolios, allows for total segregation of risk.

CCRIF SPC offers earthquake, hurricane, and excess rainfall policies to Caribbean and Central American governments. Its parametric insurance mechanism allows it to provide rapid pay-outs to help members finance their initial disaster response and maintain basic government functions after a catastrophic event. In 2017, the Aggregated Deductible Cover, a new policy feature for tropical cyclone and earthquake policies, was introduced. The Aggregated Deductible Cover was designed to be akin to a dedicated reserve fund providing a minimum payment for events that are objectively not sufficient to trigger a CCRIF policy, because the modelled loss is below the attachment point.

Since it began in 2007, CCRIF SPC has made pay-outs of over USD152 million to 13 member countries, with all payments occurring within 14 days of the shock. CCRIF SPC has also made twelve payments totaling around USD1 million under member governments' Aggregated Deductible Cover.

There are 22 country members of the facility: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Maarten, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Source: www.ccrif.org

In Saint Lucia, pay-outs from CCRIF are managed by the Ministry of Finance, which determines their allocation. CCRIF has provided Saint Lucia with the following pay-outs: USD 418,976 (XCD 1,131 million) for an earthquake of 7.4 magnitude in 2007; USD 3.2 million (XCD 8.6 million) for Hurricane Tomas in

2010; and USD 3.78 million (XCD 10.21 million) for excessive rainfall as a result of Hurricane Mathew in 2016 (World Bank Group, 2018).

While parametric catastrophe insurance instruments like CCRIF are effective for severe events, Saint Lucia lacks access to reserve funds and flexible ex ante contingent financing arrangements to address low- and medium-severity events (World Bank Group, 2018).

4.5.3 Foreign assistance

Long-term reconstruction is financed through international assistance and loans secured after disaster strikes (World Bank Group, 2018). Saint Lucia receives disaster assistance and funding through its membership in regional groupings like CDEMA and the Caribbean Electric Utility Services Corporation (Weekes and Bello, 2019). Moreover, the government can access up to USD 1 million (XCD 3 million) immediately after declaring a state of emergency through the Contingent Emergency Response Component of the World Bank's Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project, to cover emergency response and recovery costs. However, bilateral and multilateral aid flows are often insufficient to fully support disaster recovery and reconstruction efforts (World Bank Group, 2018).

5 Social protection in Saint Lucia

The social protection sector in Saint Lucia has been engaged in social safety net reforms for the past decade, following the findings of the 2009 social safety net assessment (see GoSL, 2009b). The main objectives of the reform are to enhance and improve the policy and legislative framework for Social Protection, increase harmonisation of programmes across the sector and strengthen targeting and information management systems. To date, the most significant achievements of the reform process include the approval of the National Social Protection Policy in 2015; the transfer of the PAP to the Ministry of Equity and the adoption of a Proxy Means Test (PMT) targeting tool - the SL-NET, to identify vulnerable beneficiaries (Blank, 2015). Beginning in 2020, the World Bank will support the Ministry of Equity and the Ministry of Education with a USD 20 million project, aimed at strengthening social protection and building human capital.

The National Social Protection Policy outlines four key priorities aimed at establishing a more coordinated and transformative social protection system:

- Modernising social protection systems and strengthening service delivery capacity in an efficient and effective manner.
- Rationalising, reforming, and strengthening protective interventions and strategies.
- Rationalising, reforming, and strengthening preventive and promotive interventions and strategies.
- Reviewing and developing institutional, financial, and legal frameworks for more coordinated and transformative social protection services.

A new Social Protection Bill has been drafted to replace existing separate legislative frameworks, including provisions to update the Public Assistance Act of 1968 (Morlachetti, 2015). UNICEF supported

the drafting of a Social Protection Bill in 2015. However, due to limited political traction, the bill has not been sent to parliament. Interviewees from the Ministry of Equity suggested that there might be a window of opportunity for further tailoring the bill's content to include shock-responsive considerations for the social protection system.

The World Bank is supporting the Ministry of Equity through a major project approved in March 2020. Funds were allocated in the 2018/2019 budget to support the reform process. Subsequently, as part of its long-standing commitment to the social protection sector, the World Bank approved a multi-year technical assistance programme under the 'Human Capital Resilience Project' to advance reform process. Areas of technical assistance include increase the PAP coverage, development of a social registry, harmonisation of processes across social assistance programmes and the development of grievance mechanisms and operation manuals.

5.1 Main social protection programmes in Saint Lucia

Social assistance programmes in Saint Lucia include cash and in-kind transfers, subsidies, and public works initiatives primarily managed by departments and entities attached to the Ministry of Equity, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Infrastructure. Additionally, social protection interventions extend to include labour market measures, a social insurance programme, and a comprehensive system of social services catering to vulnerable populations. This section will focus on key social assistance programmes with extensive coverage and potential adaptability for emergency response.

Table 2 provides an overview of the main social assistance programmes in Saint Lucia. The following sub-sections will highlight the PAP and the School Feeding Programme due to their coverage and poverty-targeted approach, making them conducive to horizontal expansion or resource distribution to households affected by disasters. The social insurance programme is also noteworthy for its ability to provide benefits to a comparatively large number of individuals.

Table 1: Overview of the main social protection programmes

Programme	Implementing agency	Type of scheme	Target population	Targeting	Coverage
Public Assistance Programme	Welfare Services Unit – Ministry of Equity	Unconditional cash transfer	Poor and Indigent	Means tested based on PMT	2,637 households (April 2018–March 2019)
Child Disability Grant	Welfare Services Unit – Ministry of Equity	Unconditional cash transfer	Disabled individuals (0 to 21 years old)	Children with moderate to severe disabilities Categorical based	365 children (2019)

				on medical records	
Koudemain Ste Lucie	SSDF – Ministry of Equity	Social services, training, In-kind assistance	Indigent households	Means tested based on PMT	100 households (2019)
School Feeding Programme	Department of Student Welfare – Ministry of Education	In-kind transfer	Students in need	Means tested based on assessment by principal	6,640 students (December 2018)
Old-age pension	NIC	Pension	Individuals over 65	15+ years of contributions	5,237 pensioners
Early pension	NIC	Pension	Individuals over 60	10+ years of contributions	1,281 pensioners

Source: Author, based on information collected during field mission.

5.1.1 The Public Assistance Programme

The PAP is the largest poverty-targeted cash transfer programme in Saint Lucia. It was established under by the Public Assistance Act of 1968. As per the Act’s provisions, the PAP aims to offer direct financial assistance to individuals deemed “needy,” defined as *‘any and every person who by reason of infancy, old age, illness, disease, bodily infirmity or mental incapacity is unable to maintain himself or herself’* (Xavier, 2015).

The PAP provides monthly cash transfers, with the amount varying based on household size. Payments range from USD 80 (XCD 215) for a single-member household to USD 172 (XCD 465) for households with five or more members.⁷ Additionally, PAP beneficiaries receive a card that grants access to free primary healthcare services. Other forms of supplementary assistance include support for burial, eye care, and housing (Soto, 2015).

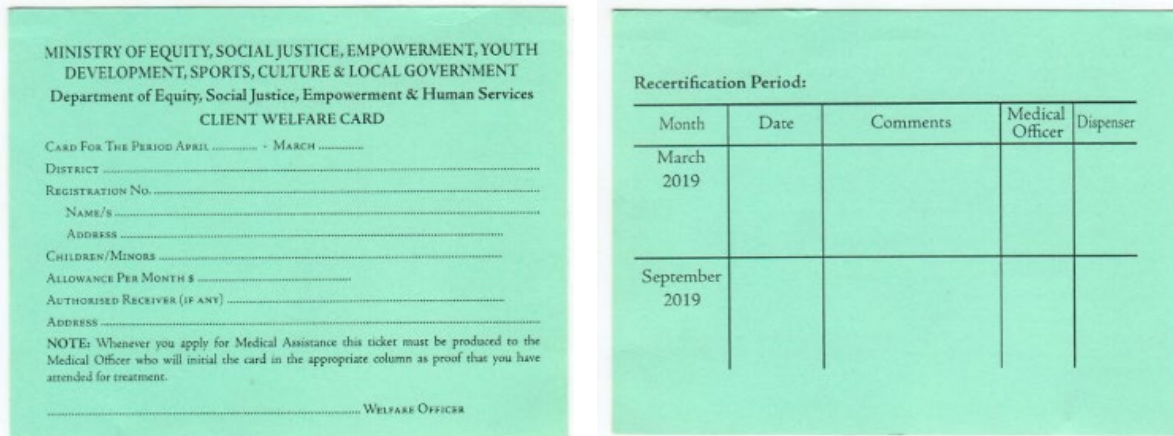
The PAP does not impose any conditions on beneficiaries. However, there is government apprehension regarding dependency issues, leading to ongoing discussions about potential conditionality measures. The National Social Protection Policy highlights conditionality as a strategy

⁷ The PAP transfer amount in 2018 was USD 80 (XCD 215) for a one-member household, USD 104 (XCD 280) for a two-member household, USD 126 (XCD 340) for a three-member household, USD 148 (XCD 400) for a four-member household, and USD 172 (XCD 465) for a household with five or more members. There are no annual or regularly scheduled increases to adjust for inflation.

to promote behaviour change among beneficiaries, ultimately enhancing their well-being (GoSL, 2015). While over 50 conditions have been proposed over time, a definitive decision remains pending.

In 2015, some co-responsibilities were introduced under the PAP, such as the requirement for households to present children’s health and school cards (Blank, 2015). It is unclear from available research whether this practice is still in effect.

Figure 4: Copy of the front and back of the PAP welfare card



From April 2018 to March 2019, a total of 2,637 households benefitted from the PAP, which represents less than 2% of the overall population. Among these households, 73% are single-member households, 15% had two members, and approximately 12% consisted of three or more members.⁸ This finding is consistent with PAP coverage assessments (Blank, 2015) and suggests that PAP beneficiaries are predominantly elderly individuals living alone. Further analysis of beneficiary household characteristics will be feasible once the beneficiary registry is finalised.

5.1.2 Child Disability Grant

While the case study did not examine the Child Disability Grant in detail, it is worth highlighting that this grant is a monthly cash transfer of USD 74 (XCD 200) operating alongside the PAP. Launched in 2014, the programmes aim to financially assist families caring for children with severe disabilities (Xavier, 2015). Eligibility for the grant is determined through medical screenings conducted at health facilities. As of 2019, there were 365 individuals under 21 benefiting from this grant.

5.1.3 The Koudemain Ste Lucie Programme

The Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF) is a statutory body established in 2009 under the Poverty Reduction Fund (Amendment) Act of 2009. This agency consolidates Saint Lucia’s two demand-driven community-based initiatives - the Poverty Reduction Fund and the Basic Needs Trust Fund, under one administrative framework (GoSL, 2009b). The SSDF coordinates several anti-poverty

⁸ Author’s calculation based on PAP data.

programmes, such as those providing labour market opportunities (HOPE and STEP), and others offering social assistance and care including the Koudemain Ste Lucia (KSL) programme.

KSL was launched in 2009 based on the Chilean programme Puente and it is implemented by the SSDF. KSL extends assistance over a two-year period across various areas including personal identification, education, housing, health, employment, start-up support, and counselling. Unlike its Chilean counterpart, KSL does not provide income assistance; instead, income support for KSL households is channelled through the PAP. The SSDF operates the programme a supervisor and four family support workers to run the programme.

There has been a long-standing plan to integrate the PAP and KSL, which is important for replicating the original Chilean model.

As step towards harmonising the social protection system, KSL beneficiaries have been selected from the PAP beneficiary list based on recommendations from Welfare Officers since December 2018. In 2019, 100 PAP households were integrated into KSL. While the standard duration of KSL participation is two years, some households exit the programme earlier.

The government finances KSL through recurrent and capital expenditure; however, funding has been irregular and declining since 2015. For instance, reported expenditure in the 2013/14 financial year was USD 0.5 million (XCD 1.5 million), which has since stabilised at USD 185,000 (XCD 500,000) annually since 2016.⁹ A 2015 assessment revealed that the average cost per household per year of KSL was USD 5,285, compared to USD 132 in Chile (Blank, 2015).

5.1.4 School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Programme covers 79 of the 81 pre-schools and primary schools in Saint Lucia, along with schools catering to students with special needs. Originating in the late 1970s with funding from WFP under the Ministry of Health and Wellness, this programme aims to combat malnutrition by providing nutritious mid-day meals to selected students at no cost and at a subsidised price of USD 0.4 (XCD 1) for paying students.

The number of beneficiaries of the School Feeding Programme fluctuates throughout the year based on meal types and quality offered by the schools. In December 2018, 6,640 students benefitted from the programme. During the 2016/17 school year, 40% of public primary school students were enrolled.¹⁰ Additionally, in January 2018, the Ministry of Education started a breakfast programme in the same schools covered by the School Feeding Programme, benefitting 2,291 students with free breakfasts by December 2018.¹¹ Furthermore, a pilot School Feeding Programme was introduced in five of the island's 21 secondary schools in March 2017, offering meals at USD 3 (XCD 8) for paying students and free of charge to 50 selected students.

⁹ Author's computation based on GoSL estimates of revenues and expenditure

¹⁰ Author's calculation, based on [Education Statistical Digest 2017](#)

¹¹ Based on information received from the Student Welfare Coordinator

5.1.5 Social insurance

Social insurance programmes in Saint Lucia are implemented by the National Insurance Corporation (NIC), an independent body whose board is appointed by the Prime Minister regulated by the NIC Act. The NIC administers the National Insurance Fund, collecting payroll taxes and disbursing entitlements such as old-age, disability and survivors' pensions, along with income replacement benefits for occupational injury, sickness, or maternity (Soto, 2015). CARICOM nationals are also eligible to participate in these schemes through reciprocal agreements, acquiring an NIC card and making contributions.

To qualify for the old-age pension, individuals must be 65 years or older with a minimum of 15 years of contributions. The minimum old-age pension stands at USD 114 (XCD 309) per month, which is considered insufficient to cover basic needs. The pension value is not indexed to inflation, although indexation was recommended by the last actuarial assessment. Increases typically occur on ad hoc basis every three years.

Social insurance mainly covers formal sector employees, which covers around 95% of waged workers. Conversely, only about 6% of self-employed individuals participate in a voluntary scheme.¹² The NIC collaborates with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to enhance social insurance uptake among self-employed workers, proposing compulsory participation and implementing a robust compliance monitoring system. Exploratory options include leveraging umbrella organisations like fisherman's associations as collection agents for contributions and potentially pension disbursements, as these organisations receive public support in the form of benefits and subsidies.

Table 2: Active insured by sector (financial year 2017/2018)

Type	Number	%
Formal sector	55,787	97.57%
Self-employed	1,355	2.37%
Voluntary contributor	35	0.06%
Total	57,177	100.00%

Source: Author, based on NIC data.

To ensure the viability of the self-employment pension system viable, the NIC is exploring the possibility of substantial government contributions to support low-earning individuals and compensate for lost contributory periods. Under the current proposal, the government would contribute with up to 10 years of social contributions on behalf of low earning self-employed individuals. This contribution would enable these individuals to accumulate the remaining five of required social contributions to be eligible for a pension.

¹² Coverage data are based on information provided by the NIC, with reference to December 2018.

5.2 Institutional arrangements and capacity

5.2.1 Ministry of Equity

The Ministry of Equity is the leading agency for social assistance. Its mandate is *'to promote rights-based human development and to facilitate the economic, social, cultural, political and spiritual advancement of individuals, households, communities, and the society through poverty reduction, social protection and empowerment'* (GoSL, 2018a). The Ministry of Equity is structured in the following units and divisions: Policy, Planning, and Administrative Services Unit; Accounts Unit; Social Research and Policy Unit; Community Services Unit; Welfare Services Unit; Division of Human Services; New Beginnings Transit Home; Boys Training Centre. Additionally, there are three external agencies aligned with the Ministry of Equity: the National Conservation Authority (NCA), the Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF), and the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund (BELfund).

The Ministry of Equity is the only ministry with the mandate to deliver cash transfers. The Welfare Services Unit has within the Ministry of Equity is responsible for implementing the PAP and the Child Disability Grant since 2012 and 2014, respectively. These programmes are administered by the same staff through similar channels.¹³ Welfare Officers are responsible for collecting PAP applications, conducting household visits, enrolling beneficiaries, conducting biannual review exercises, preparing payroll lists, and referring households to other agencies and departments based on their identified needs.

Despite the critical role of the Welfare Services Unit, it faces significant understaffing, with each Welfare Officer managing nearly 900 PAP beneficiaries since 2008. The caseload is divided geographically (north, south, east, and west), supported by additional staff include six paymasters, an accountant, and two payment clerks. Human resource constraints severely limit the Welfare Officers' ability to provide adequate case management services given the sheer number of beneficiaries per worker.

Although recognised as needing additional resources, the government is hesitant to increase staffing and resources for the Welfare Services Unit until efficiency savings from social safety net reforms are realised. The Ministry of Finance anticipates that new types of positions will be created as a result for reform, delaying approval for additional funds until these efficiencies are achieved.

Through the Community Services Unit, the Ministry of Equity also oversees social transformation/community development activities implemented by Social Transformation Officers (STOs). The Community Services Unit mandate is to *'build or enhance local capacities for initiating, implementing, and maintaining community programmes and activities towards developing resilient communities'* (GoSL, 2018a). STOs act as liaisons between the Ministry of Equity, communities, and NEMO in disaster response efforts (see 4.1). As of 2019, there were 11 STOs forming development

¹³ The PAP was administered by the division of Human Services and Family Affairs under the Ministry of Health and Wellness until 2012, then it moved to the Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government, and Community Empowerment.

committees within communities to implement activities and projects benefiting the community, sometimes assuming responsibilities of Welfare Officers by referring vulnerable households to relevant social services or protection programmes.

Additionally, the Ministry of Equity oversees the Saint Lucia Social Development Fund (SSDF), a statutory body consolidating the Basic Needs Trust Fund, financed by the Caribbean Development Bank, and programmes directly financed by the government. The SSDF's mission is to *'provide services that will facilitate the highest social and economic well-being of disadvantaged citizens and marginalized communities'* (Soto, 2015). Despite being under the Ministry of Equity, the SSDF maintains some independence as a separate entity, reducing bureaucracy and facilitating faster disbursement of funds. The SSDF employs 25 core staff members and utilises temporary workers to implement various projects.

5.2.2 Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education provides assistance to economically disadvantaged students in the form of transportation assistance, the School Feeding Programme, bursaries, and allowances (Soto, 2015). The Student Welfare Department is responsible for the School Feeding Programme and for the Book Bursary Programme, managed centrally by a Student Welfare Coordinator and clerk (GoSL, 2018a). Government-paid cooks (190 in 2019) operate kitchen canteens in primary schools as part of the School Feeding Programme.

5.3 Targeting

5.3.1 Public Assistance Programme

There is no updated legislation or manual of operations that outlines the criteria and process for targeting the PAP. According to the 1968 Public Assistance Act, eligibility assessment should be carried out by a National Assistance Board, based on whether the applicant person is deemed 'needy', defined as *'a person who by reason of infancy, old age, illness, disease, bodily infirmity or mental incapacity is unable to maintain himself or herself'* (GoSL, 2005). However, this board was never established, and in practice, the PAP follows a different targeting process, as described below.

Applicants usually learn about the programme from other community members, by visiting the Welfare Officer, or referrals from other agencies. There does not appear to be a formal awareness and information campaign for the PAP. It is unclear whether and to what extent the lack of public awareness campaigns contributes to the exclusion of potentially eligible individuals.

To apply for the PAP, applicants must submit an application and supporting documentation to the Welfare Officer responsible for their constituency. Applicants must provide medical records, if relevant, or a letter of support from a respected community member (such as pastors or community leaders). A prerequisite for applying to the programme is possession of a NIC card, as the card number serves as the unique beneficiary identifier in the Ministry of Equity's records. While it is

strongly advised that applicants obtain an NIC number, it is important to note that there are beneficiaries without and NIC number recorded in the Ministry's database.

Box 3: Lack of NIC card as a barrier to accessing the PAP

The issue of applicants without NIC numbers – and therefore unable to be registered in the Ministry of Equity system – was highlighted during data collection, although the extent of this problem remains unclear. It was noted that there are individuals in the PAP database without NIC numbers. While it is preferable for applicants to have an NIC number, the absence of one may not necessarily prevent access to the PAP.

Obtaining an NIC necessitates applying at the NIC office with a birth certificate. The initial NIC card is free of charge, but replacement cards incur a USD 37 (XCD 100 fee). Applicants are issued a letter by the NIC office for an interview at the electoral department. In cases where applicants lack a birth certificate, they are directed to the birth registry office. Anecdotally, issues related to valid birth certificates predominantly affect elderly people and people with intellectual disabilities and have no caretakers.

Some clients face challenges due to misspelled names on birth certificates issued by French priests, requiring legal intervention at significant expense.

Source: Author, based on interviews with the National Insurance Corporation, Social Transformation Officers, and Welfare Officers.

PAP eligibility is determined through a PMT score and a household visit. During the application process, Welfare Officers collect information using either an electronic SL-NET form or paper form, which is later entered into Excel. This information is used to compute a PMT score that determines eligibility for the programme.

Applicants are notified of the outcome by letter. If approved, the Welfare Officer meets with the individual to gather additional details such as payment preferences and financial institution information if the chosen payment method involves a financial institution. During this meeting, the functioning of the programme is explained, and the newly enrolled beneficiary who then signs the PAP contract.

The minimum timeline from application to first payment is two months, and the process can take up to six months. Notably, there is no verification step integrated into the SL-NET application process. All applications are conducted at the applicant's home, eliminating the need for separate verification visits.

Box 4: PAP PMT targeting model: evolution and performance

In 2010, UNICEF supported the development of SL-NET, a PMT-based targeting system originally derived from the Saint Lucia Survey of Living Conditions/Household Budget Survey of 2005/2006 (Cadette, 2015). Since then, the SL-NET methodology has undergone two revisions, culminating in the latest version (V.3.0), which is set to be implemented as part of the safety net reform. This

updated version will encompass both a PMT component and a multi-dimensional deprivation component.

Unlike the previous versions, the SL-NET 3.0 form collects information on the entire household rather than solely focusing on the applicant. This data is then used to categorize households based on their score related to monetary poverty measured through a PMT model and multidimensional poverty indicators. The result will be the classification of households into three groups: those classified as both monetarily and multidimensionally poor, those categorized as either monetarily or multidimensionally poor, and those identified as neither monetarily nor multidimensionally poor.

An assessment of the targeting performance of the PAP based on the 2006/2005 country poverty assessment revealed poor targeting performance, with 45% of PAP beneficiaries classified as non-poor (GoSL, 2009b). Another evaluation of targeting effectiveness in 2015 found that only 19% of poor households were covered by the PAP (Blank, 2015). Given subsequent revisions to the targeting model since then, it is likely that the programme's targeting performance has evolved over time.

Source: Author, based on interviews with Ministry of Equity.

If the application for the PAP is rejected, there is currently no official process for appealing the decision. However, Welfare Officers sometimes attempt to assist needy but non-eligible applicants by referring them to other agencies or providing them with free medical assistance. As part of the World Bank Human Capital Resilience Project, a grievance and appeal mechanism is expected to be developed.

PAP beneficiaries undergo eligibility reviews twice a year. During these reviews, beneficiaries are required to visit the Welfare Officer with updated medical records (for health-related) conditions, and school reports (if they have children). The biennial review process was introduced in 2011 to monitor beneficiaries and address issues such as duplication of benefits and cases where deceased beneficiaries' relatives continue to receive benefits on their behalf. If a beneficiary does not participate in the review process, they are given two months to rectify the situation before being suspended from the programme.

Recertification occurs every 2-3 years and involves re-administering the PMT to determine continued eligibility. Recertification was first implemented in 2019 using the newly developed SL-NET 3.0 form.

There is no formal graduation strategy for the PAP. Generally, beneficiaries exit the programme due to various factors, such as the passing away of elderly beneficiaries, finding employment, or resolution of medical conditions. The biannual review process does not directly contribute to

graduating beneficiaries from the programme, and there is no indication that beneficiaries no longer meeting the SL-NET eligibility criteria are automatically graduated from the PAP.

5.3.2 Child Disability Grant

Eligibility assessment for the Child Disability Grants is not based on poverty status. Children are referred by doctors and accepted into the programme if they qualify due to a moderate to severe disability. In addition, the most vulnerable among Child Disability Grant (CDG) beneficiaries receive a PAP card for free healthcare access. CDG beneficiaries are expected to graduate from the programme when they turn 21. For those who no longer qualify for the CDG as adults, some transition into the PAP after meeting eligibility criteria. This programme is universal; once individuals qualify, they remain in the programme until they reach 21 years old. Periodic reviews are conducted to update information on file and assess ongoing eligibility.

School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Programme operates without formal operational manuals or protocols outlining its processes and eligibility criteria, such as beneficiary selection and criteria for fully subsidised participation. Typically, school principals select children based on their understanding of the child's circumstances. Parents initiate enrolment by submitting requests to the school principal or designated teacher in charge of the programme. Once enrolled, children remain in the programme until they complete their school attendance.

During the study, a principal mentioned that parents facing financial difficulties can send letters to the school to explain their situation if they cannot afford lunches. It is important to note that beneficiaries of the School Feeding Programme are not necessarily beneficiaries of the PAP, although they often benefit from the Book Bursary Programme.

5.4 Payment mechanisms

5.4.1 Public Assistance Programme

PAP disburses benefits monthly either through bank/credit union transfers or manual payments at sub-collectors' offices. Manual payments are delivered through the Ministry of Equity for the Castries region and environs, or by a network of six paymasters. As of March 2019, around 81% of beneficiaries received their benefits via bank transfers.¹⁴ If a beneficiary fails to collect payments for three months or more, they are suspended pending investigation, although some beneficiaries view PAP payments as a form of savings, particularly around holidays like Christmas.

The Ministry of Equity acknowledges challenges faced by beneficiaries in accessing payments and registering with financial institutions. Health conditions, inability to meet financial sector

¹⁴ Author's calculations based on data provided by the Ministry of Equity.

requirements, and limited identification documentation are cited as barriers to opening bank accounts. Two forms of identification are required to open a bank accounts, when most people have only one form of identification. The Ministry of Equity has been trying to facilitate the opening of bank accounts for PAP beneficiaries and is exploring the option of debit cards.

Disasters have generally not disrupted PAP payments significantly. In the event of a hurricane coinciding with manual payment schedules, the payment date is typically postponed by a few days, communicated through public announcements. However, beneficiaries report challenges even in non-emergency times, such as lengthy wait times of up to two hours at payment locations or needing to make multiple visits to credit unions due to delayed payments. Distance to payment points poses particular difficulties for women who must arrange care for children, disabled individuals, or elderly family members at home. Women collecting PAP benefits expressed feeling unsafe due to confrontations or arguments that occur while waiting in line for payments (Xavier, 2015).

Pensions for formal sector employees are electronically deposited into bank accounts, whereas self-employed individuals collect their pensions through cheques at banks. Opening a bank account requires an NIC card is needed.

5.4.2 School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Programme is managed by the Student Welfare Department. Food supplies are delivered to schools Ministry of Education trucks. Dry food items (i.e. rice, flour, peas, pasta) are delivered once per term, while frozen foods are delivered two or three times based on storage capacity. In some cases, food supplies run out before the term ends, prompting schools to fundraise for additional weeks.

Revenue generated from the School Feeding Programme is split between schools and the Ministry of Education, which schools using their for-cooking gas, seasonings, utensils. Beneficiaries lists and financial reports are submitted to the Student Welfare Department term's end.

Despite limited suppliers in Saint Lucia, food commodities for the School Feeding Programme have been consistently available. The programme could potentially be leveraged for disaster response with adequate funding and a reliable supply chain.

5.5 Information management and the creation of a social registry

The PAP currently has an Information Management System (IMS) in Excel to capture basic household and client data. However, a new beneficiary registry is under development to enhance data analysis capabilities and align with the objectives of the programme. The existing system does not support in-depth analysis of data, making it challenging to disaggregate information by age, gender, household composition, and other criteria. Moreover, retrieving consistent data on trends in PAP coverage over time and understanding the duration of individuals' participation in the programme is difficult.

Owing to these limitations, obtaining geographically disaggregated data on PAP coverage for this report required manual data processing. Furthermore, the PAP MIS, which operates at the client level rather than household level, is not integrated with other programme information management systems, preventing automatic checks for duplication of services or if PAP clients are receiving other benefits.

To address these challenges, there is a plan to develop a social registry, supported by the World Bank and aligned with the long-term goals of the National Social Protection Policy. As an initial step towards establishing this social registry, the Ministry of Equity is developing a beneficiary registry using information collected through the PAP revalidation exercise with the SL-NET 3.0. NIC numbers are being used as the unique identifier.

Box 5: Development of a social registry

There is a plan to develop a social registry with the support of the World Bank and in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office. However, the modality of data collection has not yet been defined. One possible approach could involve conducting a census-type data collection exercise in areas identified as particularly vulnerable based on the 2016 poverty assessment.

Regarding the content of the social registry, the plan includes incorporating geo-referencing and data from the upcoming disability census. Ultimately, the social registry should eventually be linked with the Ministry of Health IMS to capture information relevant to the forthcoming universal health insurance programme. Discussions are also underway about potentially providing access to NGOs, although this concept is still in the early stages of development.

As a first step, data collected through recertification process is being entered into the newly created beneficiary registry using EPI Info software for data entry. The objective is to complete the PAP beneficiary registry by the end of 2019, with funding provided by the Ministry of Finance.

The information gathered during the PAP application and targeting process includes:

- Personal details such as name, date of birth, age, marital status, ethnicity, NIC number, birth certificate number, phone number, district, and community of the applicant.
- Demographic information (date of birth, age, gender), education level (highest level attained and highest examination passed), health status (chronic illness, health insurance coverage), and employment details (employment status, insurance coverage, length of employment) for each household member.
- Information on the services and benefits received by each household member from the Ministry of Equity, the SSDF, the Ministry of Education, and the department of Human Services;
- PAP welfare card number and benefit amount for individuals already receiving the benefits.
- Information about housing conditions and household assets.
- Whether the household has a bank or credit union account;
- Information on food security within the household.
- Information on the PAP benefit amount received and the method of payment collection (for households undergoing recertification).

Source: Author based on SL-NET V.0.3 application form and interviews with Ministry of Equity.

Once completed, the beneficiary registry should provide a better understanding of which services and programmes households are benefiting from and the profiles of recipients. Applicants are asked to report whether they benefit from other programmes and services as part of the new SL-NET 3.0 form.¹⁵ However, this information will still rely on self-reporting, rather than establishing links

¹⁵ The newly introduced module on assistance received by clients collects information on benefits and services received from multiple ministries. Clients have to report whether they receive any of the following: PAP, Child Disability Grant, spectacles assistance, education assistance, medical assistance, HIV/Aids assistance from the Ministry of Equity; cash transfers, housing

between different programmes' IMS, which would offer a more reliable and systematic way to determine the overall programmes and services benefitting households. The use of a consistent unique identifier across programmes would greatly facilitate cross-referencing of individuals, and ideally households, across different programmes and government databases.

Building a beneficiary registry will improve the Ministry of Equity's capacity to monitor and manage PAP and Child Disability Grant benefits. However, investments are needed to ensure the capacity to manage such a registry. The Ministry of Equity will need to establish a dedicated IT unit and consistently invest in capacity building for data capture and management.

The lack of readily available detailed information is a common characteristic of most programmes in the social protection sector (Soto, 2015). There are few tools in place for regular monitoring and evaluation of programmes. In some cases institutional changes translate into the loss of valuable information as data are not transferred from one institution to another (Soto, 2015). One of the priority areas of intervention outlined in the National Social Protection Policy is the development of a monitoring and evaluation system for all social protection interventions, with a focus on utilising results and findings (Government of Saint Lucia, 2015).

For the School Feeding Programme, information primarily flows from implementing schools to the Student Welfare Department. Schools are required to submit a paper-based form each month with information on funds collected, number of paying students, the number of students accessing the programme for free, and the total expenses incurred. The form is first submitted to the accounts unit and then entered into an Excel database by the Student Welfare Coordinator. However, the Ministry of Education does not have a unified system to integrate data from the various schools. The Student Welfare Coordinator addresses cases of inaccurate reporting and monitors inventory.

5.6 Coordination mechanisms

The social safety net reform is expected to strengthen the role of the Ministry of Equity and establish a functioning inter-ministerial committee for social protection. The reform is expected to address challenges related to programme fragmentation, overlapping agency objectives, and improve referral processes and information management, which are currently in need of strengthening.

While the 2015 National Social Protection Policy and the Social Protection Draft Bill highlight the need to create a National Social Protection Steering Committee to coordinate the social protection sector and programmes, such a coordinating structure has not yet been established. Efforts to enhance coordination are evident in the gradual consolidation of targeted programmes under the Ministry of Equity. However, stakeholders emphasise that the plans outlined in the policy and bill should be

assistance, boys to men assistance, school book subsidy, elderly care programme, or tuition assistance from the SSDF; school book subsidy, school bus subsidy, bursary assistance, public day care centre services from the Ministry of Education; or counselling support or cash transfers from Human Services.

considered long-term visions. Currently, different organisations and agencies provide similar programmes and services with limited coordination.

In the Ministry of Equity, informal arrangements help support coordination. For example, Welfare Officers and Social Transformation Officers collaborate and often share office spaces. Similarly, family case workers under the Division of Human Services refer clients to Welfare Officers for consideration for the PAP. More broadly, ad hoc client referrals occur across Welfare Officers, Family Support Workers, and Family Services social workers.

Limited coordination and case management persist across ministries. There is no formal coordination structure between the Ministry of Equity and the Ministry of Education. Sometimes, children from PAP beneficiary households are referred by Welfare Officers or the SSDF to the Ministry of Education for the Book Bursary Programme; Welfare Officers also indicated that they can refer children from PAP families to principals for the subsidised School Feeding Programme (lunch and breakfast programmes), but the decision depend on the principal.

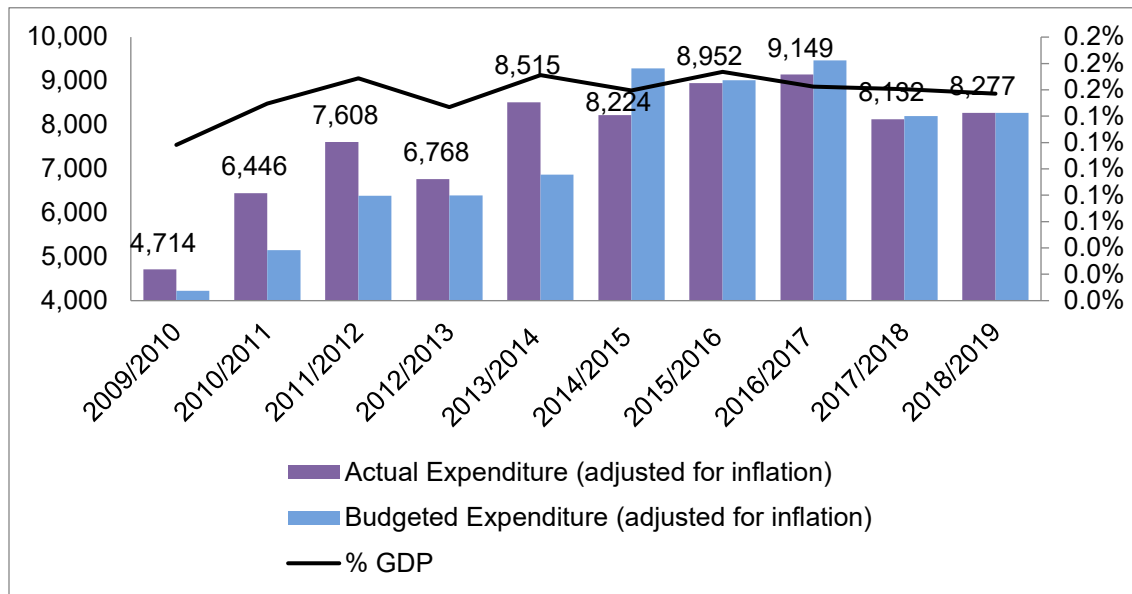
The absence of a social protection strategy and sectoral steering committees affects coordination between the public sector and civil society organisations. To improve coordination among different ministries and agencies, some interviewees stressed the importance of outlining such arrangements in the upcoming Social Protection Bill.

5.7 Financing mechanisms

The government funds the PAP and Child Disability Grant annually through recurrent expenditures based on the number of beneficiaries and available resources. Figure 6 illustrates budgeted and actual expenditure on the PAP since the 2009/2010 financial year, as well as actual expenditures as a percentage of GDP. PAP expenditure has fluctuated over time and, with few exceptions has consistently exceeded budgeted expenditure. In the 2017/2018 financial year, revised expenditure was USD 3 million (XCD 8,132,768), which is equivalent to 0.2% of GDP.¹⁶ The PAP budget is determined by the cabinet.

¹⁶ Based on author calculations using Government of Saint Lucia (2018a) and GDP data from ECCB.

Figure 5: Actual and budgeted expenditure on the PAP ('000 XCD and % of GDP)



Source: Author’s calculation based on the Government of Saint Lucia budget estimates from 2009/10 to 2018/19. Notes: Data until 2016/2017 represent actual expenditure, data for 2017/2018 are based on revised budget data, data for 2018/2019 are based on forward estimates. Expenditures until 2016/2017 are adjusted per inflation using annual inflation computed by the Saint Lucia Central Statistical Office. The expenditure to GDP ratio is computed as expenditure to gross value added based on data from the Saint Lucia Central Statistical Office and ECCB.

In practice, the number of PAP beneficiaries is capped due to a fixed budget allocated at the start of the financial year in April. This results in a substantial waiting list for the PAP. For instance, in 2015, there were 366 individuals were on the PAP waiting list (Blank, 2015), with an average wait time for inclusion of about one year and two months (Xavier, 2015). During this time, over 60% of the individuals on the waiting list were women (Xavier, 2015). The Department of Social Welfare usually reserves a few spaces to add five or six new PAP beneficiaries throughout the year for extreme cases.

If applications to the PAP exceed the available budget, additional funding can be requested, although the Ministry of Equity rarely makes such requests except in extreme and rare cases. If, approved extra-budgetary requests can lead to fund releases within two to three weeks. Additionally, if the Ministry of Equity learns that some PAP beneficiaries have been affected by a disaster, it can request additional PAP and housing funding from the SSDF or directly refer PAP clients to the SSDF for specific needs. For example, after Hurricane Maria in 2017, there was an increase in requests that required extra support.

Funds for the School Feeding Programme are allocated annually to the Student Welfare Department, and expansions occur when additional funding becomes available. Since 1999, the programme has been directly funded by the government. Prior to that, the WFP funded the programme until 1997, followed funding from the European Union from 1998–1999.

6 Shock-responsive social protection in Saint Lucia

Both the Ministry of Equity and NEMO are actively working to enhance the role of social protection in disaster risk management in Saint Lucia. This section highlights instances where social protection programmes and associated systems demonstrate potential for greater integration with disaster risk management.

6.1 Involvement of Ministry of Equity staff in DRM

In Saint Lucia, the link between social protection and disaster management is reflected in the dual responsibilities of Social Transformation Officers (STOs). During non-emergency times, these officers oversee community development. However, during emergencies, they function as NEMO's extension officers, closely collaborating with District Disaster Committees.

Welfare Officers also contribute to disaster response and recovery by referring needy households to support services offered by the Ministry of Equity, SSDF, Red Cross, NGOs, faith-based organisations, and the private sector. For instance, following Hurricane Tomas, the Ministry of Equity and NEMO directed affected individuals to the SSDF for assistance under their programmes. Additionally, the Ministry of Equity provided shelter and rental assistance to households impacted by the hurricane.

These collaborative efforts could be viewed as 'piggybacking', where NEMO leverages the complementary skills of Ministry of Equity staff to execute emergency response activities. Welfare Officers and STOs bring added value to disaster responses given their specific skills, roles, and community familiarity, especially with vulnerable community members. Although involving Welfare Officers in both the PAP and DRM theoretically lays groundwork for using the PAP to aid disaster-affected individuals, the staff's capacity constraints must be addressed due to their already extensive responsibilities.

6.2 Increasing the PAP transfer value (vertical expansion)

There have been instances of increasing PAP transfer values for beneficiaries facing major shocks. Welfare Officers can propose an increase for up to six months, based on the beneficiary's circumstances, which must be validated by the officer's supervisor and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Equity. If approved, Welfare Officers note the change on the beneficiary list sent to the payroll officer, and the increased payment is authorised by the payroll officer's supervisor.

However, there are no formal procedures on increasing the PAP's benefit value. According to interviewees, such adjustments have been rare, and exact numbers are unknown as each change is made manually during payment rounds.

6.3 Provision of assistance through the Ministry of Equity to hurricane-affected Dominican citizens

In 2017, the devastation of Hurricane Maria led some Dominicans to seek refuge in other countries, including Saint Lucia, where the Ministry of Equity promptly extended assistance. A social assistance form was developed to gather information on the needs of those arriving from Dominica (see Figure 7 in Annex B). This data enabled the Ministry to secure additional budget provisions to assist 30 families with rent payments, school fees, and food.

This experience highlights the role of social assistance in supporting people from other countries arriving in Saint Lucia following disasters or other major shocks. Stakeholders emphasised the benefits of having structured plans in place for such support to avoid relying solely on ad hoc measures during these situations. The logical next step would be developing processes and protocols for this type of post-disaster assistance in the future.

7 Towards a more shock-responsive social protection system

The concept of integrating social protection programmes into disaster response efforts is gaining traction among key stakeholders in Saint Lucia, highlighting the interest in defining exploring a 'shock responsive' role withing policy and programming. It is recognised that effectively using social protection in response to disasters requires much closer collaboration between the DRM and social protection sectors.

7.1 Opportunities for more responsive social protection programmes and systems

The PAP and the School Feeding Programme, which are analysed in this research, each have certain characteristics that could lend them to playing a key role in responding to shocks.

7.1.1 School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Programme, with its extensive geographical coverage, is well-positioned to play a vital role in responding to shocks. The following measures could be implemented under the programme during emergencies, contingent on access to food supplies through agreements with local suppliers or delivery of commodities by the Ministry of Education:

- o Waive co-financing requirements for children receiving subsidised meals.
- o Increase the number of children receiving subsidised or free meals.
- o Increase the number of daily meals, extend the meal provision to weekends, and/or cover school-break periods.
- o Provide take-home rations to households of impacted children or other affected households within the community without children in school.
- o Using available food supplies to support sheltered populations in the first days of a shock, particularly in schools serving as government emergency shelters.

Implementing these measures would require clearly defined processes for adding students to the programme, waiving fees, etc. Additionally, considerations must be made for potential disruptions in food supply chains during major events, along with the necessary financial and human resources.

7.1.2 Public Assistance Programme

Stakeholders within and outside the government see the potential for the PAP to play a larger role in responding to shocks. The PAP, or a modified version of it, could provide higher value cash transfers to existing beneficiaries and potentially include temporarily new beneficiaries affected

shocks. Additionally, it could serve as a gateway to link individuals to additional assistance and services.

Reasons supporting the PAP's role in response and recovery include its existing assistance to impoverished individuals vulnerable to natural hazards and economic shocks.

- Demand for the PAP typically increases after disasters, with a greater number of people reportedly applying.
- The PAP's systems are improving, including electronic payments and beneficiary registries, with future plans to strengthen systems as part of the reform process.
- As the largest cash transfer programme in Saint Lucia, the PAP presents a potential starting point for providing cash transfer assistance to more people in the case of a future shock.
- There is growing regional experience of using similar programmes to assist disaster-impacted populations by increasing benefits to existing beneficiaries and identifying new recipients for a temporary expansion.

Because the PAP already has measures in place to pay its beneficiaries, increasing transfer values to existing beneficiaries (i.e. vertical expansion) after a shock would be relatively straightforward operationally. International evidence suggests that vertical expansions can be implemented within a few days to weeks after the shock (Barca and Beazley, 2019; Beazley et al., 2019). Slow decision-making post-shock is usually a main obstacle to providing rapid assistance through existing programmes. Thus, financing measures (i.e. contingency funding) and triggers would need to be set up in advance to facilitate such assistance through the PAP. The manual payroll process could pose an obstacle to timeliness, which could be resolved by eventually automating the payment process or putting alternative measures in place in emergencies.

Given the small caseload of the PAP, increasing assistance to existing beneficiaries would cover only small number of people affected by a shock. Impacted individuals outside of the programme would need assistance, either through the PAP or other channels. Expanding social assistance to new households is more complex than topping up existing beneficiaries' entitlements, (for whom bank accounts, household sizes, etc. are already known), as new households would need to be identified and linked to the emergency social assistance.

The post-disaster household assessment carried out by the District Disaster Committees, with the support of the Social Transformation Officers already refer households in need to the Welfare Services Unit, the SSDF and other entities providing social assistance, establishing crucial linkages for enrolling new disaster-affected households in the PAP.

Given the low coverage of the PAP and the gap between eligible individuals/households and available resources, a temporary expansion to these households could be made relatively automatically alongside the vertical expansion, as highlighted above. A similar approach could also be considered for individuals/households just above the PAP inclusion thresholds. However, for such horizontal expansion to new beneficiaries, the PAP vetting process would need to ensure collection of bank

account and other required information. Additionally, financing and trigger mechanisms would need to be set up in advance, including measures to verify that these households have not relocated or that eligible individuals have not passed away.

Expanding the PAP during the recovery phase of a disaster could address a noted weakness in Saint Lucia's DRM system, as highlighted in the 2018 Disaster Management Audit. From the perspective of the social assistance programmes, the PAP could serve as an effective instrument for delivering time-bound, post-disaster social assistance programmes to households still requiring support. However, expanding the programme would require additional financing and increased capacity of Welfare Officers. This could be challenging given the limited fiscal space to extend social protection and the focus on improving programmes implementation and system coherence rather than expanding coverage. At the same time, expansion could become a greater priority in the event of a future shock.

Temporary expansion of PAP coverage in the aftermath of a shock could also prevent an increase in the overall population in need of social assistance in the mid-term as a result of the loss of livelihoods and income sources from the event. Additionally, it would enable the Ministry of Equity and Welfare Officers to closely monitor affected households and refer them to other programmes and services, or potentially ensure their continued inclusion in the PAP beyond the temporary expansion period.

The operational implications of scaling up the PAP and enhancing its responsiveness require further analysis and investment to ensure that the programme is prepared to take on additional responsibilities. A large-scale shock, such as a hurricane or earthquake, could disrupt the core functioning of the PAP if government staff, financial services, or payment infrastructure are affected. Delivery mechanisms and targeting procedures need to be reviewed to determine which modifications are needed for system resilience and scalability. This includes establishing protocols on how social protection programmes and systems would be used. Examining capacity implications is essential, as the Welfare Officers implementing the PAP are already stretched. Finally, using the PAP (or other social assistance) during an emergency would require clarity on roles and linkages with NEMO and disaster risk management organisations. Communication with beneficiaries is key to managing expectations regarding the duration, coverage and value of the assistance provided. Renaming the programme during emergencies is also a possible option.

While the preceding analysis focused on enhancing existing programmes responsiveness to shocks, new processes and flexibility will be necessary to address future scenarios, such as disaster-related migration. The Ministry of Equity's actions in assisting people arriving from Dominica in 2017 is an example of how processes can be quickly established to provide support. Given predictions of increased weather-related events in the Caribbean due to climate change, tools used in 2017 to assess and assist Dominicans in Saint Lucia could be updated as part of broader efforts to identify response options for persons arriving in Saint Lucia owing to shocks in their own countries.

Box 6: Enhancing the gender responsiveness of the PAP – UN Women

As part of its social safety net reform, the government of Saint Lucia has adopted a holistic approach to social protection, which is reflected in the country's 2015 Social Protection Policy. This policy gives clear priority to women and children and aims to ensure that social protection programmes are designed and implemented to meet their specific needs. In line with these efforts, a Gender Aware Beneficiary Analysis of Saint Lucia's Public Assistance Programme was conducted by UN Women in 2015 to identify barriers to gender equity and the well-being of children within the programme.

The study identified programme-related issues that impede women's access to PAP services, as well as broader systemic barriers and bottlenecks. These include underlying biases against women among PAP staff and the inadequate transfer valued that fail to meet competing needs, especially for single mothers struggling with school-related expenses, despite school attendance being a condition of assistance. Additionally, certain vulnerable groups such as grandmothers caring for grandchildren, widows who previously depended on their husbands, and single mothers applying for PAP benefits have not received immediate attention, have been assigned to the waiting list or have had their applications denied (Xavier, 2015).

In efforts to enhance the gender responsiveness of the PAP and other social protection programmes, it is important to address gender disparities when using these programmes in emergency response. Disasters and crises can exacerbate existing gender inequalities, with women often disproportionately affected by shocks (Holmes, 2019). Moreover, crises also present opportunities positive changes in gender relations and making programmes more gender-responsive, aligning with the Social Protection Policy.

Issues to be considered are potential barriers for women in accessing delivery mechanisms, ensuring sex-disaggregated data for monitoring, mitigating risks, and establishing links to other programmes and services for women, men, girls and boys (Holmes, 2019).

7.1.3 Beneficiary and social registries

Once established, the PAP beneficiary registry will serve as a good source of information on the characteristics of beneficiary households. This data can be used by public agencies, NGOs, and international agencies to target assistance to PAP beneficiaries in the event of shocks. For example, the School Feeding Programme could be expanded to include children from PAP-benefiting households, and NGOs could provide various types of disaster assistance to PAP beneficiaries. However, it is essential that any use of beneficiary registry data for targeting disaster assistance is accompanied by efforts to identify and reach affected individuals who are not registered beneficiaries.

The proposed social registry in Saint Lucia presents interesting opportunities for shock responsive social protection. Unlike beneficiary registries, social registries include data not only on social protection beneficiaries but also on other people facing poverty and risks, who are not currently benefitting from specific programmes. These registries can be designed to collect data that provides insights into disaster risks, making them powerful tools for planning responses and targeting assistance during shocks, especially when they are kept up to date and have extensive coverage of affected areas.

However, it is important to recognise that additional data collection on needs and impacted populations will always be necessary for several reasons. First, data collected before a shock may not accurately reflect post-shock needs. Second, social registries do not cover all individuals in need, and those within the registry may not always be the most in need. Lastly, social registries often lack operational data required for the effective delivery of benefits to the “last mile”, such as bank account details, full contact information, identification documents, and geo-locations (Barca and Beazley, 2019). Challenges associated with utilising social registries for emergency response are summarised in Box 7.

Existing data relevant to poverty and disaster risk, such as census data, national surveys of living conditions, and disaster risk mapping, can be better leveraged to identify areas, communities, and livelihoods likely to be affected in different scenarios. Such analysis can also help predict caseloads for social assistance programmes and estimate financial requirements.

Box 7: Social registries for emergency response

A core challenge of shock-responsive social protection is that the households affected by shocks are not necessarily those that benefit from existing social protection programmes. This discrepancy arises from variations in target populations, eligibility criteria, and overall programme objectives (Beazley et al., 2019). While programmes like the PAP can potentially expand vertically to assist a significant proportion affected individuals, this response remains incomplete as non-beneficiaries would still be excluded.

In this context, social registries emerge as a promising source of information for disaster preparedness and action during relief, response, and recovery phases, given their inclusion of data on non-beneficiaries. Leveraging existing information from social registries could facilitate rapid relief or response actions. However, the extent to which social registry data can be effectively used in disaster preparedness and response depends on various factors related to the functionality of social registries and other information systems (see Barca and Beazley (2019).

The Government of Saint Lucia has demonstrated its commitment to developing a social registry, with the assistance from the World Bank. Initial steps towards creating a PAP beneficiary registry were taken during the recertification process conducted in March 2019. In interviews for this study, government officials emphasised that the upcoming social registry would improve coordination

across the social protection sector and potentially realise efficiency savings by reducing duplications and improving monitoring.

The effectiveness of the social registry in improving coordination and achieving cost savings will depend on its design and several factors, including the interoperability of various programmes. However, current programmes that could potentially integrate with the social registry, such as those delivered by the SSDF and the Ministry of Education, appear not to have well-developed IMS, and where these systems exist they lack interoperability.

It is important to emphasise that while social registries offer opportunities for rapid response during shocks, they should not be seen as a prerequisite for implementing responsive programmes. International experience shows that some countries without such registries have successfully provided cash support to non-beneficiaries, for example Dominica (Beazley, 2018). Responses aimed at supporting non-beneficiaries can rely on other information systems.

7.1.4 Financing

Financing is a critical issue that needs to be addressed to ensure social assistance programmes can effectively reach people impacted by disasters. At present, the Ministry of Equity does not have a system to quickly access contingency funds in the event of a major shock. This challenge underscores the broader need for disaster risk financing instruments that can provide predictable and adequate funding for low and high impact events in Saint Lucia.

The use of shock-responsive social protection programmes would be enhanced by leveraging financial instruments that enable more efficient management of disaster-related liabilities.

The 2018 World Bank report on disaster risk financing in Saint Lucia includes shock-responsive social protection as a potential component of the recommended comprehensive disaster risk financing strategy. This strategy is intended to enable the government to access immediate financial resources in the event of national disasters, ensuring a proportional response based on the magnitude of loss while minimising reallocations from existing programmes and maintaining fiscal balance. The report recommended quantifying the costs and benefits of disaster-linked social protection schemes and their impact on the budget (World Bank Group, 2018).

Given the limited resources available to social assistance programmes, some stakeholders argue that social insurance could also contribute to shock response efforts. Although social insurance programmes have not been expanded in response to shocks in Saint Lucia, this approach has been implemented elsewhere in the Caribbean, such as Jamaica, where social insurance benefits were temporarily increased. It is important to note, however, that social insurance is unlikely to reach the poorest and most vulnerable populations.

8 Conclusion and recommendations

In Saint Lucia, several factors are aligning to create an opportunity for making social protection more shock responsive: increasing government interest, ongoing review of social protection and disaster risk management policies, and support from the World Bank to accelerate the social protection reform. While this report primarily focused on analysing the Public Assistance Programme (PAP) and school feeding programme, the potential for shock responsive social protection extends beyond existing assistance programmes. The human resources and systems supporting social assistance can also be used to develop new and tailored approaches to assist those affected by shocks. Strengthening linkages between social protection and DRM through coordinated and data analysis can further enhance response planning. These opportunities are part of a broader goal of ensuring predictable support for vulnerable individuals impacted by shocks and strengthening a comprehensive approach to disaster risk management.

While this research was conducted prior to the COVID-19 crisis, its findings remain highly relevant. At the time of publication, Saint Lucia, along with other countries globally, was planning to introduce and expand social protection measures to address the social and economic repercussions of the pandemic. Learning from these experiences will be crucial for establishing systems and processes to support shock-responsive social protection in the future.

There are several opportunities to better prepare social protection systems in Saint Lucia to support people vulnerable to disasters and other major shocks. Recommendations can be categorised under two main themes: (1) strengthening core functions in a risk-informed manner and (2) leveraging social protection programmes and systems to play a greater role in supporting disaster risk management.


An overarching recommendation for a more shock-responsive social protection system in Saint Lucia is to invest in the capacity of the social protection sector for regular programming and to “shock-proof” programmes to ensure the continuous provision of social benefits during emergencies. While these investments primarily aim to strengthen the social protection system, they can also be made in a risk-informed manner to enhance support for DRM. For example, strengthening information systems or electronic payment mechanisms not only benefits regular social protection programmes but also facilitates identifying and reaching people vulnerable to or affected by shocks. Similarly, automating the PAP payroll system improves efficiency in disbursement and support scaling up payments for emergency or recovery assistance.



The second theme of the recommendations involves expanding the role of social protection programmes and systems to directly support people affected by disasters through stronger linkages with disaster response and risk management. These recommendations highlight investments required to prepare social protection systems for these functions. For example, this includes establishing protocols to temporarily expand the PAP and waive beneficiary contributions for the School Feeding Programme. Additionally, it involves assessing the operational implications of



temporarily scaling up the PAP (over time) and identifying and establishing predictable financing to fund responses linked to social protection. Investment in these systems and establishing protocols does not imply that these are the sole or best methods to assist people facing major shocks, nor does it suggest that processes will remain rigid. Rather, the goal is to make strategic investments that position social protection systems to effectively provide support, avoiding the need to hastily develop these capacities in the aftermath of a disaster. These efforts must be closely coordinated with the DRM sector to ensure they contribute effectively to overall preparedness and response capacities in Saint Lucia.

All recommendations are summarised in the table below, with some envisioned for the short-medium term and others for a longer term.

Table 3: Recommendations to enable Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Saint Lucia

Preparedness category	Short/medium-term recommendations	Long-term recommendations
<p>Information management</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue investing in the development of a beneficiary registry for the PAP, the Child Disability Grant, and other relevant grants. • Invest in enhancing the Ministry of Equity's capacity to manage the beneficiary registry effectively. • Consider a staggered approach to developing a social registry, prioritising areas with higher prevalence of poverty and/or greater exposure to shocks. • Analyse existing data on poverty and disaster risk/exposure to inform scenario planning for emergency responses linked to social protection and determining financing requirements. • Invest in strengthening NEMO's capacity for data collection, analysis, and coordination. • Establish data-sharing agreements with government organisations and NGOs and invest in the interoperability of registries and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a social registry to consolidate information from all public agencies delivering social assistance programmes and explore inclusions of programmes run by NGOs and faith-based organisations (FBOs). • As part of the social registry, consider collecting data that assesses vulnerability and exposure to shocks, as well as operational data essential for rapid responses capabilities. • Use existing risk analysis to guide registration efforts and prioritise geographic areas for inclusion in the social registry. • Develop a National Unique Identifier Number (ID from birth) to enable tracking and strengthen linkages across programmes, services and ministries.

	<p>information management systems (IMS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strategies are in place for information sharing at all levels.
<p>Targeting</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop streamlined targeting processes for using the PAP or other social assistance programmes to support emergency response and recovery. • Continue facilitating the acquisition of National Insurance Corporation (NIC) cards for applicants, while also identifying alternative methods to register PAP applicants without NIC numbers. • Establish procedures to waive PAP conditionality during emergencies if it is introduced. • Create operation manuals detailing targeting, appeal, recertification processes, and exit criteria. • Pursue efforts to include self-employed individuals in social insurance schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider making the targeting criteria and methodologies more risk-informed (i.e. SL-NET capturing not only the chronic poor but also the vulnerable). • Align the targeting criteria of different social protection programmes in order to provide complementary support (in non-emergency times and during emergencies).
<p>Delivery mechanisms</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop protocols for increasing PAP transfer values in response to disasters. • Review payment and delivery mechanisms to assess the need for alternative processes in using the PAP for emergency and recovery assistance. • Facilitate the transition of PAP beneficiaries to bank or credit union transfer payments instead of manual payments, while exploring new methods like postal payments. • Automate the payroll system • Consider introducing a small honorarium or reimbursing costs for District Disaster Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver all PAP transfers electronically and prepare the payment mechanisms for scale-ups. • At the same time, build in redundancy for cases of large-scale emergencies where electronic transfers may not be feasible.

	<p>members, to incentivise their engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish protocols to adjust payment cycles in anticipation of forecasted shocks 	
<p>Coordination</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalise the National Social Protection Steering Committee as outlined in the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP). • Invest in enhancing the coordination role of NEMO/NEOC during emergencies and ensure responses linked to social protection are closely coordinated with NEMO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the coordination of social protection and disaster response programmes, including data management and sharing, across ministries and public entities.
<p>Financing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalise the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) based on an analysis of trends and forecasted financial requirements. • Establish safeguards to ensure funds are earmarked for disaster financing. • Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of disaster-linked social protection schemes to understand their impact on the budget. • Review possible risk financing mechanisms to support shock responsive social protection actions (e.g. expansion of PAP) • Assess the staffing and resource implications of shock responsive social protection actions, including for the Welfare Services Unit, and develop plans to ensure adequate capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mechanisms and protocols for the rapid disbursement of funds for shock-responsive social protection.

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Annex A List of interviewees

Date	Where	Ministry / Agency	Name	Position
18-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Equity (Departments of Human Services and Community Development)	Ms Blanda Lansilo Ms Brenda Wilson Mrs Kerensa Donelly Ms Deidre Charlery Ms Tanzania Toussaint Mr Tommy Descartes Ms Leca James Mr Wendell Bertrand	Senior Field Social Worker Acting Deputy Director Social Transformation Welfare Officer Welfare Officer Deputy Director Welfare Services Unit Deputy Director Social Research & Policy Unit Social Research Officer Policy and Research Officer
18-Mar-2019	Castries	NEMO	Ms Dorine Gustave	Director
19-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Education	Ms Meriam Henville	Student Welfare Coordinator (Department of Education and Innovation)
19-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Economic Development	Ms Dahna Jn Charles	Social Analyst
19-Mar-2019	Castries	Central Statistical Office	Ms Linn Brown	Demography Statistician
19-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Equity (Department of Local Government)	Ms Michelle Auguste Mrs Keisha Chastanet Atil	Local Government Officer (North) Local Government Officer (South)
19-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Equity (Department of Community Development)	Mr Kendall Elva Mrs Antonia Rene Marius Ms Kerensa Donelly	STO STO WO
20-Mar-2019	Castries	SSDF	Mr Allison Mathurin Ms Jennifer Walter	Executive Director Social Assistant Officer
20-Mar-2019	Castries	CARITAS Antilles	Allister Phillip	YEAC St Lucia Project Manager
20-Mar-2019	Castries	Salvation Army	Major Derrick Mitchell	Commanding Officer for Salvation Army, St Lucia
20-Mar-2019	Castries	Saint Lucia Red Cross	Mrs Terencia Gaillard	Director St Lucia Red Cross
21-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Equity	Velda Joseph	Permanent Secretary (former NEMO director)
21-Mar-2019	Castries	Ministry of Agriculture	Cherry Anne Smith	Agricultural Officer
21-Mar-2019	Castries	National Insurance Corporation	Desmond Dujon Harry	Assistant Director (Operations)
22-Mar-2019	Castries	MoF	Jacqueline Francois	Budget Analyst

22-Mar-2019	Castries	Disaster Committee - Castries South-East	Philip Leon	Chairman of Castries S-E District Disaster Committee
22-Mar-2019	Marc, Bexon			School Principal
08-Apr-2019	Remote	World Bank	Snjezana Plevko	Senior Economist
09-Apr-2019	Remote	UNICEF, Eastern Caribbean Area Office	Maya Faisal	Social and Economic Policy Specialist

Annex B Social Assessment Form

Figure 6: Social Assessment Form for humanitarian assistance post-disaster



**MINISTRY OF EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, EMPOWERMENT, YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT, SPORTS, CULTURE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Application #

Name:

Gender

Age:

Address (Intended/Former):

Head of Household:

Number of Adults:

Number of Children:

Status of Applicant:

CURRENT/PREVIOUS BENEFITS

Amount \$	Pension #
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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME

Income (as stated by informant)

Income/month (to be completed by social worker)

Are you employed? Full-time [] Part-time [] Not employed []

How much do you earn? (per week) \$ \$

Is anyone else in the house employed? []

How much do they contribute to the family expenses? (per week) \$ \$

Is there any other means of support? (per week) Indicate source \$ \$

TOTAL \$

EXPENDITURE ITEMS

Expenditure (stated by informant)

Expenditure/month (to be completed by social worker)

How much do you spend for food? (per week)	\$	\$
.....Electricity (per month)	\$	\$
.....Water rate (per month)	\$	\$
Transportation for children to go to school (per week)	\$	\$
Do you pay rent? <input type="checkbox"/> Lease <input type="checkbox"/> live rent fee <input type="checkbox"/>		
How much do you pay for mortgage/lease/rent (per month)	\$	\$
ECONOMIC ALLY THE APPLICANT IS DEPENDENT ON:		
a.	Who _____	
b.	What _____	

THE MOST URGENT NEEDS OF APPLICANT		
i.	Present Needs	
1.	Health care <input type="checkbox"/> Daily Meals <input type="checkbox"/> Better living conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Training <input type="checkbox"/>	
	ii.	Medical conditions
Do you or any family members suffer from any chronic illness such as:		
1.	Asthma	
2.	HIV <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Diabetes <input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	Hypertension <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
If yes, how are medical bills taken cared of? _____		
iii.	Special circumstances	
Has the family experienced any major change in the circumstances with the past six (6) months due to?		
1.	Flood <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	Fire <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Death of a bread winner <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please express any special needs _____		
5. What is the most appropriate intervention recommended?		
PAP <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION <input type="checkbox"/> KSL <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
State reasons for response _____		
6. In case of a single parent household:		

A. How many children are in the home

B. Is father:

1. Deceased? []

2. Incarcerated? []

3. Mentally challenged? []

4. Whereabouts not known? []

7. In case of family head with grandchild/children in the home, what is the status of the parent?

a. Abroad Yes [] No []

If yes, what is the purpose? Visiting [] Permanent []

b. Live in another community or Parish? Yes [] No []

c. Deceased Yes [] No []

d. Mentally challenged Yes [] No []

e. Whereabouts unknown Yes [] No []

8. Are there any other able bodied member of the family who are not employed? Yes [] No []

a. Do they have a skill? Yes [] No []

If yes state skill _____

b. Is applicant willing to seek & retain employment if found Yes [] No []

If yes, state what kind of employment desired _____

EVALUATION OF THE CASE

9. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORKERS

No.	ITEM	EVALUATION BY SOCIAL WORKER	REMARKS
9a	Condition of dwelling bad	YES [] NO []	
9b	Family's monthly expenditure below \$6,000	YES [] NO []	
9c	Family eats less than 2 cooked meals per day	YES [] NO []	
9d	Household head is aged/disabled or has a chronic or terminal illness	YES [] NO []	
9e	Aged/disabled/chronically/terminally ill family members/s cause hardship on household	YES [] NO []	
9f	Family experiences major income losses in the past six months (loss of job etc.)	YES [] NO []	
9g	Family experienced major disaster (flood, fire etc.) in the past six (6) months	YES [] NO []	

10. SOCIAL WORKERS COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

.....

Name of social worker _____ Signature _____ Date _____

11. SUPERVISOR'S ANALYSIS _____

.....
Name of social worker	Signature	Date
12. RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEE		
RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/> NOT RECOMMENDED <input type="checkbox"/>		
Recommendations for payment made for the following basis:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Head is aged/disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Head has a chronic/terminal illness	
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of breadwinner	<input type="checkbox"/> Recent disaster in family (e.g. Fire, Flood)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness/disability of family	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Case.....recommend for review after one (1)	
Member causing hardship	year (comment needed below)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Breadwinner incarcerated		
Justification of the decision made: _____		
Committee Members _____		
Signature of Chairman _____ Date: _____		
Signature of Committee Members _____ Date: _____		

Annex C Research questions

In this annex we present a list of research questions that was used to guide the mapping of stakeholders, the literature review, the interviews, and field visits. These are not questionnaires, but umbrella questions to guide the interviews and the review of literature.

A. Stakeholder mapping and analysis

Code	Question
A-01	Who are the different actors and stakeholders responsible for the design, implementation, and coordination of a) social protection and b) DRM policies and systems?
A-02	What are the formal and informal roles and mandates of these different actors and stakeholders in relation to the design, implementation, and coordination of a) social protection and b) DRM policies and systems?
A-03	Is there an effective agency 'home' for a) social protection and b) DRM systems? Are roles and responsibilities clear? Is there competition over resources, power, and authority associated with social protection and humanitarian systems between line ministries? What are the recurrent key points of contention? What effects have these had?
A-04	What are the interests and levels of power / influence of these different stakeholders—local, national, and international? How have these power relations affected (positively or negatively) the design and implementation of social protection, humanitarian, and DRM interventions?
A-05	Which stakeholders (public, private, communities, donors, etc.) support, and which might oppose, the use of social protection systems to respond to shocks, or closer collaboration between the social protection and humanitarian communities, and why?
A-06	How influential has the presence of stakeholders who are 'sector champions' been on securing and maintaining a higher priority for a) social protection and b) DRM investments and maintaining services?

B. Institutional mapping and analysis

Code	Question
B-01	What is the institutional relationship between national and sub-national governments? Are sub-national governments accountable to the national level or local electorate? Do these relationships vary according to sector (e.g. social protection, humanitarian response, other relevant sectors)? What is the degree of decentralisation in the provision

	and financing of, and authority over, social protection, humanitarian response, and DRM?
B-02	How have the relationships between national and sub-national government affected (positively or negatively) the design and implementation of social protection and humanitarian systems, and their prioritisation at different levels of government?
B-03	How is the relationship between the government and humanitarian actors, development partners, and NGOs? Who in the government is in charge of leading this relationship? How effectively is this done before and after a shock?
B-04	What factors have promoted and/or hindered the effective coordination of social protection with humanitarian interventions for effective shock response policy?

C. Organisational capacity assessment

Code	Question
C-01	What are the main administrative and organisational constraints to effective a) social protection and b) DRM delivery?
C-02	What organisational and administrative measures and arrangements and incentives facilitate effective a) social protection and b) DRM delivery?
C-03	What main resources exist to carry out the functions of a) social protection and b) DRM under their current form (consider e.g. staffing levels, network of offices, transport if details are available)? What is the size and nature of any capacity gaps between what exists and what is required, both now and under a reformed shock-responsive social protection system (consider e.g. the requirement for additional resources at times of crisis)?

D. Risks

Code	Question
D-01	Which are the typical shocks affecting the country? What have been the specific major covariate shocks in recent years? What are the characteristics of shocks affecting the country (natural vs man-made, onset, etc.)?
D-02	How does vulnerability to shocks relate to poverty? Do shocks tend to affect areas / sub-groups characterised by higher poverty rates? How?

E. Disaster Risk Management

Code	Question
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E-01	What relevant national and local laws, regulations, and policies exist in relation to DRM? How and by whom is legislative / policy reform initiated? What changes are planned, if any?
E-02	Once in place, are laws, regulations, and policies being implemented? How well have they been applied? If they have not been (fully) implemented, what are the reasons for this? (Who or what is blocking it and why? What do they stand to lose? How big a role is corruption playing in this?)
E-03	What are the implications of these observations for the future design and implementation of shock-responsive social protection laws, regulations, and policies?
E-04	What kind of support do people affected by shock receive? How adequate and timely is this support?
E-05	Is there an early warning system? What agency implements it? What data does it use? What indicators/alerts does it produce?
E-06	Do early warning indicators – indexes trigger automatic responses? How are they used?

F. Social protection

Code	Question
F-01	What relevant national and local laws, regulations, and policies exist in relation to social protection? How and by whom is legislative / policy reform initiated? What changes are planned, if any?
F-02	What is the spending on social protection? Has it been increasing? Are there plans of increasing it in the future?
F-03	What proportion of the population is covered by social security? What kind of support does social security provide? Are the poor and vulnerable covered by social security?
F-04	What proportion of the population is covered by social assistance programmes? And what proportion of the poor? What are the main programmes? What type of benefits do they provide?
F-05	What is the public opinion about social assistance? Is there support for it? Has it been questioned because of corruption or clientelism?
F-06	What are the targeting mechanisms used by the main programmes? Are they effective? Have they been assessed? Are these mechanisms flexible?
F-07	How are social protection data collected, stored, and managed? Who does it? What programmes use these data? How frequently are they updated? What is the perception of the quality of the data?

F-08	What types of information system are in place, if any? (Social registry, beneficiary registry, etc.) How do they work? What proportion of people/households are included in the registry?
F-09	What are the delivery mechanisms used by the main cash and in-kind programmes? How effective are they?
F-10	How have these delivery mechanisms been affected by recent shocks? Have programmes managed to keep delivering benefits during emergencies? If not, why so?

G. Shock/disaster risk financing

Code	Question
G-01	How are emergency responses typically funded? (Domestic vs foreign resources.)
G-02	Is there budget flexibility to reallocate resources to fund responses?
G-03	Are there <i>ex ante</i> financial mechanisms for emergency response, such as regional or private insurances or contingency funds? (e.g. CCRIF) If yes, for what can they be used? And how are they triggered?
G-04	What are the main financing and budgetary constraints to timely and adequate social protection shock response according to the literature and experts? In planning future responses, how can these be overcome?

H. Shock-responsive social protection

Code	Question
H-01	Are you aware of any experience in the country in the use of social protection to respond to shocks?
H-02	What social protection schemes would be better placed to flex and respond during emergencies? What design and implementation features of the social protection system have elements of flexibility and adaptability to facilitate rapid and adequate shock response?
H-03	Has there been any recent experience of coordination between, or integration of, social protection and DRM policies?
H-04	Is there space for dialogue and collaboration between these two sectors? How could this dialogue be promoted?
H-05	Have early warning systems been used to trigger social protection or HA responses? What kind of responses? Have these responses been effective and timely?
H-06	Do national emergency response plans provide a role for social protection in the immediate response? What kind of role?





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