



EnGenDER

Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery,
Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean



SAINT LUCIA



Policy Brief

Gender Inequality of Climate Change and Disaster Risk in Saint Lucia

November 2021





Government of Saint Lucia staff receive personal protection equipment in response to COVID-19 under the EnGenDER Project.

Source: Department of the Public Service, Labour and Gender Affairs, 2020

BACKGROUND

The Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project is funded by Global Affairs Canada and the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, which is led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and jointly implemented by UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). The aim of the project is to identify and address any gaps to ensure equal access to disaster risk resilience, climate change and environment solutions for women, men, boys and girls in nine beneficiary Caribbean countries, including Saint Lucia. The **three priority sectors** selected by the National Decision-Making Mechanism for Saint Lucia for EnGenDER are **agriculture, water** and **fisheries**.

In December 2020, the UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) Caribbean completed a review of the Gender Inequality and Differential Impact of Climate Change and Disaster Risk and Cost of Inaction for Saint Lucia. The study focused on the gender-responsiveness of climate change policies and strategies and incorporated a mapping of the coping adaptive capacities for key vulnerable groups through stakeholder consultation.

The MCO, in collaboration with the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) also completed a gender-responsive, resilience-building Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Behaviours (KAPB) Study in July 2021. This study provided a better understanding of any institutional gender biases that are not captured in policy documents, which can influence the ways in which gender is mainstreamed in their work.

Results from both studies confirm that natural hazards and climate change impact men and women differently for a host of factors, which include their different roles and individual and family responsibilities, and policy development and service delivery by mandating bodies.

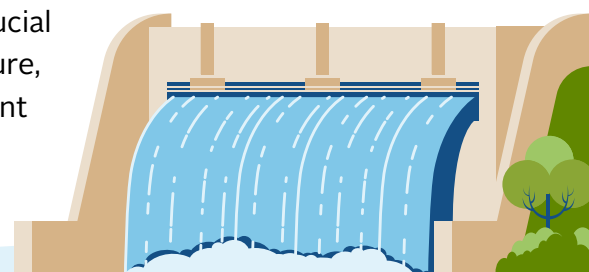
VULNERABILITY: A GENDER LENS

Despite being mostly small-scale, Saint Lucia's **agriculture sector** provides **21%** of total employment and is the second highest contributor to the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Agriculture has been severely affected by extreme climate events in recent years, including:

- Loss of livestock due to hurricanes, flooding and major landslides;
- Damage and loss of crops and land due to droughts and hurricanes: Hurricane Tomas (2010) was one of the most severe, particularly in terms of economic recovery;
- A decline in the number of active farmers as a result of their inability to recover from financial loss;
- Increased disease and pest infestations due to rising temperatures and unfavourable conditions.

Women have always played an integral role in agriculture throughout Saint Lucia. However, they have traditionally worked alongside their husbands and hence, outside of commercial financial markets. Historically, men were given titles and ownership over agricultural lands and resources (e.g. tools, licences) and also access to financial markets through loans and grants. Due to the systemic isolation preventing women from playing a greater role in the ownership of agricultural land, they have been included in other aspects of the industry, such as in market activity and as micro and small-scale business owners, with two-thirds of women owning their own business. Additionally, youth participate in the agriculture sector, where some women occupy leadership positions. Nevertheless, in 2015, more men were employed in agriculture than women.

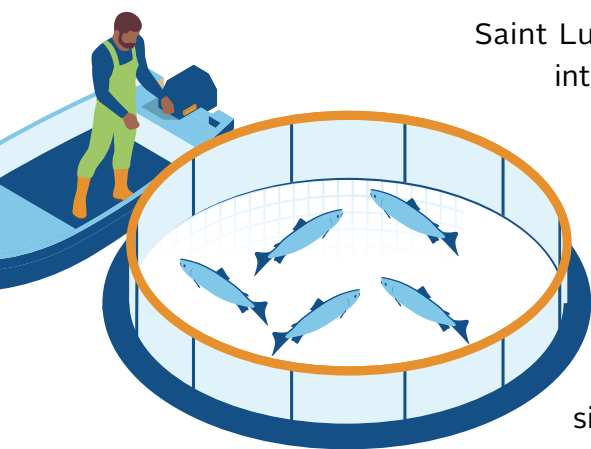
The **water sector** is the sector most exposed to the adverse effects of climate change since it is cross-cutting with other critical sectors in Saint Lucia. Not only is it integral to domestic consumption, but it supports the agriculture, tourism, health, and financial services sectors. Its availability is also crucial for safeguarding food security. Given this cross-cutting nature, impacts caused by climate and disaster risks pose significant threats to Saint Lucia's population and economy.





There are twice as many men than women working at water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation jobs, and men earn higher wages than women in the sector – XCD2797.00 (US\$1,035.92) for men and XCD2,008.30 (US\$743.81) for women (ILO, 2018). A Study of Impacts on Climate Change on Women and Men in the Caribbean, which examined the employment of managers in the water sector in 2015, revealed that women's participation was negligible, whereas men's participation was just over **10%** of the sector's workforce. Women are under-represented within water resources

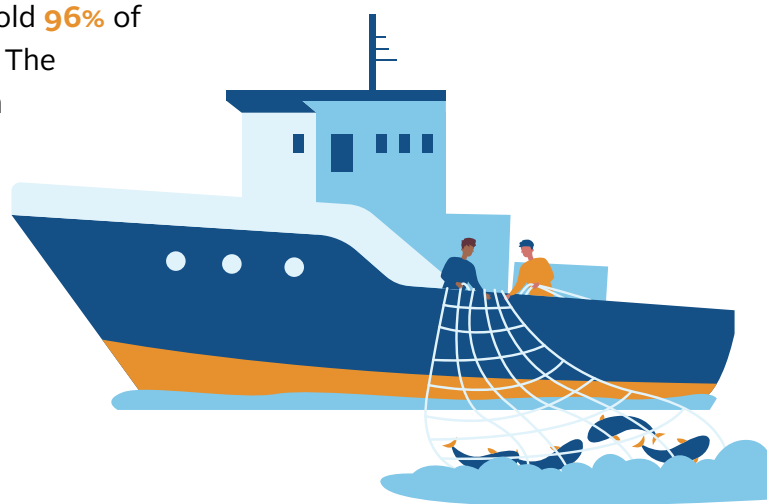
management. They are often left out of decision-making on the use, allocation and governance of water, despite being the main collectors and users. Women are also under-represented in leadership positions within the water services and utilities sub-sector. Men dominate technical roles, such as production quality, transmission and distribution, while women dominate the administrative functions. Women are also not major local decision-makers in the sector, and hence cannot contribute to areas such as resource allocation.



Saint Lucia's **fisheries sector** can be divided

into two subsectors: marine fisheries and aquaculture. Small-scale, artisanal traditional fishing is a significant part of the economic development of many coastal communities, despite only contributing to **0.8%** of national GDP, and is regarded as part of the social fabric of the island. Given the importance to the social and cultural fabric of rural communities and the role that fisheries play in local food security stabilization, climate change implications are of significant risk to the fisheries sector.

There are eight main occupations in the fisheries sector: fishing vessel owners, fishing boat captains, sport fishers, fishing boat crew, fish market vendors, builders and repairers of boats and fishing equipment, outboard engine mechanics, and fishing equipment suppliers. Men hold most of these jobs; they hold **96%** of marine fishing jobs compared to **4%** for women. The fisheries sector directly employs 114 people in aquaculture, of whom **20%** are women. The median age of fishers is 42 in households, comprising one to three people. Most people in fishing households are young (0–24 age group), and most of their dwellings are not on individually owned land



(Government of Saint Lucia, 2013). Since there is no registration of fish processors and vendors, women, who predominantly occupy these roles, become excluded from being captured in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives' database. Fish markets also do not fall under the Department of Fisheries and are therefore not fully used. It should be highlighted that women's roles are not always visible in the fisheries value chain because data collection in the sector fails to capture their contributions. Women are also not major local decision-makers in the sector, and hence cannot contribute to areas such as resource allocation.



GENDER INEQUALITY ISSUES – CLIMATE AND DISASTER RISK

Table 1 breaks down the gender and age-differentiated impacts even further by hazard and climate impacts and risks. It also highlights some of the key associated costs aligned with climate risks.



Representative of the Ministry of Tourism accepts cheque from Mr. Emran Matthew of the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development for craft vendors who were impacted by COVID-19 through a partnership with UN Women under the EnGenD Project.

Source: Department of the Public Service, Labour and Gender Affairs, 2021

Table 1: Gender and age-differentiated impacts of climate and disaster risks

GENDER AND AGE IMPACTS BY HAZARD										
Hazard	Climate Impacts and Risks	Sector	Gender and Age Inequalities Impacts						Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/Potential Impacts
			Women (15-64)	Men (15-64)	Girls (0-14)	Boys (0-14)	Women +65	Men +65		
Inland Flooding	Prolonged rainfall events lead to flash floods.	Agriculture Water	Single female-headed households suffer the most due to poor housing and insufficient resources to build back better.	Damage and loss to fishing gear.	Health risks.	Health risks.	Losses in kitchen garden. Health risks.	Health risks.	Health risks.	Vulnerable communities driven further into poverty.
	Increased water-borne diseases	Agriculture Water Fisheries	Women and girls—given their roles within the household.	Since the majority of people within the fisheries sector are men, they have increased cases of health risks.	For boys and girls, there is risk of increased incidents of malaria and water-borne diseases.	Risk exposure to diseases.	Risk exposure to diseases.	PWDs experience an increased risk of infectious diseases.		
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Increased frequency and intensity of tropical storms leading to greater storm surges, wind damages and coastal zone flooding.	Agriculture Fisheries Water	Women, particularly those from female-headed households, are noted as impacted the most due to their limited access to resources for insurance for hazard-proofing their properties.	Instability in hazard-proofing fishing equipment for unregistered male fishers. Young men are particularly vulnerable due to lack of financial resources for hazard-proofing windows that would assist them in recovery. Men are most at risk of death, with a higher death rate during hurricane and tropical storms.	Lack of potable water increases health risks and can disrupt education.	Lack of potable water increases health risks and can disrupt education.	Health risks due to lack of potable water.	Older fishers risk not being able to respond due to lack of resources and hazard-proof equipment. Health risks.	Lack of potable water increases health risks and lack of access to health care.	Hurricane Tomas in 2010 caused damages and losses of approximately ECD151.8 million (USD56.9 million).


GENDER AND AGE IMPACTS BY HAZARD										
Hazard	Climate Impacts and Risks	Sector	Gender and Age Inequalities Impacts							Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts
			Women (15-64)	Men (15-64)	Girls (0-14)	Boys (0-14)	Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Loss of market access due to damages to infrastructure (e.g. access roads).	Agriculture Fisheries Water	Women, who make up the majority of market vendors, are unable to generate income.	Men are unable to bring yields to market. Loss in income.	-	-	Elderly market vendors not able to supplement income. Greater food insecurity.	Unable to bring yields to market. Loss in income.	-	-
			Women have limited access to finance, with the exception of microfinance opportunities. There is poor recovery and asset safeguarding due to lack of insurance for women's businesses. This problem is worse for women's than men's businesses.	Inability to pay back loans used to offset damages mostly held by men. There is poor recovery and asset safeguarding due to the lack of insurance for young men's businesses, which leads to a loss or reduction of their livelihoods.	-	-	Lack of resources for pensioners. Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to the younger labour force.	Lack of resources for pensioners. Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to the younger labour force.	Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to PWDs.	Primary economic infrastructures, such as seaports, roadways and domestic infrastructure (e.g. housing and storage facilities) may expose communities to significant financial downturn.
			Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts				
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Increase in storm-related damage and recovery costs.	Agriculture Fisheries Water	Women have limited access to finance, with the exception of microfinance opportunities. There is poor recovery and asset safeguarding due to lack of insurance for women's businesses. This problem is worse for women's than men's businesses.	Inability to pay back loans used to offset damages mostly held by men. There is poor recovery and asset safeguarding due to the lack of insurance for young men's businesses, which leads to a loss or reduction of their livelihoods.	-	-	Lack of resources for pensioners. Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to the younger labour force.	Lack of resources for pensioners. Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to the younger labour force.	Difficulty in recovery due to little to no financial safeguarding or grants given to PWDs.	Primary economic infrastructures, such as seaports, roadways and domestic infrastructure (e.g. housing and storage facilities) may expose communities to significant financial downturn.
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			Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts				
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Limited cross-ministerial coordination of adaptation efforts and understanding of how to integrate gender considerations.	Agriculture Fisheries Water	Inefficient spending. Projects and actions may be duplicated due to lack of coordination, with the same groups of people engaged, and others are left out.	Inefficient spending. Projects and actions may be duplicated due to lack of coordination, with the same groups of people engaged, and others are left out.	-	-	Inefficient spending. Projects and actions may be duplicated due to lack of coordination, with the same groups of people engaged, and others are left out.	Inefficient spending. Projects and actions may be duplicated due to lack of coordination, with the same groups of people engaged, and others are left out.	There is inefficient appropriation of funds and limited reach due to repetition of projects. Stakeholder fatigue.	There is inefficient appropriation of funds and limited reach due to repetition of projects. Stakeholder fatigue.
			Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts				
			Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts				
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Under-utilized gender data.	Agriculture Fisheries Water	Policies and strategies for integrating gender considerations within each sector has shown limited acknowledgement of gendered impacts and mitigation and adaptation strategies to circumnavigate them.	Policies and strategies for integrating gender considerations within each sector has shown limited acknowledgement of gendered impacts and mitigation and adaptation strategies to circumnavigate them.	-	-	Policies and strategies for integrating gender considerations within each sector has shown limited acknowledgement of gendered impacts and mitigation and adaptation strategies to circumnavigate them.	Policies and strategies for integrating gender considerations within each sector has shown limited acknowledgement of gendered impacts and mitigation and adaptation strategies to circumnavigate them.	There is a lack of understanding of who is affected and to what extent the gendered impacts of climate and disaster risks will be exacerbated.	There is a lack of understanding of who is affected and to what extent the gendered impacts of climate and disaster risks will be exacerbated.
			Women +65	Men +65	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Cost of Inaction/ Potential Impacts				
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ADAPTIVE COPING MECHANISMS

Table 2 outlines responses from interviews and focus groups as it pertains to how stakeholders access certain coping mechanisms. What is captured are some of the coping mechanisms, stakeholders from the agriculture and fisheries sectors have identified. Items in bold highlight stakeholders who utilize these coping mechanisms the most.

Table 2:
Stakeholder Coping Mechanisms

Coping Mechanisms	GENERATED USE OF COPING MECHANISMS BY SECTOR						HAZARDS	FREQUENCY OF USE
	Male farmer (MF) Fisherman (FM)	Female farmer (FF) Female fisher (FW)	Youth (male, female, or combined)	Elderly (male, female or combined)	PWD (male, female or combined)			
Insurance schemes (e.g. COAST)	FM	FW					H, S, T	S
Diversification – same industry	FM	FF, FW	B				H, D, S, T, C	O
Diversification – other industry		FW					H, D, S, T, C	S
Change in techniques	MF, FM	FF, FW					D, F	O
Loans	MF, FM						H, S, C, F	R
Government grants	MF, FM		B					S
Relief/distress funds	MF, FM	FF, FW	B	B	B		H, D, S, C, F	A
Selling off physical asset/sy						M		R
Membership in a cooperative/social organization	MF, FM	FF, FW		B	B		H, D, S, T, C, F	O, A

Coping Mechanisms	GENDERED USE OF COPING MECHANISMS BY SECTOR						HAZARDS	FREQUENCY OF USE
	Male farmer (MF) Fisherman (FM)	Female farmer (FF) Female fisher (FW)	Youth (male, female, or combined)	Elderly (male, female or combined)	PWD (male, female or combined)			
Climate-resilient technology	FM	FF					Hurricane (H), Drought (D), Storms (S), Temperatures (T), COVID-19 (C), Floods (F)	 Always (A), Often (O), Sometimes (S), Rarely (R)
Raising livestock pens	MF	FF	B				F	S
Greenhouses	MF	FF						S
Rainwater harvesting/ barrels	MF	FF		B			D	A
Savings	MF, FM	FF					H, D, F	S
Temporary/ part-time jobs		FF, FW					H, D, F	O
Leave the sector				M			D	R
Move towards processing		FF, FW	B				S, D, F, C	O
Training/ learning	MF, FM	FF, FW	B				H, D, S, T, F	O
Becoming owners of assets	MF, FM	FW						S
Microfinancing schemes	MF, FM	FW						S
Migrant worker schemes	MF						C	

THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, PRACTICES AND BEHAVIOUR STUDY

There is an assumption that individual knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours can influence institutional practices (and vice versa) and policies create the environment in which individual and institutions operate.

In addition to a policy institutional mapping, which identified the priority sectors' key policies and institutions that incorporate gender, climate change and disaster risk reduction principles, a survey including stakeholder consultation was carried out for Saint Lucia. Findings revealed that, while women and men have equal rights in the workplace, there were a few areas for strengthening gender resilience.



Respondents to the survey indicated that:

At the individual level



Although persons perceive themselves as “gender champions,” there are knowledge gaps with respect to understanding gender and its concepts. For example, there seems to be a poor understanding of equality vs. equity.



Women are more vulnerable than men to climate change and disasters, therefore opportunities for strengthening resilience must take the varying risks into consideration.



There are aspects of bias in gender attitudes. For example, some respondents believe that women should prioritize their family, regardless of the impact on their career. Responders also believed that women are better at planning and multi-tasking than men. Survey results also revealed that there was a general consensus that it is more important for a man than a woman to obtain a university degree and work outside the home.

At the institutional level



Hiring practices do not discriminate by sex. Results revealed that women and men are in similar senior positions at the institutional level.











The biggest barriers to integrating gender in the work highlighted were related to the lack of expertise, data, information, analysis and a mandate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 3: Specific recommendations for vulnerable groups with respect to the various barriers on gender equality that may arise

Barriers	Women	Men	Girls	Boys	The Elderly	PWD	Recommendation
The elderly, children and adolescents are not very agile in adapting to the shocks posed by climate and disaster risks. With increasing vulnerability from floods, major cycles and rising sea levels and limited access to freshwater resources, these groups are at risk of serious health and mortality implications.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Early warning systems (EWSs) and women's roles within them are integral to informing a holistic model for community-based EWSs that reach all people. This is also the case for adolescents, the elderly, and vulnerable groups with different risk levels and needs in terms of EWSs. Due to these differing roles that men, women, girls and boys play in communities, women are more vulnerable during and after climate and disaster risks than men. Since they tend to hold roles related to caregiving and household chores, EWSs that do not consider women's daily activities often prevent them from getting messages around incoming hazards early enough to respond.
The limited access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) poses significant impacts on communities.	X		X		X	X	The State should roll out water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) relief kits for vulnerable groups during times of inaccessibility.
Since water management tends to be performed by men, they are often responsible for decision-making on hazard-proofing water resources.	X					X	Women and people with disabilities should be mainstreamed, particularly within leadership positions where systemic change can occur.
There is a lack of knowledge of adaptive technologies to respond to climate risks.	X	X				X	Gender quotas/targets can be used, but it is necessary that criteria be met for participants selected. A Knowledge, Attitudes Practices and Behaviours study would highlight awareness and practices stakeholders share and utilise. Gender, sector and location are all key areas of focus.
There is a lack of sectoral approach to gender and age inclusive policies to guide national actors.	X	X	X	X	X	X	A sectoral adaptation strategy and action plans must embed gender and age considerations.

 Barriers	 Women	 Men	 Girls	 Boys	 The Elderly	 PWD	 Recommendation
There are deaths due to hazards.	X	X					Men are most at risk. Awareness should be raised among men as it relates to safety considerations during this period.
There is a lack of insurance for fishers and farmers due to distrust and overall unawareness of schemes.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Insurance schemes should be supported and marketed through sectoral cooperatives and networks. The trust of stakeholders in these networks can be leveraged towards stakeholder buy-in. However, initiatives must be flexible—i.e. adopting flexible rates according to seasonal peaks and troughs in activity, and hence revenue. There should be greater buy-in through full coverage from climate risks.
There is trepidation among women and PWDs in accessing microfinance schemes due to concerns over interest, and distrust in financial services.	X	X	X	X		X	Efforts should be strengthened in communications and marketing strategies around microfinance schemes and grants. Gender-responsive microfinance schemes should be devised, such as women's or PWD microfinance opportunities. Cooperatives should be engaged in communicating microfinance schemes.
Since women in Saint Lucia's rural communities are the main collectors of water for the household, they will have to travel further to collect clean water.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Structural interventions should be carried out in order to connect vulnerable households to safe potable water.
Increased risk of drought is leading to a reduction in crop yields and agricultural productivity.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Plant climate-resilient crops. Diversify crops and farming businesses. Adopt climate-smart technologies.
Increased temperatures have been a major threat to Saint Lucia's agricultural sector, impacting crops and livestock.	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Note: PWD=persons with disabilities

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