Case Study

Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Natural Disaster Risk Reduction, Prevention and Preparedness Initiatives

In the context of the State of Saint Lucia


Presented by THE ALDET CENTRE-SAINT LUCIA
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1. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

1. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is the conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.1

2. The key elements of DRR are:
- Risk awareness and assessment including hazard analysis and vulnerability/capacity analysis;
- Knowledge development including education, training, research and information;
- Public commitment and institutional frameworks, including organizational, policy, legislation and community action;
- Application of measures including environmental management, land-use and urban planning, protection of critical facilities, application of science and technology, partnership and networking, and financial instruments;
- Early warning systems including forecasting, dissemination of warnings, preparedness measures and reaction capacities

1. United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)
2. The Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia

3. The Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia constitute approximately one-third (55,000) of the population of the State of Saint Lucia. The Island is located in the Caribbean. They reside in all seventeen constituencies, but are predominant in the six constituencies of (Anse La Raye and Canaries, Soufriere, Choiseul, Laborie, Vieux Fort and Micoud)\(^1\), located in the West, South and East costal zones of the Island.\(^2\)

2.1 Preliminary Census 2010 Results

Enumerated Household Population and Estimated Household Population by District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Enumerated Household</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries City</td>
<td>65,656</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>32,475</td>
<td>33,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castries Suburban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse La Raye</td>
<td>6,247</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3,190</td>
<td>3,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canaries</td>
<td>2,044</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1,049</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>8,474</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>4,280</td>
<td>4,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>6,098</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>3,042</td>
<td>3,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>6,701</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>3,346</td>
<td>3,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux Fort</td>
<td>16,284</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>8,166</td>
<td>8,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>16,284</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>8,123</td>
<td>8,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>12,599</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>6,310</td>
<td>6,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros Islet</td>
<td>25,210</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>12,213</td>
<td>12,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>165,595</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population Density By District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Land Area Sq. Miles</th>
<th>Estimated Household Population</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castries</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>65,656</td>
<td>2,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anse La Raye</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>8,291</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soufriere</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>8,472</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choiseul</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>6,098</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborie</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>6,701</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieux Fort</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>16,284</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micoud</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>16,284</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennery</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>12,599</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gros Islet</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>25,210</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Saint Lucia Population & Housing Census 2010  
www.stats.gov.lk
2.2 Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia and disaster risks

Dealing with existing risk factors

4. Conditions of risk in the areas where the Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia are predominant have been identified in several documents emanating from reviews and assessments.3

5. The Saint Lucia Disaster Catalogue which was first produced in 19994 and periodically reviewed provides a formal historical compilation on disasters, categorizing the history making events based on time period, and by type of disaster event.

Environmental and geographical factors

6. By virtue of the geographical location, physical formation and fragile ecosystem, the Island of Saint Lucia is exposed to a number of natural disasters, which have the potential to cause loss of lives and personal property and adverse effects on livelihoods and severe damage to infrastructure and other economic assets.

7. The types of natural disasters that occur in areas predominantly occupied by the Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia are geological, hydrometeorological and emergencies affecting public health and safety.6

8. Geological hazards, such as earthquakes, volcanic activity and emissions and seismic related geophysical processes, such as mass movements, landslides, rockslides and surface collapses, debris or mud slides, and tsunamis.7

9. Hydrometeorological hazards include tropical cyclones/hurricanes, thunderstorms, costal storm surges, and floods including flash floods, drought, heat waves and cold spells.8

Vulnerable livelihoods

10. The Indigenous People (Betechilokono) of Saint Lucia dominate the fisheries and agricultural sectors, and are usually adversely affected when a disaster strikes.

Health risks

11. Emergencies affecting public health and safety include illnesses and epidemics of major occurrence (avian flu, traditional and haemorrhagic, malaria, dengue, cholera, among others; vector borne diseases and other illnesses as a result of climate change.

Avoiding accumulation of future risk

Climate change

12. The main impacts of climate change identified for Saint Lucia include changes in precipitation patterns manifested in longer dry spells, resulting in droughts; excessive rainfall, resulting in flooding and landslides; more intense storms; increased hurricane intensity; excessive heat and storm surge, due to hurricane activity, with storm surge expected to exacerbate with sea level rise. Climate change projections for the State of Saint Lucia which have been prepared by the Climate Studies Group of the University of the West Indies are based on regional climate change models.9

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6. 2010 National Population Census of Saint Lucia
7. Disaster Risk Reduction – Country Profile for Saint Lucia, November 2012
8. Disaster Risk Reduction – Country Profile for Saint Lucia, November 2012
9. Climate change projections for the State of Saint Lucia which have been prepared by the Climate Studies Group of the University of the West Indies are based on regional climate change models.
13. The State of Saint Lucia, and in particular the coastal zones where the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia are predominant, are prone to a large range of potential impacts of climate change. This is a major concern for food security, water resources, natural resources productivity and biodiversity, human health, desertification and costal zones.

Environmental degradation
14. The present state of the environment is a direct result of destructive practices of deforestation, in particular where the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) are predominant for mono cropping by successive colonial occupying countries from the early 1700s. The present state of affairs of inadequate forest cover has resulted in un-repairable damage to the coastal zones. Frequent heavy rainfall trigger landslides into the rivers causing siltation of the coasts and reefs.10

Land tenure and access
15. The Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) hold personal and family land titles. They do not own properties in community.

Resource extraction
16. While national law prohibits sea sand mining where the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia are predominant, land mining is executed on private properties.

Migration
17. The majority of the population of the State of Saint Lucia, and by extension, the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia reside in seven constituencies and in the North of the Island.11

How can consultation and participation of Indigenous Peoples in natural disaster risk reduction, prevention and preparedness initiatives are improved?
18. Current state of affairs of Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia participation in disaster risk reduction at the local, national, regional and global levels, is limited to the use of the application of their local knowledge for advance warning, precautionary and mitigation.

Local and national levels
19. The Constitution of Saint Lucia (Order 1978)12 and the Emergency Powers (Disaster Act of 1995)13 stipulates that the Governor General is authorized to formulate orders under the provisions of the Ordinance to secure essentials of life in the State of Saint Lucia for the preservation of health, welfare and safety of the population.

20. As of late, the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia, which maintains contact with the National Emergency Organization, have been invited to provide input into the technical review of the Disaster Management Act of Saint Lucia, No. 30 of 2006.14

9. Disaster Risk Reduction – Country Profile for Saint Lucia, November 2012
10. GosL. 2009. Saint Lucia: Current Climate, Future Projections; University of the West Indies (UWI)
11. 2010 National Population Census of Saint Lucia
13. www.preventionweb.net/files/8454_5of95.pdf
21. A commitment has been given by the Office of The National Emergency Organization that recommendations and amendments by the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia to the Disaster Management Act of Saint Lucia will be included in the Revised National Emergency Act of Saint Lucia to reflect the State of Saint Lucia obligations to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Thereafter, an assessment will be made by the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia with regards to the extent and nature of their participation in Disaster Risk Reduction in the State of Saint Lucia.

22. The Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia contributes to fora of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and other United Nations Agencies and Programmes on Disaster Risk Reduction. With the advent of this study, the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia will participate at regional and international platforms on disaster risk reduction.

3. **The State of Saint Lucia, national, regional and international obligation on Disaster Risk Reduction**

23. The national, regional and international context for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is enshrined and anchored in the DRR global strategies and platforms such as the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World, The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters; global agreements such as the Johannesburg Declaration, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. Saint Lucia is signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC).

24. The State of Saint Lucia is also committed to the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA)15 The St George’s Declaration of Principles of Environmental Sustainability (SGD) in the OECS, 1979, which incorporates Eastern Caribbean states commitments to “environmentally sustainable development as essential for the creation of jobs, a stable society, and a healthy economy”.

25. Saint Lucia is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). In 2001, CARICOM adopted a Strategy and Results Framework for Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM), which is being led by Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). A revised Framework (2007-2012)16 places stronger emphasis on disaster loss reduction through risk management. The Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change (2009-2014) provides direction for the continued building of resilience to the impacts on CARICOM states.

26. The National Environmental Policy (NEP) is the key mechanism for implementation of the SGD at the national level. The National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS) focuses on hazard risk management, policies, plans, programmes and strategies, including those developed under international and regional agreements.

27. Saint Lucia is a volcanic Small Island Developing State (SIDS) located at latitude 13°59’ N, and 61° within the Caribbean Archipelago. The island covers a land area of 616 km sq., with steep, rugged landscapes with deep valleys and fast flowing rivers.

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15. The BPoA sets forth specific actions and measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels to support the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
3.1 Types of disasters that impact on the State of Saint Lucia

28. Saint Lucia is impacted upon by a tropical maritime climate with two climatic seasons, a wet season (June to November) and dry season (December to May). Tropical disturbances (waves, depressions, storms, and hurricanes) account for the greater amount of the recorded rainfall during the rainy season; and Global Climate Change (GCC) is considered one of the most serious threats to the sustainable development; thus imposes new hazards on the Island and exacerbates existing ones. The steep topography and volcanic soils, subjected to seasonal high rainfall, exposes the island to soil erosion and landslides, exacerbated by inherited colonial occupying powers undesirable land management practices.

29. The estimated population for Saint Lucia as at the 2010 Census stood at 166,526, with 24.1 percent of the population under 14 years and 33.3 percent between 14 and 34 years. Large segments of the island’s population are located along the coastal belt, where low land agriculture, coastal resources, reefs, fisheries and tourism are the main sources of livelihood. Historically, the narrow coastal strip which circumscribes the island is characterized by concentrations of haphazard and unplanned human settlement and other development, posing a growing threat to the sustainability of the fragile terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems. Urbanization of the former rural areas of the island, as manifested by approximately 60 percent of the population residing along the northwest corridor, has resulted in denser populations living in unplanned or informal settlements; and lead to increased risks with regard to natural and human induced disasters.

30. Saint Lucia’s development agenda is guided by national policies and instruments; such as the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS). The international and regional agreements and DRR strategies and platforms on the DRR Context, also drive the development agenda. The development priorities described in the MTDS for the period 2006-2011 were aimed at arresting the decline in the agricultural sector, through agriculture and other economic diversification; encouraging an enabling environment boosting the local economy through effective linkages; encouraging education and human resource development; support for the emerging informatics industry and financial services sector; and the adoption of appropriate technology as a means of achieving greater efficiency.17

3.2 Disaster Risk Reduction Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Framework

31. Saint Lucia's legal and regulatory framework for DRR is enshrined in the Saint Lucia Constitution (Order 1978)18 and the Emergency Powers (Disaster) Act of 1995.19 The CDERA model legislation, assented to by the State of Saint Lucia on August 7, 2000, provided the guide for the development of the Disaster Management Act18 (DMA) enacted in 2006; the foundation of the legislative framework for disaster management in the Island. The Disaster Management Act,20 includes provisions for the application of treaties and multi-lateral and international agreements. Disaster management has been included in health and education, and cross cutting sectors such as water, national security legislative instruments.

17. GOSL Socio-Economic Review, 2011
32. With the exception of the Hazard Mitigation Policy, all DRR related national policies have a strong focus on disaster preparedness and response, with limited reference to the planning, mitigation and prevention components of DRR. Emphasis is placed on developing communities, building institutions and capabilities to reduce vulnerability. The National Environmental Policy and Strategy (NEP/NEMs), National Water Policy, National Land Policy, and the Climate Change Policy and Adaptation Plan, address the concepts of DRM/DRR.

33. The regulatory framework for DRM is effected through the NEMP, which finds authority in the DMA and national CDM Strategy. The draft Physical Planning Regulations under the Physical Planning and Development Act; national building codes/standards, and draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations have significant implications for DRR within the context of development planning. Emerging trends in international and regional standards and regulations for operations within agriculture, tourism, education and health, which have stipulated requirements for disaster risk management also impacts on the State of Saint Lucia.

34. The institutional framework for national disaster management in Saint Lucia comprises the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), supported by a network of volunteers comprising ten (10) National Disaster Committees and eighteen (18) District Disaster Management Committees, operating under the jurisdiction of the NEMO, and involved in the planning and response against disasters. The NEMO organizational structure also allows for the involvement of the national Community Development Officers to act as Ex-Officio members of the District Disaster Management Committees. The Local Government Councils are also integral to the functioning of the District Committees.

35. For effective governance, accountability and the delivery of disaster risk reduction services, the State of Saint Lucia needs a legal, regulatory, and institutional framework that is inclusive of all sectors of the population. It is incumbent upon the state to make accessible information on disaster risks, so as to generate social demand for disaster risk management.

4. **State of Disaster Risk in Saint Lucia - Summary of Economic Loss in Saint Lucia as a result of recent disasters**

4.1 **Hurricane Tomas, 2010**

36. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) reported that the total cost of damage and losses to the different sectors in Saint Lucia, as a result of Hurricane Thomas in 2010, amounted to US$336.2 million. This represents 43.4% of GDP; with the scale of impact nine times agricultural GDP, three times tourism GDP, 62% of exports of goods and services, 19% of gross domestic investment and 47% of public external debt.

37. Historically, hurricanes, storms and flooding have been the most likely hazards to affect Saint Lucia. Flooding has been of major concern particularly in the City, low-lying areas and coastal villages, which has resulted in the displacement of people and the destruction of private and public properties in the said communities.

38. Droughts have also affected the quantity and quality of available water supplies, and also productive sectors of the economy. Since 1938, there have been about eight (8) major land slippages, which have resulted in significant loss of lives, destruction of homes, dislocation of families and biodiversity loss.

39. Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Policy (2007) and the UN-ECLAC Damage and Loss Assessments (DaLA) methodologies, have pointed to the increasing cost of disasters, related to loss of lives and property, human injury, infrastructure, crops, livestock, household, commercial and industrial assets. For example, Tropical Storm Debbie in 1994, resulted in losses over US$90 million. The Tropical Wave of October 1996 also incurred an estimated US$4.8 million in damages to property and infrastructure particularly in Soufriere, Anse la Raye, Vieux Fort and Castries, Tropical Storm Lilli-damage in 2002 was estimated at US$8 million and colossal losses of over US$336.2 million were reported for Hurricane Tomas in October 2010.

4.2 National Damage Assessment Report No. 3 (Saint Lucia) - Trough of December 24, 2013

40. Saint Lucia had been severely impacted by a Trough System on the 24th December, 2013. The Saint Lucia Met Services reported 406 mm of rain in the 24 hours period. Due to the previous impact of Hurricane Tomas in 2010, including damaged forests, silted river beds, weakened slopes, temporary and incomplete infrastructural rehabilitation and repairs, among other factors, the island was highly vulnerable to impact from such an intense rain event. Several communities were flooded, the water infrastructure and supply was widely impacted and interrupted, and primary access between the north and south was severed due to damaged bridges and culverts along the main East Coast and West Coast Roads. The Ministry of health has confirmed six (6) deaths. The combined population the worst impacted areas is 55,431, (with an estimated Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia population of approximately 15,100). An estimated 1,050 persons were severely affected.

Concept of Operations
41. Reference DANA Policy Appendix: Standard Operating Procedures [SOP] For Damage Assessment And Needs Analysis [DANA], the overall responsibility of DANA is: To assess damage in Saint Lucia after the impact of a hazard in terms of elements damaged and cost estimate to determine type and amount of assistance needed for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

42. In keeping with DANA Policy Appendix: Types of Assessment Reports for Emergency Relief and Short-term Restoration, the purpose of this report and the anticipated next steps are as follows:
Updated assessments with Preliminary and detailed costs estimates have been received from WASCO, and the Ministries responsible for Agriculture, Education and Infrastructure. These have been supplemented by input from the APESL and SLASPA, and analysis by the DANA chair. The DANA Chair has continued to solicit outstanding updated assessments from relevant sectors agencies. Submissions are anticipated in the short term from Ministries responsible for Health and Housing.

24. UNECLAC, 2011. Saint Lucia, Macro socio-economic and environmental assessment of the damage and loss caused by Hurricane Tomas
43. Twenty one days after the December 24, 2013 trough, From 21 days after, a Damage Assessment And Needs Analysis [DANA] which was executed by the Government of Saint Lucia revealed that temporary and permanent interventions for key infrastructure damaged - Bridges and major culvert structures; Road carriageway; Causeways and culvert crossings; Slope stabilization; Flood protection and river desilting was about US$40M; infrastructure, Operations and humanitarian interventions for main Schools impacted – Canaries Infant & Primary; Anse la Raye Primary, Vieux Fort Primary; Dame Pearlette Louisy Primary; Bexon Primary was about US$600,000; interventions resulting from damage to crops, aquaculture and livestock in all 8 regions was about US$3M; key outstanding needs for reinstatement of services - Pipe and Fittings, Pumps and Appurtenances, Heavy Equipment Rental – including Roseau Damn, Beausejour, Anse la Raye, Vieux Fort, Marquis locations was about US$300,000, and within the Health and Housing and other sectors, an approximately US$40M.

Regional Action
44. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CEDEMA) maintained contact with the State of Saint Lucia and coordinated the response and recovery support.

4:3 Vulnerability
45. 'Documentation on disaster management points to Saint Lucia’s vulnerability to devastating natural and anthropogenic/human-induced disasters, that can be attributed to a dynamic set of risks that emerge from antecedent conditions determined by physical, social, economic, environmental and political factors 32.'

46. Factors and processes that increase the susceptibility and exposure of a community, structure, service or geographic area to hazards; including (a) its small geographical area, which accounts for the fact that disasters take country-wide proportions; and (b) its location in some of the highest risk areas of the planet, such as mid-ocean ridges with strong volcanic and seismic activity, tropical cyclone belts, and direct exposure to the forces of the oceans.

47. Some limited national and local assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available, and include risk assessments for key sectors.33 It is noteworthy to mention that there are still no systems in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities and the absence of a comprehensive national multi hazard database / archive with protocols for information sharing impede the use of mechanisms to inform the local and regional DRR effort. Mechanisms for the systemic research, recording and analysis of the hazards, which have impacted Saint Lucia, and the impacts of these hazards also need to be established.

Reference Documents on National Damage Assessment Report No. 3 (Saint Lucia) - Trough of December 24, 2013
25. Initial Situation Overview Reports (NEMO)
26. Initial District Disaster Reports (NEMO)
27. Initial Assessments by Association of Professional Engineers of Saint Lucia (APESL)
28. Updated assessment by Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport (MIPST)
30. Updated assessment by Ministry for Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries and Rural Development
31. Updated assessment by Assessment by Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO)
33. The V&A assessments conducted for the SNC highlighted the vulnerabilities of several critical sectors including: water resources; land resources; agriculture; coastal sector; marine resources; forest terrestrial resources; health; financial services; and critical infrastructure.
48. There is also need to generate ethnic and gender disaggregated disaster impact data at the local and national levels, so that special care is taken to meet the needs of those so affected. Risk mapping of vulnerable groups (including the Indigenous Peoples (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia) will also help to profile each of these groups within the context of the vulnerable situations in which they live and to identify their coping and adaptive capacities. The mapping will also help to identify hotspots of high vulnerability in Saint Lucia.

49. The state of Saint Lucia has through the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act No. 13 of 2000 developed A National Risk Register. There is also a Saint Lucia National Climate Change Risk Register, dated October 28, 2008. Hazard/risk mapping is available for some of the phenomena including landslide, drought, and floods. Hydro-meteorological hazards and health emergencies were given high-risk ratings. Geodynamic/Geological and socio-natural hazards were rated between medium to low risk, with the exception of deforestation, which was rated a high-risk hazard. Technological hazards were deemed to be medium risks.

50. The state of Saint Lucia has limited experience in the area of disaster risk analysis, which has been limited to the sphere of climate change. Saint Lucia faces high exposure and susceptibility, social fragility and lack of resilience that favour risk accumulation and incapacity to respond to disasters, and does not have the resources to face catastrophic events. Priorities for addressing risk have been presented in the Disaster Management Policy Framework approved by Cabinet in 2009, and are consistent with those emanating from the B-Tool Assessments, SNC and HFA monitoring reports. These include:

- Timely, coordinated and focused direction of resources towards the disaster management system’s effective operation.
- Maintaining institutions that are technically capable of efficiently executing the comprehensive disaster management programme.
- Developing local expertise capable of operating and maintaining the disaster management system.
- Ensuring that the public is well informed and educated about disasters, their consequences and preventive and mitigation measures.
- Creating an environment in which the private and non-government sectors contribute meaningfully to the comprehensive disaster management effort.

5. **Recommendations**

51. Disaster and climate change impacts are cross-sectoral in nature in Saint Lucia and usually manifested in effects on the state’s natural resources, national infrastructure and assets and the population. ‘These impacts may be further exacerbated by the local risk realities emanating from physical, social, economic, environmental and political factors.’ Considerations for disaster prevention, mitigation or preparedness are not integrated into the appraisal of projects or programmes, especially those financed by public investments; resulting in recurring costs for post disaster rehabilitation, in particular in areas inhabited by the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia.

52. According to The Global Assessment Report (GAR) of 2011, while great strides have been made in reducing loss of life, for weather related disasters, disaster-related socio-

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34. Information provided in the document is deemed valid only at the date of publication as risks are intended to be monitored on an ongoing basis.
35. **Objective of the Policy** is to advance an approach to disaster management that focuses on reducing risks - the risk of loss of life, economic disruption and damage to the environment and property, especially to those sections of the population who are most vulnerable due to poverty and a general lack of resources.

Economic losses continue to rise; particularly so in the state of Saint Lucia where damage to housing (personal properties) and critical local infrastructure and public assets such as bridges, schools and health facilities has risen sharply. The risk of losing wealth to natural disasters is beginning to outpace wealth creation, and disaster risk reduction (DRR) must of need be incorporated in all sustainable development strategies.

36. Over the past three decades, the risk of economic loss as a result of floods rose by over 160 per cent, while economic loss incurred as a result of cyclones surged by 265 per cent in member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). UN, 2011. 2011 Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Disaster risk reduction (DRR) – Revealing Risks, Redefining Development.

37. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly for RIO +20 Conference in thematic debate on disaster risk reduction: “addressing disaster risk reduction is therefore inseparable from the broader sustainable development agenda.”

53. The State of Saint Lucia faces key challenges in enhancing resilience to natural disaster risks in Saint Lucia, including, managing the overall disaster risks to ensure social protection (in particular in areas inhabited by the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia), that are prone to disasters.

54. In the absence of a national plan in the State of Saint Lucia for the promotion and protection of the rights of the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia in natural disaster risk reduction and prevention initiatives, the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia has taken the initiative to engaged the State of Saint Lucia in acquiring space for their full and effective participation in national activities that impact on them; given that the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia constitute approximately one-third of the national population (at 55,000), and having regard to their resilience to natural disasters, as the First People, in their use of traditional knowledge to predict, prepare and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. The State of Saint Lucia should ‘consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.’

55. The State of Saint Lucia should with the cooperation and active participation of the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia, collect disaggregated data on the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia, and include such in its Disaster Risk Reduction reports to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

56. The State of Saint Lucia, in dealing with its rehabilitation programmes to cushion the effects of natural disasters, should at all times take into consideration its international obligations to respect the rights of the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia, as contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

57. The State of Saint Lucia is urged to include competent representatives of the Indigenous People (Bethechilokono) of Saint Lucia, selected by themselves, on all local and national committees and advisory bodies, established by Law or Policy of the State of Saint Lucia for Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Emergency Management and other associated activities.
58. The Indigenous People (*Bethechilokono*) of Saint Lucia urges the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) to incorporate the notable efforts and experiences of the Indigenous People (*Bethechilokono*) of Saint Lucia in its current Ministerial and Regional Platforms and other activities leading to The 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

59. The Indigenous People (*Bethechilokono*) of Saint Lucia calls on the United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNEMRIP) to take note of its contributions to the UNEMRIP ‘Study on the protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in natural disaster risk reduction and prevention and prepared initiatives,’ and the same be included in its deliberations at the Seventh session of the UNENRIP, and in the UNEMRIP Report to the Twenty-seventh session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNCHR).

60. The Indigenous People (*Bethechilokono*) of Saint Lucia calls on the UNHRC to consider its approach on collaboration with the State of Saint Lucia on the protection of the rights of the Indigenous People (*Bethechilokono*) in Natural Disaster Risk Reduction, Prevention and Preparedness during its Half-Day Panel Discussion on ‘on the protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in natural disaster risk reduction’ at its Twenty-seventh session.

THE ALDET CENTRE-SAINT LUCIA