

# Saint Lucia

## Country report



# UNITED NATIONS JOINT PROGRAM ON ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS SUBJECT TO VIOLENCE

This document has been prepared with information from the Country Report of the Third Evaluation Round of the Monitoring Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women (MESECVI), the Country Report of the UNDP and UN Women publication From commitment to action: Policies to eradicate violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean. and information provided by the Office of the United Nations Population Fund in Saint Lucia.

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## 1. Legislation

The State of Saint Lucia has sanctioned a series of norms to address domestic violence, sexual violence, violence in the workplace and trafficking, although none of them specifies the criminalization of violence against women. The regulatory framework is made up of the following legal instruments: the Domestic Violence Act (1994) , which is the main legal instrument in the matter - although its provisions are restricted to the intra-family and / or domestic sphere despite the fact that that the State of Saint Lucia has adhered to and ratified the Convention of Belém do Pará of 1994 and other international instruments, the Law on Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Labor (2000) (Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Occupation Act (2000) ), that defines sexual harassment in the workplace as a criminal offense and establishes penalties, the Penal Code (revised in 2003) (Revision of the Criminal Code (2003)), that punishes sexual violence within marriage, establishes that rape is a crime only when it occurs between divorced or separated<sup>1</sup> couples and allows abortion for cases of rape, incest or when the life of the mother was in danger, the Penal Code Amendment (2005) (Amended Criminal Code), that increases penalties for aggressors and introduces criminal types that punish harassment (electronic or labor), the transmission of venereal diseases and establishes compensation to those who were victims / survivors of acts of rape or sexual abuse, and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (2010) (Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act) although the Criminal Code does not contemplate the crime of trafficking in persons nationally or internationally.

**Femicide** is not incorporated into the national legislation of Saint Lucia. In addition, there is no legal provision that defines the term "gender violence". While the St Lucia Penal Code No. 9 of 2004 offers some protection to victims of sexual violence, it contains a limited definition of **violence against girls**.

The Government of Saint Lucia does not indicate in its report whether measures have been taken to enact laws to protect against obstetric violence in hospitals and other health institutions and sexual violence in armed conflicts as a form of torture, a war crime and / or crime against humanity.

There is no legislation prohibiting conciliation, mediation or other extrajudicial methods to address violence. **Mediation is used as an intervention** in cases in which the alleged victim does not meet the criteria required to guarantee a Protection, Occupation or Lease order<sup>2</sup>. It is worth noting that the Child Justice Bill to be tabled in Parliament on November 22 does address this.

**The rate of violence against women by partner or ex-partner was 419 per 100,000 in 2015.** While the

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<sup>1</sup> That is, rape within marriage is not classified as a crime in the country, except in very limited cases.

<sup>2</sup> Order of protection: prohibits the defendant from harming or harassing a victim; Occupation Order: prohibits the defendant from living in the family home; and Lease Order: transfers the lease in the name of the victim only.

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rate of **violence against girls** was 1,268 per 100,000 girls in 2015, according to data from the Division of Human Services and Family Affairs. The mortality rate, based on data from the Royal Police of Santa Lucia (2015), for women by suicide, homicide and accidents were 0, 5 and 2, respectively.

**The number of cases prosecuted for violence against women was** 602 cases (that is, 1.21% of all cases). **The pregnancy rate of girls and adolescents** (from 10 to 19 years) declared by Saint Lucia for 2015 was 126 per 100. 13% of all full-term births were young adolescents. There was an abortion rate of 11% among adolescents in 2015. The mortality rate in this group was 0. The proportion between the increase in VDW (violent death of women) and the increase in VDM (violent death of men) for 2015 was 24 for men and 5 for women.

## Legislative Recommendations

1. Modify the current legislation and harmonize it with the Convention, including the incorporation into the national legal framework of all forms of violence against women in their diversity, the regulation of femicide, obstetric violence, sexual harassment in places other than work and school and typifying sexual violence against women and girls in armed conflicts.
2. Enact laws that explicitly prohibit the use of methods such as conciliation, mediation, commutation of sentences, and others aimed at resolving extrajudicially cases of violence against women and girls.
3. Participate in the preparation of the CARICOM Model Legislation Project on sexual harassment in public spaces, including educational institution.

## 2. Nacional Plan

**Saint Lucia does not have a national plan to address gender-based violence or gender equality policy.**

The State notes that several **civil society organizations** are involved in efforts to promote an end to violence against women, including United and Strong, Raise Your Voice, the Blind Welfare Association of Saint Lucia, the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities and the National Youth Council.

The Division of Gender Relations through the **Women's Support Center** has organized several seminars, disseminated information on domestic violence in community activities and held exhibitions and other empowerment initiatives. In them there has been a joint work of governments, NGOs and religious organizations.

In terms of capacity development, the Police Training School has a curriculum for new recruits that includes a component on gender violence. Officers receive training on the **'Protocol to refer women**

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to the Women's Support Center'. And about the study '**Silence Scourge Embedded in St. Lucian Society**,' offers an overview of the cycle of domestic violence, the reasons why women remain in abusive relationships, types of violence, profile of an abuser, barriers to putting end to violence, the impact of domestic violence on women and children, the role of the police and social institutions in reducing their incidence. Presentations were made to promote the Protocol to refer women to the Women's Support Center to the senior officers of the Saint Lucian Royal Police at the sixteen police stations throughout the island during 2015 and 2016.

Officers of the Vulnerable Persons Team at the Saint Lucia Royal Police receive training at the local and regional level on: interview techniques, evidence collection, Juvenile Justice Reform Project, mediation, awareness on domestic violence, including a training of trainers component aimed at the development of capacities within the police force. A big challenge to keep in mind, however, is that many trained officers are often reassigned to other departments within the police force.

In addition to government training, NGOs such as the Saint Lucia Crisis Center and the **Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)** - have developed training and awareness programs on different topics with violence against women, but these efforts are limited and need to be strengthened to ensure their sustainability.

The report submitted to the MESECVI by the government highlights the training of a single social worker of the Family Court in an empowerment workshop organized by RISE (St. Lucia) Inc., in March 2016, focused on the care of victims of domestic violence. Several community and religious organizations, as well as ministerial departments, organized empowerment seminars, community outreach, exhibitions, exhibitions and anti-violence parties.

These initiatives are supported by the Gender Relations Division and staff of the Women's Support Center with presentations on domestic violence, counseling services, referrals and delivery of awareness materials on the subject. **The Gender Relations Division implemented the Youth A.R.T initiative (Active Response Team)**, aimed at promoting the concept of healthy relationships: What they are and what they are not. The program targets high school students between the ages of 11 and 17 years and is aimed at the prevention of violence in courtship. The Women's Support Center conducts awareness-raising activities on domestic violence in schools throughout Saint Lucia. Some schools have participated in community marches on violence against women. These events generally coincide with the annual celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 and the 16 days of activism against violence against women and girls, from November 25 to December 10. The Curriculum Unit of the Ministry of Education is analyzing **the content of gender stereotypes in the national curriculum, within the framework of the Education Sector Development Plan 2015-2020** under Priority 2: Gender Equity and Human Rights.

Saint Lucia did not inform MESECVI about the **percentage of the budget** allocated to programs, plans and agencies related to different forms of violence against women. The Annual Performance Program is presented annually and is aimed at monitoring the budget of measures against violence. In this process, members of the Gender Relations Division, Women's Support Center, Division of Human Services and Family Affairs, Accounts Department of the Ministry of Health, Welfare, Human Services and Gender Relations, Permanent Secretary of the quoted Ministry and Directorate of Planning.

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While this is a promising practice, there is no information on the application of the results of the review.

The budget of the Women's Support Center for 2015 was EC \$ 469,191.00. Taking into account the total estimated government budget of 2015 - EC \$ 1,464,236,000, this financing amounted to 0.032% of the general budget.

## National Plan Recommendations

1. Develop a specific national plan with a comprehensive approach and whose efforts are focused on the axes of prevention, care, punishment and reparation of violence against women, with the participation of civil society organizations involved in the response to survivors and of the survivors themselves.

### 3. Recommendations addressed to all sectors (police-judicial, health, social services) that provide essential services

1. Guarantee the awareness and periodic and continuous training of the civil service of the different institutions of all sectors in the different forms of violence against women and in coordinated response.
2. Ensure that all women and girls who have been victims of violence have access to specialized services, especially shelters if they require it and that there is sufficient coverage throughout the state.
3. Ensure that the institutions and public policies in charge of responding to violence against women and girls have sufficient resources to meet their objectives.

### 4. Police and Judicial Services

SERVICES	SPECIALIZED SERVICES ON VAW.		Description of the service (include profile and coverage of professionals who attend VAWG at the national level).	Acting instruments.
	Sí	No		

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<p>POLICE: Women's Commissioners, Police Service to women and children victims of violence etc.</p>			<p><b>Unit for the Care of Vulnerable Persons (Vulnerable Persons Unit)</b>, Royal Police Force of Saint Lucia. Established in December 2007. It is composed of police officers and a team trained by the Department of Gender Relations on the handling of cases of sexual violence.</p> <p><b>Unit of Complaints of the Police</b>, for the reception and investigation of the complaints of the public against the police.</p>	<p>Protocol to refer women to the Women's Support Center.</p>
<p>JUDICIAL: Office or similar of victims' defense Judicial Power</p>			<p><b>Legal Aid Authority</b>, a unit within the Ministry of Affairs, provides free legal support. However, there is an application fee of EC \$ 5.00.</p> <p><b>Family Court</b>. It has offices in the capital and in rural areas to facilitate access for victims / survivors to justice. There are three mechanisms for the release of protection orders: transport, rescue and authorization so that they can leave the country. The Women's Support Center has a bus that collects victims / survivors and the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force has an inter-institutional protocol to ensure that victims / survivors reach the Women's Support Center and, if necessary, emergency passports are facilitated so that they can leave the country in a matter of 2 days, after receiving a court order. In cases of sexual abuse, to protect the confidentiality of victims / survivors, hearings are held in private spaces.</p>	
<p>JUDICIAL: Foundation of NGO or juridical services.</p>				
<p>JUDICIAL: Office or similar victim assistance Public Ministry.</p>				



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JUDICIAL: Prosecutor's offices specialized in Violence against women				
JUDICIALS: Institute or similar of legal medicine				
TREATMENT PROGRAMS DIRECTED TO THE REHABILITATION OF AGGRESSORS <sup>3</sup>				

### Recommendations for improvement of police and judicial services

1. Guarantee access to justice for all women, without discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic origin, race, disability, immigration status, through effective mechanisms that allow them to have quality services throughout the country. institutional care route, research and processing.
2. Training of members of the judiciary branch on VAW.

### 5. Health Services

ESPECIALIZED SERVICE ON VAW.		Description of the service (include profile and coverage of professionals who attend VCMN at the national level).	Acting instruments.
Sí	No		
			National protocols on HIV / AIDS and STIs.

<sup>3</sup> The Essential Services package for women and girls who suffer violence mentions in the corresponding Guide to police and judicial services, the need for aggressor rehabilitation programs with specific methodology, minimum sessions and systematized tools to assess: compliance by the aggressors, the safety of the victims and the reduction of the incidence of violence.

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## Recommendations for the improvement of health services

1. Adopt all necessary measures to avoid pregnancies in girls and ensure that pregnancies of girls under the age of 14 are considered high-risk pregnancies and the legal interruption of pregnancy is allowed. Additionally, strengthen the mechanisms of interaction between the health and judicial sectors in cases of sexual violence against girls.

## 6. Social services

SOCIAL SERVICES	ESPECIALIZED SERVICE ON VAW.		Description of the service (include profile and coverage of professionals who attend VCMN at the national level).	Acting Instruments
	Yes	No		
VAW emergency line			202 free line 24 hours for victims of domestic violence. Women's Support Center. Intervention in cases of crisis.  203 hotline also available for crisis, managed by the St. Lucia Crisis Center.	
Governing body for the care of children and adolescents			Division of Human Services and Family Affairs.	
Responsible agency for the care of people with disabilities				
Ministry of Labor (Job placement services for women who suffer violence)				
Institution of support for micro, small and medium enterprises (Services for women who suffer violence)				
Leading institution of vocational training (training services for				

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women who suffer violence)				
Comprehensive care centers (One stop center): include n ° of Centers and places where they are located			<p><b>The Women's Support Center (WSC)</b> - inaugurated in 2001, which receives funds from the Government of Saint Lucia, is the main agency responsible for victims of violence. It is a refuge for women victims of domestic violence, it has space to accommodate a total of 25 people, including women and children. In addition, coordinates the telephone line 24 hours. Provides individual and group counseling; has a program for children; supports in the realization of security plans for the victims and their children; provides information about available community resources; makes references to various agencies for the provision of legal and social assistance; supports for the search for employment and alternative housing; and follows up and advises women and children when they leave the refuge.</p> <p><b>Crisis Center of St. Lucia</b> (Saint Lucia Crisis Center) opened its doors in 1988 and is a civil society organization in the district of Castries that provides support to victims / survivors of rape, child abuse, domestic violence and other forms of sexual, physical and psychological abuse. It offers counseling, intervention in crisis, referrals to Family Court, training, educational sponsorship and has carried out awareness campaigns on gender-based violence to the community and through the media.</p>	
Other relevant institutions (Ministry of Education, Ombudsman, etc.)			<p><b>The Department of Gender Relations</b> and the <b>Network of Rural Women of St. Lucia</b> (St. Lucia Rural Women's Network) promote the economic empowerment of groups of rural women victims / survivors who work in agriculture and in the processing of agricultural products.</p> <p><b>Family Planning Association</b> of Saint Lucia offers psychological care services.</p>	

### Recommendations for the improvement of social services

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## 7. Information and statistics

In the report submitted by Saint Lucia to the MESECVI **No reference is made to a national statistical office.** The State indicates that the offices where data can be obtained on reported incidents of violence against women and children include: the **Division of Human Services and Family Affairs** (abuse, abandonment / physical, psychological and sexual violence); the Center for the Support of Women (domestic violence); the Family Court (domestic violence, child abuse, child support); the Santa Lucia Crisis Center (counseling, referrals for the victim herself, her family, friends, employer, Women's Support Center); and the Vulnerable Persons Unit of the Royal Saint Lucia Police (sexual crimes, domestic violence).

According to official information of the year 2012, UN Women developed a tool for the collection of data on domestic violence. This tool was applied in the Northern and Southern Divisions of the Royal Police Force of Santa Lucia. The objective was to eliminate duplication of data and to be able to monitor cases of domestic violence recorded in police administrative records. The data collected would increase the efficiency of the programs in response to domestic violence and would provide disaggregated information (by sex, age, place of residence, marital status, etc.) for the formulation of policies.

## Recommendations on information and statistics

1. Collect and present information on the different forms of violence against women, including jurisprudence.

## 8. Diversity

Saint Lucia has the **Reproductive Health Policy of 2013**, the **National Health Policy for Children and Adolescents**, the **National Policy for the Prevention of Child Abuse**, the **National Policy on Persons with Disabilities**, the **Health and Family Life Education Policy** and the **National Policy of Saint Lucia for Older Persons (Project)**.

The Saint Lucia Reproductive Health Policy of 2013 is a reform framework that aims to make reproductive health programs and services accessible and affordable and includes maternal and child health, family planning, prevention and treatment of infections. sexual transmission (STIs and HIV infection), adolescent and juvenile reproductive health, gender and reproductive health and reproductive health care for people with disabilities, among others.

The National Health Policy for Children and Adolescents is aimed at comprehensive, preventive, curative and rehabilitation care for children and adolescents in a coordinated and coherent manner. The priorities of the policy include the provision of services, sexual and reproductive health, and the prevention of crime and violence, among others.

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The NGO United and Strong Inc. (U & S), formed in 2001, is the first and only LGBTI rights organization in Saint Lucia and works to promote, among other things, the end of violence against women and AIDS.

In March of this year the organization, HerStoire was launched. It provides a safe virtual space for young women to access information and support on issues and reproductive health. This is a privately run initiative through external funding.

## Recomendations about diversity

### 9. Coordination and governance

#### Existence of a mechanism to coordinate the response at the national level and its operation

The Department of Gender Relations under the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development is the state entity that exercises the rectory in matters of gender policies and is responsible for monitoring and implementing measures to mitigate gender-based violence. The Department of Gender Relations is the Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women in Saint Lucia.

Although violence against women is not explicitly included in its mandate, the objectives of the Division are, among others to:

- a. Coordinate programs at the national, regional and community levels to influence policy toward the achievement of gender equity and improve gender relations.
- b. Provide technical advisory services to the government and private sector agencies, as well as collaborate with these agencies in the implementation of programs that address gender inequalities and the needs of women.
- c. Provide technical assistance to NGOs to strengthen their capacity to address problems that respond to the needs of women and men in their communities.

According to the sources consulted, an interagency coordination mechanism has not been created to respond to violence against women and girls.

#### Existence of a mechanism to coordinate the response at the local level and its functioning

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## Description of integral care models

## References

Saint Lucia Country report. Third round. OAS MESECVI. 2017

From commitment to action: Policies to eradicate violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean. UNDP and UN Women. 2017. Country file: Saint Lucia.