

# National Approaches for Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups in EWS

## Experience of Saint Lucia



# Presentation Outline



- Introduction/Background Information
- Overview of EWS in Saint Lucia
- Existing mechanisms for integration of vulnerable groups in EWS
- Key Next Steps to institutionalizing the integration of vulnerable groups in EWS
- Empowerment of vulnerable Groups towards integration into existing EWS
- Conclusion
- Questions

# Background Information

## Map of Saint Lucia



## General Information

- Small Island Developing State located in the Eastern Caribbean region
- 616 sq. km/238 sq.mls
- Population - approximately 170,000 people
- The island is vulnerable to multiple hazards including tropical cyclones, earthquakes, Tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, oil spills, fires and droughts, among others.

# History of EWS



Alarm system: siren alert

- 2009-  
2012: Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) installed in Corinth, Gros-Islet under the CADM2 Project
- 2015: Installation of Flood Early warning system in 3 communities (Castries, Anse-La-Raye & Canaries) by the WRMA
- 2016: Installation of multi-hazard EWS in Dennery (ongoing initiative)

# Existing Mechanisms for integration of vulnerable groups in EWS



- **Risk Knowledge**

- Direct involvement of vulnerable groups in the conduct of risk assessments and vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCAs).
- Existing information sharing platforms /mediums (consultations, meetings, electronic means) where national representative organizations (NCPD & National Council of and for Older Persons) are present. Such mediums can also be used to obtain pertinent information from vulnerable groups.
- National Committees where vulnerable groups are represented



# Existing Mechanisms for integration of vulnerable groups in EWS



- **Dissemination and Communication of Alerts/Warning Messages**

- SMS/text messages
- Emails
- Radio & Television broadcast
- Town Hall Meeting & Focus Group discussions
- Traditional Means (blowing of the conch shell, hoisting of flags at the Local Police Station, town crier, ringing of the church bell etc.)
- District Disaster Committees (via VHF network)
- **Sirens**



- **Response Capabilities**

- Training Opportunities
- Response Planning (up to date response plans)
- Simulation exercises to enable people to experience and practice warning interpretation and responses.

# Key Next Steps to institutionalizing the integration of vulnerable groups in EWS



- Facilitate the development of institutional, legislative and policy frameworks and protocols that support the implementation and maintenance of effective early warning systems.
- Include representation of vulnerable groups at appropriate levels within the established Disaster Management System/Framework
- Increased Advocacy for integration of vulnerable groups in EWS

# Empowerment of vulnerable Groups towards integration into existing EWS



- Training/Capacity building .
- Engagement in DRR/DM planning at all levels.
- Public Awareness/Information sharing.
  - ✦ (organized fora with vulnerable groups, home visits, use of sign language etc.)
- Establish a system of liaison officers between national representative organizations and the National Disaster Offices.
- Encourage representation of vulnerable groups on District Disaster Committees.

# Conclusion



- All community members especially the vulnerable groups should be involved at all stages of the community based early warning systems from designing to operating the systems, receiving the warning messages and responding to the warning.
- Early Warning Systems should take into consideration the needs of everyone in the community including the most vulnerable segments of the community.



Thank You

**Velda Joseph**  
**Director, National Emergency Management Organization**  
**Saint Lucia**