

JOINT EVALUATION

Final Evaluation of Joint Programme 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean' 2020 – 2022

FINAL – MAY 31, 2022

Decentralized Evaluation Report
WFP, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women



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Acknowledgements

The evaluation team is very grateful for the support and guidance provided throughout the evaluation by Juliette Maughan (Evaluation Manager, at the WFP Caribbean Multi-Country Office) and Michala Assankpon (Evaluation Officer at the WFP Regional Bureau in Panama).

Our gratitude extends to all the Participating UN Agency Country Directors, their staff, and colleagues in their regional bureaus for their sustained support to the evaluation process.

We also greatly acknowledge the valuable contributions of the numerous governments, donor, United Nations, non-governmental organization (NGO), private sector, and other informants who generously made time to talk with us and provide us their insights and advice during the evaluation process.

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Executive Summary

FINAL REPORT: JOINT EVALUATION OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME 'ENHANCING RESILIENCE AND ACCELERATION OF THE SDGS IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN' 2020 – 2022



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Introduction

1. This is a Joint Evaluation commissioned by International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) under the auspices of the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. It is summative in nature and covers all activities under the Joint Programme (JP) for enhancing resilience and acceleration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Eastern Caribbean (the first of its kind in the region). It focuses on efforts to develop adaptive and universal social protection (SP) systems in Barbados, Saint Lucia, and other countries in the Eastern Caribbean (through the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)) between January 2020 through mid-March 2022 under the JP. Its objectives are accountability and learning.

2. The JP is a two-year programme that was approved in December 2019 and was expected to be completed from January 2020 until January 2022.¹ It was part of the first call for JPs by the UN Joint SDG Fund and was co-led by UNICEF and WFP and implemented jointly with ILO, UNDP, and UN Women. The budget documents indicate the overall budget of the programme was USD \$4,859,633² with the Joint SDG Fund providing \$3,000,000 and \$1,859,634 contributed by the five PUNOs. At the end of 2021, the overall implementation rate was 84 percent; expenditure rate was 83 percent.³

Purpose

3. The evaluation serves the purposes of assessing the accomplishment (or not) of main expected results of the JP, assessing the value added of the partnership (i.e., the 'jointness' of the programme), taking stock of lessons learnt and good practice, and achieving accountability and learning objectives. The main expected

¹ The initial duration is two years with an extension granted until May 2022 to allow finalising of the evaluation.

² The amount stated in the ToR and overview of the budget in the Programme Document is \$4,804,402, while \$4,859,633 is the total presented in the budget document.

³ MCO for Barbados and the OECS (2022), Joint Programme 2021 Annual Progress Report.

users of the evaluation include the Resident Coordinator's Office, Participating UN Agencies, Governments of Saint Lucia and Barbados, the OECS, and the Joint SDG Fund.

Subject

4. The subject of the evaluation is the development of adaptive and universal social protection systems in Saint Lucia and Barbados – modelling tools, processes, and policy approaches for the Eastern Caribbean States. The scope included all the activities undertaken from January 2020 through mid-March 2022 through different lenses of design, implementation, and results – across national (i.e., nation-wide in Barbados and Saint Lucia) and regional (within the OECS member states) levels. This includes the adaptation of existing social protection systems and programmes to support people at risk of or impacted by shocks – using a core diagnostic instrument (CODI) in Barbados, supporting legislative and policy review in Saint Lucia (with the support of the World Bank), south-south cooperation and social protection and social inclusion strategy formulation through the OECS, and strategic reallocations of JP funds in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to strategically trigger contingency-based disbursements of concessional loan financing for SP.

5. While the JP did include direct household-level targeting as part of pilot projects (1,598 are reported to have benefited from adaptive social protection programmes using cash transfers and 25 women-headed households received stipends for childcare and access to vocational training, counselling, and service referral), this programme was largely strategic – and the 'value' of direct assistance to households (from the perspective of the JP's results framework) was mainly the opportunity it provided for modelling and learning from the adaptive mechanisms being strengthened.

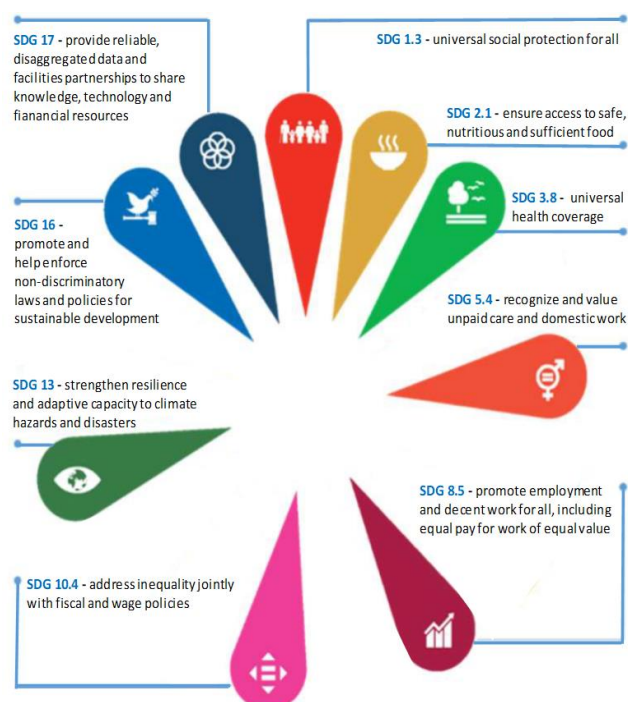
Methodology

6. The evaluation approach was mixed-method, theory-based, and utilization-focused. This approach includes perspectives of marginalized populations in analysis of processes and results. Systematic triangulation of evidence from several streams of data was structured by an evaluation matrix and used to answer questions, form evidence-based conclusions, and develop useful recommendations. The evaluation covers JP activities in Saint Lucia and Barbados, at the regional-level, and South-South Cooperation achievements over the duration of the programme. The depth of coverage was determined by assessing relevancy to the main lines of inquiry developed through the sub-questions and indicators. The indicators in the evaluation matrix draw on existing indicators in the JP results framework to some extent, but also approach the lines of inquiry in qualitative terms using a constructivist lens that allowed for the articulation of unexpected and complex aspects in the causal flow of the programme (e.g., adapting to COVID-19).

7. The data collection methods used included key informant interviews (20 with PUNOs, 5 with Government Officials, 1 IFI representative, 1 private sector stakeholder; 17 women and 10 men), and 10 beneficiary households – 6 women and 4 men); desk review of key project documents and related studies (including documents produced by the JP such as country case studies on adaptive social protection systems and an in-depth literature review on the same topic); a case study on 'Jointness' is included as an annex, and the team also conducted a stakeholder debrief during which polling exercises were conducted to gain additional insights on preliminary findings.

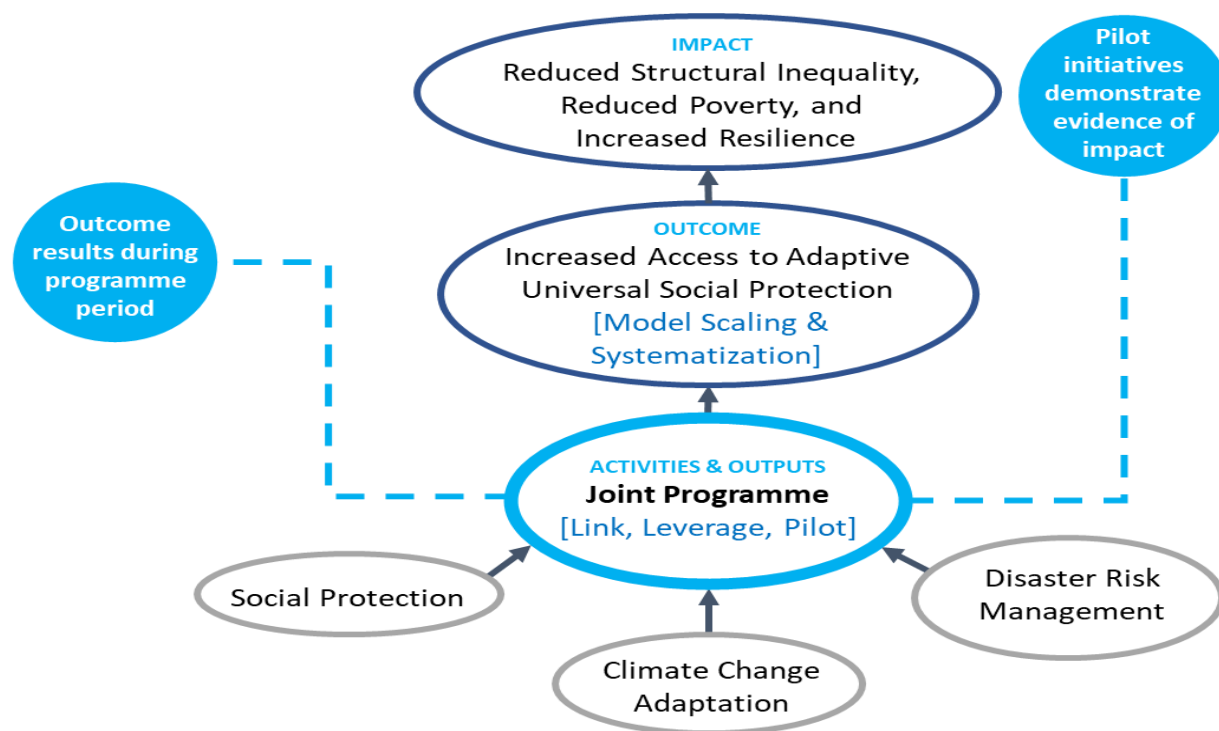
8. Limitations included gaining timely access to key informants. The evaluators were unable carry out 14 originally planned interviews. Secondly, the depth-of coverage was guided by the evaluation questions and objectives but have been in certain cases limited by the insights provided by the informants. However, the interviews conducted have led to saturation and additional validation took place during debriefing and stakeholder workshops.

Illustration 1. SDG targets covered by the JP



9. Conceptual clarity was also a challenge. The JP covers a broad range of activities – each carefully linked to specific SDG targets, indicators, etc. While a theoretical framework existed for the programme, The ET established a simplified theoretical framework that would be both consistent with existing programme design (i.e., true to the spirit and substance of the JP) and suited to facilitate the analysis required by the ET to answer the evaluation questions (i.e., helping to articulate critical causal pathways for substantiation). Illustration 1 provides a depiction of SDG targets covered by the JP. Illustration 2 is the revised theory of change (ToC) developed by the ET.

Illustration 2. Revised ToC developed by the ET



Findings

10. Findings and conclusions were developed based on evidence gathered and triangulated by the evaluation team. This analysis corresponds to the six main questions covered by the evaluation – which link to the evaluation criteria.

EQ1: To what extent are the JP design and implementation relevant and coherent?

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