



# Joint Programme 2023 Annual Progress Report

## Building Resilience & Ending Vulnerabilities in Small Island Developing States

### Cover page

**UNCT/MCO:** Commonwealth of Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

**Reporting Period:** 1 January - 31 December 2023

**JP title:** Building Resilience & Ending Vulnerabilities in Small Island Developing States

**Thematic SDG Areas:** Digital transformation; Decent jobs & universal social protection;

**Gender Marker:** Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gender needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support)

**Engine Room Activities:** Building capacity at scale;

**Total estimated expenditures:** USD \$547,358.00

**Total estimated commitments** (including expenditures): \$925,686.57

## Executive Summary

This is a summary of the most important achievements of the JP from its launch until 31 December 2023. Please highlight: progress on the 3 major results achieved in the past year to accelerate progress and system-level transitions for the SDGs, with reference to contributions to the CF outcome(s) and national/regional development plans and priorities, and/or related SDG targets, as well as information on any leveraging of additional financial resources toward the SDGs, within the framework of the Joint Programme. Please, provide key data, including on the number of the people that directly and/or indirectly benefited from the JP, and the broader impact, including regarding the institutional and financial sustainability to be ensured upon the closure of the JP.

The Joint Programme (JP) embarked on a transformative journey from its launch until 31 December 2023, achieving significant milestones that accelerated progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This summary highlights three major results attained during the past year.

**Enhanced Resilience to Climate-Related Hazards (Result 1):** The JP significantly advanced early warning systems, risk, and vulnerability data, fostering cross-departmental coherence and directly contributing to Target 13.1 (Climate Action). WFP SRSP training further linked social protection with disaster risk management, benefiting 21 individuals directly trained in data analysis and 26 participants in SRSP training, with entire communities indirectly benefiting from improved risk assessment.

**Responsive Digital Data Systems and Registries (Result 2):** The Project Mapping and Management Enhancement Initiative and Effective Data Management Program markedly improved data practices, responsiveness, and established national registries, aligning directly with SDG Target 2.3 (Zero Hunger). Direct beneficiaries include project personnel, farmers, and vulnerable households, with broader communities benefiting from improved agricultural practices. Leveraging financial resources, the initiative attracted funding from the World Bank and showcased scalability.

**Improved Linkages Between Sectors (Result 3):** The JP introduced expanded market and climate information services, empowered vulnerable individuals, and enhanced responsiveness to climate risks, directly contributing to Target 13.1 (Climate Action) and improving resilience. Direct beneficiaries include farmers, individuals receiving life skills training, and communities benefiting from improved risk management practices, with broader impacts evident in increased resilience to climate-related challenges. Agreements with the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica and support from international partners for innovative financing modalities contribute to the sustainability of social protection systems.

## Annual Progress

### Overall progress against 3 key results in 2023:

Result 1: Early warning, risk and vulnerability data, related systems, and geospatial information systems are improved.

- Collaborative approach: The project supports data collection, management, analysis, and process mapping, fostering collaboration across ministries for data-driven decision-making.

- Data preparedness initiative: In SVG, an initiative focuses on exchanging ideas, knowledge, and skills among disaster management actors, improving data collection tools, and conducting simulation exercises.

- Shock-responsive social protection (SRSP): Progress has been made in raising awareness and linking social protection with disaster risk management in both countries. WFP conducted training on SRSP in collaboration with the Government of Dominica.

- Data and information systems inventories: Both countries are making progress in developing inventories to guide the design of agricultural geoinformatics systems and update national agriculture management information systems. Trainings were provided for 20 persons in Dominica on the use of GIS.

- Geo-spatial data sets: Collaboration with CDEMA involves identifying and cleaning key geo-spatial data sets for

uploading on the CDEMA GeoCRIS Platform for disaster preparedness and response planning.

- Participatory GIS approaches: The project used participatory GIS approaches to map communities, integrating drone and satellite imagery.

- Systematic Observation Financing Facility: WFP is identified as a partner for both governments to support meteorological offices on early warning systems in the future.

Result 2: More responsive and adaptive digital data systems, assessments, and national registries on farmers, fishers, and vulnerable households.

- Project Mapping and Management Enhancement Initiative: In progress to enhance project documentation, data management, reporting, and coordination within the Min. of Agriculture. Two tools have been identified and drafted for review by the Government: The Data Compilation and Analysis Tool and the SOP for Management and Application. Plans are underway for the roll out of this within the Min. of Agriculture for the year of 2024.

- Digital data systems enhancement: Both ministries are upgrading systems to be more responsive and adaptive, establishing national registries on farmers, fishers, and vulnerable households.

- Transition to digital processes: In Dominica, a successful transition from paper-based to digital processes for social assistance was piloted, but there were delays due to a government reshuffle.

- In December 2023, the Management Information Steering Committee met and made plans to for the first quarter of 2024, including the finalization of the Committee's Terms of Reference, Roles and Responsibilities document and draft Strategy document.

Result 3: Improved linkages between agricultural and social protection sectors.

- Expanded climate information services: A mapping of existing climate services and gaps has been completed, with plans to enhance agro-climate services in February 2024.

- Digital decision-support tools: Pilot projects for precision irrigation and pathogen risk forecasting are underway, with Phase 2 set to commence in January 2024.

- Life Skills Training Program: The Min. of National Mobilization was supported in delivering a program to empower vulnerable persons in conquering barriers to employment and livelihoods.

- Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture in Response to Emergency (FARE) Training program involving 48 participants aimed to enhance understanding of the interconnections between fisheries, aquaculture, emergencies, food security, and livelihoods. The focus included assessing post-disaster needs in the fisheries and aquaculture sector using FAO Guidelines for Damage and Needs Assessments in Emergencies.

- Innovative financing modalities: An agreement was signed with the Dominica to top-up its CCRIF macro-insurance policy for the 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season, with a portion of any payout going to cash transfers.

### **Main Challenges, adjustments and lessons:**

At the end of 2022, the implementation of activities within the Joint Programme (JP) was paused due to elections in Dominica and the re-organization of ministries. A notable change was the transfer of responsibility for social protection from the Ministry of Youth to the Ministry of Health. The shift in social protection to the Ministry of Health brought with it a larger portfolio of responsibilities for the ministry. This presented difficulties in effectively prioritizing the activities of the JP within the ministry's expanded agenda and required the development of new technical and strategic relationships with new government counterparts.

The staff changes within both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the challenges linked to technical officers being assigned to multiple projects and having difficulties in prioritizing activities added another layer of complexity to the situation, which contributed to delays. Considering these developments, adaptation and re-engagement with relevant stakeholders was crucial to ensure the continued progress of the JP as well as ensuring alignment of the JP's goals with the priorities of the Ministries became necessary during this transitional period.

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, at times, the implementing partners faced challenges with timely responses

due to conflicting activities, resulting in occasional delays in the implementation process. Nevertheless, the team effectively addressed these situations by employing diverse engagement methods that encouraged active participation from stakeholders, ensuring progress in achieving the objectives of the JP.

## **Priority Cross-cutting Issues**

### **Cross-cutting results/issues**

#### **Gender Marker and activities undertook for gender equality**

The JP is Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gender needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support). Capacity development (e.g. training of social workers, local governments, local communities);

#### **SDG Transitions Acceleration**

Bet Better Integration of Policies and Action:

- The project fostered a collaborative approach, integrating data-driven decision-making across various ministries, promoting coherence in policy formulation.
- Linking Social Protection with Disaster Risk Management: Progress was made in linking shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) with disaster risk management, ensuring a more integrated approach to addressing vulnerabilities and shocks.
- Collaboration with CDEMA involved cleaning and uploading key geo-spatial data sets, contributing to a more integrated and accessible platform for disaster preparedness.

Increased Speed of Reaching SDGs:

- Digital Data Systems Enhancement: The ongoing enhancement of digital data systems, including national registries, accelerates the speed of data collection and analysis, facilitating evidence-based decision-making.
- Transition to Digital Processes: Piloting the transition from paper-based to digital processes for social assistance, despite some delays, demonstrates efforts to expedite the implementation of digital solutions for efficient program management.

Enhanced Scale of Progress - People and Planet Reached:

- Expanded Climate Information Services: The mapping of climate services and the enhancement of agro-climate services contribute to reaching a larger population of farmers, enabling them to make better-informed decisions for sustainable agricultural practices.
- Life Skills Training Program: Empowering vulnerable persons through the Life Skills Training Program contributes to reaching a broader demographic, addressing barriers to employment and livelihoods for a more inclusive impact.

Ensuring Sustainability of Transitions:

- Systematic Observation Financing Facility: Identifying WFP as a partner for direct support to meteorological offices ensures sustainability in early warning systems, indicating a commitment to ongoing support and development.
- Innovative Financing Modalities: The agreement to top-up the CCRIF macro-insurance policy for the 2023 Atlantic Hurricane Season, with a portion going to cash transfers through social protection, demonstrates a sustainable approach to financing resilience efforts during disasters.

## Annual Reporting on Results

### Exit strategy, scaling, sustainability and next steps

The lessons generated through the activities will contribute to regional and global evidence and good practices. To ensure scale-up, replication, and sustainability from the start, the programme will use the policy recommendations, to inform broader efforts in the region to promote the resilience of farmers, and vulnerable households. Experiences from the Caribbean and evidence generated by WFP and FAO have played and will continue to play a role in regional knowledge exchange and transforming the capacities of governments to support people more effectively and equitably via various capacity strengthening and technical assistance activities taking place.

#### Plans

1. Enhancement of agro-climate services building upon the mapping of existing climate services and gaps identified
2. Pilot projects for precision irrigation and pathogen risk forecasting are underway, with Phase 2 set to be completed in 2024.
3. Conduct the Holistic hazard data assessment for enhanced disaster resilience initiative phases with governmental stakeholders is planned for 2024.
4. Finalise evidence-based outputs derived from analysed data, with a specific emphasis on maps or dashboards displaying gender-disaggregated information.
5. Implement measures to make digital data systems more responsive, adaptive, and gender-sensitive, focusing on farmers, fishers, and vulnerable households.

### Measuring and reporting on impact

N/A

### Overview of progress toward Financial Instrument(s)

#### Completed transactions

# Strategic Partnerships, Documents and Communications

## Multi-stakeholder engagement

### Stakeholder groups you closely partner with, as part of your JP approach

National Government;Civil Society Organizations;Private sector;

### Brief description of the nature of engagement. Outline the main outcomes and achievements resulting from the partnerships.

The joint program ran collaboratively with the government and civil society organizations (CSOs) to implement activities. Measures were undertaken to ensure that the right individuals were targeted for training. This involved a careful selection process to identify those who would benefit the most from the program's initiatives. Additionally, when buying equipment, a priority was placed on compatibility with existing networks to ensure seamless integration and sustainability of the implemented solutions. This approach aimed to maximize the effectiveness of the interventions and guarantee that the investments made through funding provided a lasting and positive impact on the targeted communities. This collaborative approach helped the effective planning and execution of initiatives, leveraging the strengths and knowledge of each partner to implement the activities.

### How did the JP facilitate collaboration with diverse stakeholders

### Financial leverage

### Financial resources leveraged

N/A

### Donor and Strategic events attended by JP in 2022

JP steering committee/ programme board meeting	Strategic partners/ donors event
Yes, in 2023	No, but planned in late 2024

**Explanation if you have not held any key meeting/events for the above question.**

**Project Governance Structures:**

The Multi-country Steering Committee (MCSC) oversees and provides strategic guidance to the Joint Program (JP) across all participating countries.

The Country Coordination Committee (CCC) is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the JP's implementation at the country level in each participating country.

- **St. Vincent CCC Meeting (April 4th, 2023):**

During this meeting, the JP's workplan for St. Vincent was presented, outlining the progress made so far and the planned activities for the remainder of 2023. The workplan presentation allowed stakeholders to review and provide feedback, ensuring alignment with the JP's objectives and the country's priorities. The next CCC meeting for St. Vincent is scheduled for 2024, where further progress and updates will be discussed.

- **Dominica CCC Meeting:**

The CCC meeting for Dominica was postponed, and instead, email updates were shared with committee members. This measure was taken to keep stakeholders informed of the JP's progress and of changes in the implementation plan. The rescheduled CCC meeting for Dominica was planned for October 2023, providing an opportunity for more detailed discussions and decisions. However, due to changes within the Ministry of Agriculture the meeting was not able to take place as planned. It was proposed to have the meeting in February 2024.

**MCSC Meeting (August 11, 2023):** During this meeting, progress on the JP's workplan was discussed. Challenges found involve response times and conflicting priorities among implementing organizations. The presentation outlined plans for the year, including informatics system development, community-based disaster management, and anticipatory action protocols. The team sought budget revisions and a no-cost extension, having spent 95% of the received funds, with the second tranche expected by August 2023. Committee feedback expressed gratitude for progress, commitment from relevant ministries, and recognition of collaboration benefits. Concerns were raised about response times, conflicting priorities, and the need for legislative measures in data sharing. Clarifications included the no-cost extension timing, linkages with financing mechanisms, and efforts to prevent double counting in assistance programs.

**JP contribution to SDG Financing**

Drafted a bill, strategy, and/or approved a law increasing the fiscal space for the policy in focus	Produced financing, costing, diagnostic and feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or increase spending on the SDGs	Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the management of programmes/schemes	Improved effectiveness (value for money; i.e. social impact of \$1 spent) of spending	Drafted policies/regulatory frameworks or developed tools to incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs	Structured new financial instruments (public, private or blended) to leverage additional funding
No	No	No	No	No	No

**Briefly explain how and in which area your JP contributed to enhancing SDG financing**

**Focus on LNOB cross cutting principles**

Human Rights	Persons with disabilities	Youth	Environmental and social standards
No	No	No	No

Provide any other comments or descriptions on how your JP contributed to cross-cutting issues and principles.

**Beneficiaries****Number of beneficiaries**

837

Percentage (%) of women benefited among the total number	Percentage (%) of children & youth (0-24 years of age) benefited among the total number	Percentage (%) of older persons (age 60 and above) benefited among the total number	Percentage (%) of persons with disabilities benefited among the total number
47	20.4	4	0

**Please briefly explain how people benefited from the joint programme**

The activities under the joint program directly helped the beneficiaries by engaging individuals in training sessions and providing them with improved early warning systems and geospatial information. This resulted in enhanced disaster preparedness. Increased social protection awareness directly helped women and girls, providing a safety net during emergencies through shock-responsive social protection. The Life Skills Training Program directly affected participants by equipping them with coping strategies and knowledge of work culture. Furthermore, efforts to improve risk management practices directly helped farmers and government stakeholders, enhancing their ability to mitigate risks in case of a disaster.

The broader community indirectly benefited from the joint program's focus on disaster preparedness, social protection, and inclusive risk management, contributing to community-level resilience. Improved livelihoods of farmers and vulnerable households had indirect positive impacts on the overall community and economy. Furthermore, the knowledge gained through training sessions had indirect benefits as individuals shared insights with their communities, contributing to a wider dissemination of valuable information.

**Did your JP support the localization of SDGs by moving SDG actions to the local level and enhancing abilities of local and regional governments to promote the SDGs?**

Enhanced capacities of staff in the local and regional governments;

**Provide information of how your JP supported localization of the SDGs as outlined above:**



The Joint Programme (JP) actively supported the localization of enhanced capacities of staff in local and regional governments through targeted initiatives aimed at building skills, fostering collaboration, and empowering local stakeholders.

The JP organized a series of capacity-building workshops and training programs tailored to the needs of local and regional government staff. These sessions covered a range of topics, including data analysis, disaster risk management, digital data systems management, and social protection. Quantitatively, these initiatives reached a 115 government and private sector stakeholders.

Recognizing the diverse needs of different countries, the JP developed customized training modules specifically designed for staff in local and regional governments. These modules focused on enhancing their understanding of the program's objectives, utilising information systems, integrating digital tools and improving their ability to respond effectively to local challenges.

## **Communications**

### **Voices from the field**

The JP activities have boosted the ministry's tech access for crucial data collection, aiding in identifying production enhancement areas, assessing climate change impact, and validating data, thus underscoring tech's significance in agriculture.

Debbie Daniel Senior Planning Officer Ministry of Agriculture, St Vincent and the Grenadines

### **Declaration**

We hereby confirm that the information provided in this update is duly reviewed and approved by the RC and all PUNOs involved in the Joint Programme.