

**Intellectual Disability in Community Activities 2014**  
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**Inception Report**  
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Name of Country: Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia is 616 sq. km

Life of expectancy rate is 77.22 years (2013 est.)

Infant mortality rate is 12.07 deaths/1000 live births (2013 est.)

Maternal mortality rate is 35 deaths/100 000 lives (2013 est.)

Literacy rate is at 90.1% (2013 est.)

Saint Lucia has a population of 165, 770 (2010 est.)

**Education system**

The Education System in St Lucia comprises of the following:

- ✓ **Early Childhood Education:** Children attend day care up to age two (2) years old and preschool up to five (5) years old. There are twenty one (21) government operated and twenty (20) private run day care centers. There are also 94 preschools.
- ✓ **Primary Education:** Children in St Lucia begin formal education at this level and cater for children between the ages of 5 – 11 years. Compulsive education is from ages five (5) to fifteen (15) years. This level is also broken down into infants (lower primary) and primary. There are seventy five (75) schools in this level and six (6) private primary schools not reflected in the data. There are eight education districts in St Lucia. Below is a breakdown of the number of primary schools and students enrolled in each district for the academic year 2011/2012.
- ✓ **Secondary Education:** The formal age for this level is between twelve to sixteen years. There are twenty three (23) public secondary

schools and two (2) private secondary schools. One of the private primary schools have been pursuing secondary education programme.

- ✓ **Special Education:** There is one school that caters to the visually impaired, another caters mainly to children with hearing impairment and the others deal with a number of other disabilities. Below is a table indicating the enrolment at each of the special education schools. The table reflects five of the centres as the sixth centres were recently established.

### **Health System**

There are presently thirty-three (33) Health and Wellness Centres and one Polyclinic providing primary preventative care. There are two general hospitals, two district hospitals and one private hospital.

### **Major Industries**

St Lucia's major industries are Agriculture and Tourism. There are smaller industries including, rum distillery, clothing and food processing. There are 66,095 people employed in industry.

#### **Industries in St Lucia**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Employed</b>
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6532
Mining and quarrying	128
Manufacturing	3762
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	454
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	407
Construction	7390
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10724
Transportation and storage	3675
Accommodation and food service activities	9504
Information and	1268

communication	
Financial and insurance activities	1900
Real estate activities	167
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1012
Administrative and support service activities	2754
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	6755
Education	3455
Human health and social work activities	1757
Arts, entertainment and recreation	798
Other service activities	1494

Saint Lucia's employment rate is 80% (2013 est.)

### **Intellectual Disabilities**

In September 2011, the Government of St. Lucia signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; however it has not been ratified. The 1999 Education Act of St Lucia states the Chief Education shall provide a special education programme for students who by virtue of intellectual and communicative exceptionalities are in need of special education. The act further states that the programme is to be delivered in the least restrictive and most enabling environment. Presently, there are no set laws concerning persons with disabilities in Saint Lucia.

### **Financial Assistance for Persons with Disabilities**

There exists a welfare programme on the island of Saint Lucia. Some Persons with Intellectual Disabilities are in receipt of financial assistance from the government of Saint Lucia. However, this program was not initiated for persons with disabilities. It was initiated for persons who fell below the poverty line who are in dire need of financial assistance. However, currently some children with disabilities and some adults have benefitted from the welfare assistance programme. Persons who have benefitted receive two hundred dollars (\$200) under this program.

At Human Services, under the foster care programme persons who foster a child or children may receive three hundred dollars (\$300) per child. Therefore, anyone who fosters a child with Intellectual Disabilities may be a recipient of three hundred dollars to contribute towards the financial needs of this child.

### **Services including CBR available for persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

Presently, in Saint Lucia there are not many CBR services available to persons with Intellectual Disabilities. However, through the diagnostic center children with Intellectual Disabilities have access to some therapeutic interventions such as speech therapy, language therapy and occupational therapy. Some persons with Intellectual Disabilities receive food donations from the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities. There is no respite service available for families with persons with Intellectual Disabilities; however the council also hosts a annual weekend summer camp for persons with disabilities.

The following is a least of the services offered:

- Child abuse prevention and management
- Child maintenance
- Foster care and adoption
- Family counseling and social work intervention
- Orphans and vulnerable children and adult support programme (HIV/AIDS)
- Adoption reports for the High Court
- School and community outreach
- Information and referral
- Crisis intervention

Social work intervention and counseling services for children

Parenting services

Other services

JOVC

International social services collaboration

Student summer programme

Social work internship

### **Outline of your Organisation**

#### **Background**

The Division of Human Services is a social agency which falls under the umbrella of the Ministry of Health in the public sector. This organization is primarily concerned with protecting the vulnerable and being the voice of the vulnerable. Human Services functions with ten Family Case Workers who work island wide.

#### **Vision**

To enhance the psychosocial functioning of children, families, older persons, individuals and other vulnerable groups through research, advocacy, counseling, and other Social Work therapeutic intervention strategies, focusing on family preservation and the provision of the skills for self-empowerment.

#### **Strategy**

The goal of the Division of Human Services is to protect and support children, older persons and the vulnerable. Therefore, the strategy is to make our department visible in all areas of Saint Lucia. The Division has established a strong presence, hereby, placing a Family Case Worker in each district.

### **Services/Major Programs**

The Division of Human Services provides services island wide. There are currently three offices on the island; however, there are eight districts and each district is served by one Social Worker, with the exception of Castries, the capital, which has two Social Workers. The Division has undertaken a number of programs which includes Break the Silence Program, groups for adolescent boys, groups for adolescent girls, talks on Bully, talks on sexual abuse at different schools.

### **Position and duty**

As a Family Case Worker the duties include;

1. Conduct social investigations and counsel clients with social problems.
2. Conduct social investigations into cases of alleged child abuse and provide counseling and support to the victims and their families.
3. Promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of children in difficult circumstances.
4. Promote and protect the rights of individual and families.
5. Make applications to the Family Court where necessary for the care and protection of children.
6. Prepare Social Enquiry Reports when required by the Court and by International Social Service Agencies.
7. Seek to strengthen the family unit through the development and implementation of Parenting Education Programmes.

8. Assist in the administration of the National Foster Care and Adoption Programme including identification and assessment of suitable foster carers and adoptive parents.

9. Assist in the coordination of National Child Abuse Programme and monitor legislation impacting on the welfare of children.

10. Assist in developing community outreach programmes and conduct lectures to various groups and organisations.

11. Submit monthly reports.

**Community Development programs which include intellectual disability issues as one of the activities. (If you know any)**

Community development programs which include intellectual disability issues take place mainly within the special education system. Intellectual Disabilities are the largest group of disabilities within the special education system. Dunnator Special Education School works with a few corporate citizens in developing greater independence for persons with Intellectual Disabilities through employment. Although the numbers of persons employed have not increased over the years, there are a few persons with intellectual disabilities who have been in long term employment, through the schools initiative. Dunnator also runs a project to create employment, through the making of dolls. The students make the dolls for sale to the general public in so doing receive payment for their work.

**Situations of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

**Diagnosis**

The Child Development and Guidance Centre (CDGC) is responsible for the diagnosis of children with Disabilities. The centre began fifteen years ago; however, over the past few years it has evolved into a more diagnostic and treatment centre. The centre comprises of a pediatrician, clinical psychologist, occupational therapist and a speech and language therapist. Referrals to the Centre come from Medical practitioners at the child health clinics, Human Services and the Multidisciplinary Team of the Ministry of Education.

## **Education**

The Ministry of Education has set up a multidisciplinary Team to diagnose children with Intellectual Disabilities who are in mainstream schools. If/when these children are diagnosed they are referred to special classes or may be transferred to a school where they will better be served. The Ministry of Education's team comprises of a medical doctor, psychologist and a special educator.

## **Vocational training and Job Opportunity**

Persons with Intellectual Disabilities are educated in segregated special education school. The majority of persons in the special education schools and centers have been diagnosed with intellectual disabilities. However, many persons with intellectual disabilities are kept at home due to several difficulties in accessing education.

Vocational training and job opportunities are very limited for persons with Intellectual disabilities. The segregated schools are responsible to ensure that some level of vocational training is offered and to also create opportunities for employment. The schools endeavour to work with private and corporate citizens in promoting employment for person with Intellectual disabilities. Very few persons with intellectual disabilities have been able to find employment.

## **Support Organisations**

### **Government Agencies**

The Division of Human services provide social work interventions to persons with Intellectual disabilities.

### **Number of NGOs concerned with Person with Intellectual Disabilities**

The National council of and for persons with disabilities was established to promote fair and equal treatment for all persons with disabilities. The council oversees and provides support to the district councils.

**Based on the information above, what are the issues to solve to conduct effective supports for persons with intellectual disabilities?**

**Issues to be solved:**



✓ **Lack of employment opportunity**

Persons with Intellectual Disabilities should be given a fair opportunity to be a part of our work force. There should be advocacy for training of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities so they can have a skill which could be used to generate income. Also, there are persons with disabilities who are skilled in certain areas and yet it is a challenge for them to find employment. There should be advocacy for companies to recognize these persons as part of our work force.

✓ **Lack of public awareness and education**

Many persons are not educated about disabilities and may tend to look down at PWIDs. Also, some persons may not even be aware of the high numbers of PWIDs in our country. It is very important to bring awareness to persons, to educate them about the different forms of disabilities. By doing so, persons may be more receptive and more empathetic to PWIDs and will treat them equally.

✓ **Lack of Financial Assistants for PWIDs**

It is very important that the Government set up a program to contribute financially to PWIDs or their families. It is a financial struggle for some families who are caring for PWIDs, especially since most persons with PWIDs are unemployed.

✓ **Lack of Teachers/Schools**

The Government of Saint Lucia should encourage persons to get trained in the special education field by offering scholarships for study. Many children with Intellectual Disabilities suffer because there are not enough schools on the island and these children are kept on a waiting list for years, some never attending school. There should be advocacy for more special education schools in Saint Lucia.

✓ **Lack of Respite Services for Family of PWIDs**

There is no respite service available for families of PWIDs. There should be a service whereby families can get a day off or a weekend off. Government can facilitate this by providing trained caregivers to families with PWIDs or Government can build a center where PWIDs can be dropped off for a day, while the families rest or attend to other matters.

✓ **Lack of Recreation and Fun Activities for PWIDs**

PWIDs are persons like everyone else and need to enjoy life and have fun. There should be advocacy for a center for fun and games to be built for PWIDs. There they can take part in sporting activities and socialize and make new friends. The center should also cater to other persons so that they too can mingle and socialize with PWIDs.