Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

National preparedness, response and recovery actions in situations of disaster and crisis (2017-2020)
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Prepared by
Shevon Letang PhD
13 January 2021
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<td>CCL</td>
<td>Caribbean Congress of Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAT</td>
<td>Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores (Latin American Confederation of Workers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPSA</td>
<td>Caribbean Public Services Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREAD</td>
<td>Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRRP</td>
<td>Climate Recovery and Resilience Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAWU</td>
<td>Dominica Amalgamated Workers’ Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>DBS Radio</td>
<td>Dominica Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOMWASCO</td>
<td>Dominica Water and Sewage Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPSU</td>
<td>Dominica Public Service Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EHS</td>
<td>Environmental health and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency (US Agency)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPS</td>
<td>Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2014-2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITUC</td>
<td>International Trade Union Confederation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUF</td>
<td>International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurants, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>Nationally determined contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPO</td>
<td>National Emergency Planning Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRDS</td>
<td>National Resilience Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWU</td>
<td>National Workers’ Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSHA</td>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDNA</td>
<td>Post-Disaster Needs Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Personal protective equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>Public Services International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUCA</td>
<td>Trade Union Confederation of the Americas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>WAWU</td>
<td>Waterfront and Allied Workers Union</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Executive summary

In the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017, which blazed a trail of destruction in Dominica, and left the country reeling from a loss of approximately 226 per cent of GDP, the Government declared to the world its bold vision of Dominica becoming the first climate resilient nation in the world. Dominica was, and is still, in the throes of recovery when it was hit with another disaster: the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its declaration, the country has become a nation in transition as it seeks a sustainable development trajectory, reflected in strategic plans such as the Fourth Medium-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2014 - 2018, National Resilience Development Strategy (2018) and the Climate Resilience Recovery Plan (2020). In its quest for becoming a climate resilient nation, Dominica declared it places a high value on positioning people at the centre of development strategies seeing that the outcomes will impact their lives for many years to come, and furthermore, for generations. This value is also articulated in its National Resilience Development Strategy (2018) and operationalized in the framework of the Climate Resilience Recovery Plan (2020). As such, the Strategy and the Plan call for strong stakeholder collaborations where citizens can have a voice in development initiatives and reflected in policy decisions. Despite this value on having a collaborative approach from all societal sectors, trade union organizations lament their input into such activities are often overlooked.

Through the implementation of strategies geared towards a more sustainable development and becoming a more climate resilient nation, Dominica expects socio-economic, environmental, public health, and other outcomes such as:

- better quality of life;
- better and more jobs;
- sustainable growth;
- improved health, and
- more equality/equity (gender integration; human rights of individuals and vulnerable groups; gender equality).

Dominica's vision for its citizens as it transitions, therefore aligns with that of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for Dominica and the rest of the Caribbean. The ILO, while promoting sustainable development policies to combat global societal and environmental ills, and in fostering its Decent Work Agenda, mandates a just transition to other sources of work income that are sustainable. As such, the ILO, in line with its Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), targeted three Caribbean countries including Dominica, to strengthen their capacities to become more resilient in post-disaster situations. Specifically, ILO’s objectives are to (a) ensure these countries implement its guiding principles, using practical tools, including those it developed, “to support resilience, adaptation to climate change, and greening of the economy, and for (b) more holistic, inclusive disaster preparedness and increased national awareness and capacities to mainstream Decent Work in early recovery stages.” In transitioning to a more sustainable society and way of life, it is essential that the four pillars of social protection, rights at work, employment, and social dialogue on which ILO’s Decent Work Agenda rests, be inculcated into development and growth policies.
Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

Photo: Michael Atwood / UNDP
Introduction

1.1. Dominica’s resilience programme agenda

In 2017, category 5 Hurricane Maria, which struck the tiny Caribbean island of Dominica, home to 69,625 people (2006 estimate, Government of Dominica, 2020), left the country and its citizens reeling in the aftermath of the wide swath of economic, social, environmental and infrastructural destruction. Losses amounted to 226 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) (Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), 2017). Furthermore, the PDNA assessed the estimated cost for recovery would be approximately 230 per cent of GDP. The current COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly caused disruption to the quality of life as citizens and Government strategize to adapt to what may seem the ‘new normal’. The Prime Minister, Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit (June 2020), reported that despite a downward spiral in revenue collection, almost $22 million Eastern Caribbean dollars have been spent on the COVID-19 response. The continued response will necessitate more spending he noted, which was not advantageous to a country still recovering from Hurricane Maria’s extreme destruction. Together, these major disasters have increased the rallying cry for a resilient Dominica.

The Government has repeatedly expressed the importance of people-centred development in building a resilient Dominica seeing that the outcomes will impact their lives as well as the lives of generations to come. This vision is also articulated in its National Resilience Development Strategy (2018) and operationalized in the framework of the Climate Resilience Recovery Plan (2020) which visualizes Dominica as the world’s first climate resilient country. Stakeholder participation is therefore viewed as a strategic and critical factor in promoting and achieving resilience. Citizens’ input in the identification of key challenges and outcomes has also been recognized as essential. Therefore, trade unions as people-centred organizations and their members, will have a stake in the response and recovery initiatives in problem definition, outcome identification, among others, because they are likely to be impacted. The United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA, 2011) endorses, among some key factors, the people-centred collaborative approach, as critical to a community’s successful recovery. At community level, the recognition of partnerships forged with the non-governmental, private, and non-profit sectors are especially important to drive community recovery. It highlights seven factors that aid in achieving this successful recovery. They include: (a) proactive community engagement, public participation, and public awareness; (b) effective decision-making and coordination; (c) integration of community recovery planning services; (d) well-managed recovery; (e) well-administered financial acquisition; (f) organizational flexibility, and (g) resilience building.

With the goal of making Dominica the first climate resilient nation in the world, the country has supplemented two of its development strategies, the Growth and Social Protection Strategy (2014-2018) and the National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 (2018) with the introduction of the Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020-2030 (CRRP). Dominica also recognizes the critical importance of...
hardwiring resilience into all sectoral strategic plans. This requires the incorporation of the resilience agenda and its goals into sectoral strategic plans and into capital projects during the budgetary process.

The CRRP's description of a climate resilient Dominica is a country that has: (a) stronger overall socio-economic development trajectory, and (b) reduced impact from climatic and other environmental shocks. Its resilience outcomes are focused in six core areas, namely: (i). strong communities, (ii). robust economy, (iii). well-planned and durable infrastructure, (iv). strengthened institutional systems, (v). enhanced collective consciousness, and (vi). protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets. These outcomes are incorporated into a national sustainable development framework for climate resilience. This framework speaks to international development frameworks such as the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015; the Sendai Framework adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on 18 March 2015; Dominica's national commitment under the Paris Agreement on climate mitigation adaptation and finance, and Dominica's National Resilience Development Strategy. Dominica's national sustainable development framework for climate resilience also supports ILO's employment-centred recovery from crisis and aspects of the Just Transition Towards Environmentally Sustainable Communities for All Recommendation, 2018. (No. 105). Table 1 subsequently outlines an ILO model of a just transition broken down into thematic areas and statements. Overall, Dominica's definition of resilience aligns with that of the ILO. The ILO defines resilience as “the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.” (ILO Recommendation No. 205, 2017; also known as R205).

According to the government’s Climate Resilient Recovery Plan, 2020-2030 and in consideration of other strategic plans, for example, the Fourth Medium-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2014-2018, the following summary of outcomes and long-term impacts are expected. Notably, some of the targets in its major strategic initiatives are set to be achieved in 2020.

**Expected outcome:** Building strong communities through having a robust economic and well-planned durable infrastructure. Herein there is expected to be:

- better quality of life;
- better and more jobs;
- sustainable growth;
- improved health, and
- more equality/equity (gender integration; human rights of individuals and vulnerable groups; gender equality).

**Expected long term impacts:** Features of a resilient Dominica will be:

- a robust economy through a stronger development trajectory;
- reduced impact from environmental and other shock;
- reduced time it takes to recover from environmental and other shocks;
- peace by hardwiring resilient values, thoughts, and behaviours into Dominica society and organizations;
- enhancing collective consciousness;
- protecting environmental resources;
Introduction

1.2. The ILO programme purpose

The ILO, while endorsing sustainable development policies to combat these global societal and environmental ills, and in fostering its Decent Work Agenda, mandates a just transition to other sources of work and income that are sustainable. In accordance with ILO Recommendation No.205, the ILO targeted three Caribbean countries, including Dominica, to strengthen their capacities to become more resilient in post-disaster situations. Specifically, the ILO project objectives are to (a) ensure these countries implement its guiding principles, using practical tools, including those it developed, “to support resilience, adaptation to climate change, and greening of the economy, and for (b) more holistic, inclusive disaster preparedness and increased national awareness and capacities to mainstream Decent Work in early recovery stages.” Towards this end, ILO’s key areas of focus are: having an enhanced vocational qualification standard and curricula for technical and vocational educational training in the Caribbean that responds to future needs for green jobs; national employment and social sector contingency plans that facilitate resilience of social protection systems; increase in, and more effective tripartite social dialogue on Just Transition Guidelines; increased understanding in Caribbean societies of how vital Decent Work is in preparedness, recovery and resilience, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals among others. (ILO, n.d.).

Dominica trade unions have expressed the critical need for empirical data collection and analysis to build their capacities to participate in national policy- and decision-making and implementation of national resilience interventions. The ILO intends that this research should meet this need. Furthermore, the unions charge that they are not represented in national resilience policy interventions. saying the input of trade unions and workers are minimal or lacking in national adaptation plans. An empirical collection and analysis of data would be a starting point in facilitating trade union capacities become actively involved. In so doing, this would be a precursor to carrying out the mandate for ILO’s capacity building in the areas of adaptation to climate change, supporting resilience, greening of the economy and its Decent Work Agenda. In this regard the research seeks answers regarding the impact of the 2017 Hurricane Maria, and the effect and consequences of response and recovery actions on trade unions (and their members), as well as the effects of COVID-19 on the organizations and their membership. Furthermore, this study seeks to find out whether there is any indication of a possible correlation between trade union capacity to build workers’ resilience (pre- and post-disasters) and their representation in national resilience policy intervention processes.

1.3. General information on the ILO Decent Work Agenda

The ILO Decent Work Agenda rests on four strategic objectives, namely: (a) promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, (b) create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income, (c) enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all, and (d) strengthen tripartism and social dialogue. Decent Work for All embodies the principles and values of social justice and satisfactory and acceptable working conditions. engages in promoting opportunities for men and women to acquire decent productive jobs that will allow them to have economic security, equity, human dignity in an environment, which allows the individual freedom to thrive and be productive (ILO, 2003).

In the area of social protection, ILO’s Decent Work Agenda espouses that everyone has a basic right to social protection and there should be universality of coverage. Social protection is defined by the ILO as

- conscious population that values resilience (over 90 per cent of population), and
- culture enrichment (history, life experiences, and knowledge of resilience in the population).

(See also pp.31–35 of the National Resilience Development Strategy Dominica 2030 for Dominica’s idea of a resilient nation.)
“the set of public measures that a society provides for its members to protect them against economic and social distress that would be caused by the absence or a substantial reduction of income from work as a result of various contingencies (sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age, and death of the breadwinner); the provision of health care; and, the provision of benefits for families with children.” (ILO, 2003). This definition of social protection includes not only the traditional social security measures but also non-statutory measures of social security. ILO’s model of social protection declares tripartite social dialogue and collaborative partnerships between government, employer, and worker representatives are essential in policy development and programmes. Among the benefits promoted by the ILO model of social protection are (a) the enrichment of human and social capital which promotes individual productivity thus fostering economic growth and sustainable development, and (b) the enablement of sustainable development through greater social cohesion and stability.

In a society that is transitioning and responding to the challenges presented by climate change, as undoubtedly Dominica is, issues of economic and social justice may arise. To counter this, workers and their unions must be able to meaningfully engage in effective negotiations with government and business entities (Cartwright, n.d.). In transitioning to a more sustainable society and way of life, it is essential that the four pillars of ILO’s Decent Work Agenda, namely social protection, rights, employment, and social dialogue, are inculcated into development and growth policies. ILO (2015) refers to the following as essential policy areas to enable environmental, economic, and social sustainability: macroeconomic and growth policies; industrial and sectoral policies; enterprise policies; skills development; occupational safety and health; social protection; active labour market policies; rights; social dialogue and tripartism. In view of the foregoing, the necessary elements for a model of just transition are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. Model of just transition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic- employment</td>
<td>Workers receive supporting income during transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic – community development</td>
<td>Economic development initiatives in affected communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education – training</td>
<td>Training/educational programmes to facilitate and access decent jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Sharing</td>
<td>Adoption of technological, innovative best practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>Supportive labour standards and collective bargaining framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectoral Collaboration</td>
<td>Applicable national, regional, international inter- and intra-sectoral collaborative initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Development (R&amp;D)</td>
<td>R&amp;D to aid in adjusting to technological advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice</td>
<td>Equitable distribution of benefits and burdens in communities and workplaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Safety &amp; Health</td>
<td>Workplace safety; worker health &amp; safety</td>
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Modified from source, Cartwright J. (n.d.). World Resources Institute
1.4. International guidelines/policy frameworks relevant to union actions/involvement regarding disaster situations

As affiliates of regional and international trade union organizations, it is feasible for the Dominican trade unions to gravitate towards these organizations for leadership and advice through policy guidelines and frameworks of international best practices. These guidelines can enable an effective union response in a world that is rapidly changing and demands the evolution of trade unions to fight the challenges presented by climate change, emergent new pandemic diseases, unsustainable development, among others.

International organizations, such as the ILO, the Public Services International (PSI), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) among others, have issued guidelines specifically for unions, that unions can follow in the COVID-19 pandemic and in other disaster situations. ILO has also issued directives for unions to help them facilitate the smooth transition for workers, as nations, like Dominica, seek a greener economy.

At the International Labour Conference in 2017, ILO’s guidance document, Employment for Peace and Decent Work for Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) was adopted. The Recommendation is a guide to actions to be taken to generate employment and decent work for the purposes of preventing crisis and enabling recovery in crisis situations, and ultimately, building resilience.

In its policy brief on guidance towards transitioning to a greener pathway, ILO advises unions of their roles in the transitional process. Just transition requires holistic policy approaches to livelihoods, workplaces, and development, and the role of unions is critical to achieving this. Ultimately, its publication, Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (ILO 2015), is a framework to guide the national implementation process of the Paris Agreement and the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under the Paris Agreement, nations committed to reduce global warming by 2100, to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. In consideration of this Agreement, national development priorities in the decarbonization process must align with a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent and quality jobs. ILO emphasizes that the prominence of trade union involvement in the decarbonization process will be dependent on their capacity (preparation) and the degree and form of their involvement. ILO further recommends that countries’ nationally determined contributions (NDC) should be implemented using ILO guidelines to manage the process, to assure that sustainable development principles and decent work are incorporated holistically (ILO, 2018).

In its guidance to trade unions on dealing with COVID-19 in the workplace, the Public Services International (PSI) advises unions on response strategies for the protection of workers’ rights, and health and safety in the workplace. For an effective response, it stresses the importance of unions keeping abreast of the latest situation regarding COVID-19. Unions should ensure governments, employers, and management at international and local levels are held accountable and are transparent; unions should acquire and use information about occupational safety and health best practices employed in other countries to agitate for improvement. They should also ensure there is a mechanism for workers, especially essential ones, to frequently supply the union with information on workplace conditions and how workers are coping; they should participate in sharing knowledge with other unions, and workers, about actions initiated by international, regional, and local unions which can be implemented in the country. Unions also should safeguard labour rights through enabling workers to act collectively and be able to withhold their services if public and private employers do not take action to keep the worker and workplace safe and healthy (Public Services International, March 13, 2020).

ILO has published another extremely useful guide that enables a better understanding of the provisions of Recommendation No. 205 and foster its practical implication. Through examples of shared practical experiences, trade unions are guided towards possible strategies which would assist them in supporting national (including private sector) efforts to generate jobs and promote decent work. This support will enable the building of individual and national resilience after disasters even as it promotes prevention,
recovery, and peace. The guide also provides support for “the development of effective strategies and policies for trade union action”. (ILO, 2019).

In a disaster situation it is crucial to stay current on the latest developments and recommendations. Situations are prone to change very quickly and accordingly so will the recommendations. Such is the case with COVID-19. It behaves governments, disaster management organizations, employers, communities, workers’ organizations, and workers to keep abreast of this very fluid pandemic. Unions themselves have a role to be adequately prepared to respond appropriately. Kertist Augustus, General Secretary of the Waterfront and Allied Workers’ Union (WAWU) reported he quickly upgraded his knowledge about occupational safety and health and the approaching pandemic so he could respond in a timely and effective manner to dialogue with employers. This is an appropriate response. Glynn and Taplin (2010) concur regarding unions’ roles in a case such as this, saying there will be expectations for fair wages, occupational safety and health and respect for workers’ rights and protection. A disaster does not in any way alter expectations that applicable labour laws would prevail.

1.5. Research scope and objectives

Based on the foregoing expression in the study’s Terms of Reference (TOR) of trade union data needs, and in alignment with Recommendation No. 205 and the Guidelines for a Just Transition, the ILO has identified 14 questions for data gathering and analysis in the TOR that will guide this research. As stated before, the unions indicated a lack of representation in national resilience policy development and implementation. Therefore, the research will examine a possible relationship between trade union capacities for building worker resilience (pre-and post-disasters) and their representation in national resilience policy intervention processes. The overall objectives of this research are to acquire information on the effects of these identified national disasters from the period 2017 to 2020, and the impacts of national response and recovery actions on national trade unions and their members. In so doing, the study will expose the key issues and lessons learnt in the analysis. The study will also address the role of trade unions in building worker resilience during the period of 2017 to 2020.

Specifically, the study identifies the following as sub objectives of the overall ones:

- identify and describe the economic, social, and legal frameworks and activities at the national level that guides recovery and response strategies,
- identify and outline pertinent regional and international organizational governance guidelines that foster implementation of response and recovery programmes and activities,
- highlight national climate resilience and the COVID-19 key strategic initiatives and their status,
- determine trade unions’ effectiveness in the response and recovery phases,
- describe and evaluate the role of the unions in disaster responses and recovery,
- discover and quantify as appropriate, the economic, social, health and environmental impacts on trade union members and their families,
- identify risks and vulnerabilities that challenged the response/recovery capacity and resilience of trade unions and workers,
- highlight and analyse lessons learnt from management of the recovery processes from the perspective of trade unions.
Therefore, in its scope, and as applicable to the 14 questions outlined in the TOR (See Appendix 1), the study will include the following background information:

- ILO’s vision, mandates, for example, Recommendation No. 205, and their relevance to identified national developmental plans and goals,
- overall impacts of Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 in Dominica and on its citizens,
- national disaster response strategies/actions, including projects; agencies and coordination for disaster management, the resilience plans, and related national organizational frameworks and roles and their applicability to Recommendation No. 205,
- national, regional, international collaborative linkages,
- trade union background information – organizational structure, and their international and regional affiliations,
- role of trade unions in disaster response and recovery, and resilience,
- national and international legal and policy frameworks relevant to union actions/involvement regarding disaster situations, and
- status of recovery initiatives.

1.6. Research impact framework

ILO is focused on the capacity building of trade unions and workers to develop their resilience in order to make a meaningful contribution to their nation’s sustainable development, especially in the face of global climate change and other emergent national and global events, like COVID-19 that threaten both citizens and their environment. Therefore, the capacities of trade unions as reflected in their strategies, their abilities, and the national (as well as regional and international) opportunities they are afforded to facilitate worker and country resilience are important. For the purposes of this research, the ILO definition of resilience will be used. This definition reads as follows: “...resilience means the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.” (ILO, 2017).

In determining trade union capacity for building worker resilience, the following variables will be considered in the measurement and analysis. Some are included in Figure 1 below. They are: strategic plan available, union’s level of disaster preparedness and response; their roles and execution of roles in disaster response and recovery, mainly in accordance with ILO Recommendation No. 205, and with other literature; organizational variables (membership numbers, data-driven or not; technical expertise available, sufficient staff and representatives and their respective roles, financial status to execute planned programmes and activities, training logistics, communication); knowledge-sharing capabilities; powers granted by national law and international mandates; and national, regional and international collaborative linkages.

Worker resilience will be determined by their access to skills training, advice, and material support to enable a just transition to new or modified jobs including green jobs; access to social protection; satisfactory environmental health and safety (EHS) in workplaces and shelters; adequate representation in negotiation and social dialogue; and whether they demonstrate a heightened awareness and capability to be prepared, responsive, and resilient.
Figure 1 below provides a framework that will guide the research in Dominica. It conceptualizes the information in the foregoing paragraphs with that of the variables and expected outcomes of the TOR. The double-headed arrows show the interconnectedness of ILO’s mandates with trade union capacity and worker resilience and their convergence in contributing to Dominica’s goal achievement for resilience which ultimately rests on the three key national development pillars. These pillars are: Pillar 1. Climate-resilient systems; Pillar 2. Prudent disaster risk management; and Pillar 3. Effective disaster response and recovery.

**Figure 1. Conceptual diagram of the interrelatedness between Dominica’s strategic resilience outcomes and ILO mandates, trade union capacity, and worker resilience**

Input variables: National strategic plans; governance processes and structures; laws and policies; trade union partnerships and activities; educational awareness; social networks and collaborative exercises; business creation and continuity.
Methodology

Based on the TOR requirements for the research, this is a qualitative and quantitative case study of four trade unions and their membership in Dominica.

In attempting to gain deeper insight into the quantitative results, issues and concerns of trade union leaders and members are explored and analysed to better understand and evaluate how national response and recovery initiatives related to Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 impacted them. The study looks at national (including trade unions) disaster management processes used in the cases of these two disasters. Whatever disaster management processes and actions, that government and other actors take in the national interest, will impact trade unions as representatives and bargaining agents for a critical mass of the country’s populace – the workforce – as well as the workforce itself. Furthermore, how trade unions mitigate, can respond and do respond to these actions and impacts will affect their workers. Therefore, the research looks at government actions and responsiveness, trade union actions and capacities to adequately respond in disaster management matters, and on behalf of their membership, as Dominica seeks to generate sustainable development and build national resilience. Trade union members’ (also called workers in this research) assessment of both trade union and government actions are highlighted and their reports of resulting impacts from such actions are provided.

The research was conducted over a period of 5 months from 8 June 2020 to 5 October 2020.

For the purposes of this study, disaster management includes the organization and management of resources and responsibilities at all stages of the preparedness, response, and recovery processes. Disaster management is inclusive of planning, to monitoring for outcomes to minimize the disaster’s impact.

“Disaster means a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts” (ILO, 2019)

Disaster response includes a series of actions taken after a disaster for needs assessment, minimization of suffering, containing the disaster’s impact and preparing for recovery.

Recovery entails “restoration and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.” (Government of Dominica, Emergency Shelter Manual, 2019, citing UNISDR, 2009)

2.1. Data collection methods

Key data sources included trade union leaders and representatives, a Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) Disaster Committee official, workers who are trade union members, administrative documents, including national legislative and policy documents and their strategic plans (CRRP, National...
Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

Disaster Plan, National Resilience Development Strategy 2030, Fourth Medium-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2014-2018), and project activities, reports, and media archives. Reports of international and regional agencies including the ILO, World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO) were also sourced for information. These agencies’ guidelines are helpful to discover appropriate best standards and practices and thus deviation from them. Data was collected from the key data sources above through interviews, questionnaire administration, and grey literature review. The peer reviewed literature was helpful too. Multiple attempts made to the Ministry of Health, to obtain an interview or send a questionnaire to a COVID-19 Committee member proved unsuccessful.

2.2. Research participants’ characteristics

To adequately meet research objectives, a snapshot of the trade unions and characteristics of their membership are provided. Table 2 gives some insight into some of the main characteristics of the four unions. These unions are the Dominica Public Service Union (DPSU); Waterfront Allied and Workers Union (WAWU); Dominica Amalgamated Workers Union (DAWU); and the National Workers Union (NWU). The Table displays their administrative staff complement, their affiliation to regional and international organizations, the types and job sectors they represent, and the number of members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade union</th>
<th>Regional/international affiliation</th>
<th>No. of staff members</th>
<th>Sector represented</th>
<th>Job sectors represented</th>
<th>No. of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DPSU</td>
<td>Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL); Caribbean Public Services Association (CPSA); Public Services International (PSI); International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public &amp; Private</td>
<td>All categories of public sector workers and some in statutory bodies</td>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAWU</td>
<td>International Trade Union Confederation; Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Services sector, Hotel sector, Agricultural sector, Construction sector, Shipping/Airline sector</td>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAWU</td>
<td>ITUC; CCL: International Transport Workers Federation (ITF); International Union of Food (IUF); Trade Union Confederation of America (TUCA)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Bank, Tourism, Supermarket</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWU</td>
<td>Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores (American Confederation of Workers, CLAT); World Confederation of Labour (WCL)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Gas station, Industrial (factory workers), Aid Bank</td>
<td>not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 outlines the characteristics of the workers who took part as research participants. In total, there were 51 subjects, which included 34 females (66.7 per cent) and 17 males (33.3 per cent). One person did not provide an answer to the questions related to trade union membership and the person’s role in the union. The DPSU had the largest number of participants in the research. NWU and DAWU together had the least. A total of 11 shop stewards participated in the research, and 38 participants were ordinary members. The table does not make a distinction between which union the parties belong to but provides a general breakdown of the relationship with the unions.

### Table 3. Nested summary of respondents/trade union members profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Trade union membership</th>
<th>Role in union</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Males</td>
<td>No. of Females</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>No of Respondents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPSU</td>
<td>37 (72.5%)</td>
<td>Shop Steward</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAWU</td>
<td>9 (17.6%)</td>
<td>Delegate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAWU</td>
<td>2 (3.9%)</td>
<td>Ordinary member</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWU</td>
<td>2 (3.9%)</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1 (2.0%)</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (33.3%)</td>
<td>34 (66.7%)</td>
<td>51 (100 %)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3. Selection of trade union members

Criteria for inclusion in the workers’ sample survey were being employed before and after Hurricane Maria, and before the COVID-19 pandemic. The unions supplied a list of possible members including delegates and shop stewards as possible research participants. Notably, none of the unions have a complete database on the numbers, characteristics, and contact information of their membership. In total, DPSU supplied a list of 707 workers, inclusive of delegates and a list of 18 shop stewards. In total, there were 725 persons supplied by the union. For WAWU, 27 shop stewards and seven assistants were provided. NWU supplied 11 members, chiefly shop stewards except for one person, and DAWU supplied five persons. A WAWU shop steward in turn provided a list of 20 members. WAWU provided in total 54 possible participants, inclusive of shop stewards and members.

To encourage participation, a few members, including shop stewards, were first sensitized about the research through the unions.

A systematic random sample was done of DPSU 725 members to secure a sample. To determine the number of persons to be sampled from the population, a pre-existing table of information with various sample sizes in relationship to various population sizes from the peer reviewed literature was used. For a population of 700 persons, the sample size is 248 persons (Krejcie, & Morgan, 1970).
2.4. Questionnaire construction and pretesting

A preliminary exploratory interview using the 14 questions in the TOR was executed with two trade union leaders, to explore the issues as to what happened and provide targeted focus in the questionnaire’s construction. Notably a closed-ended questionnaire for trade union leaders resulting from the interview was later developed to explore the issues more in depth.

Four categories of questionnaires were constructed based on the target, that is, trade union leader, trade union members, CREAD executive and COVID-19 executive.

The questionnaires were constructed thematically based on the TOR questions and consisted of structured and open-ended questions.

Indicators to guide evaluation of impacts were guided by the requirements of the TOR questions (See Appendix II) and outcome criteria indicators of ILO Recommendation No. 205 guidelines. ILO’s strategic guidelines such as those for a just transition to sustainable economies and the peer reviewed and grey literature, including Dominica’s expectations from its Climate Recovery and Resilience Plan, and National Resilience Development Strategy 2030, were also used to guide the development of indicators. The assessment indicators were developed using all the aforementioned grey and peer reviewed sources as a foundation for information and focus. Grey literature is inclusive of national reports, for example, development plans, government reports, organizational reports; international guidelines, briefs, and unpublished works from recognized organizations such as the ILO, and ITUC. Using the literature to guide the development of the indicators, enabled the questionnaire to be constructed to ensure the questions met criterion, construct and face validity. In other words, they would measure what they were intended to measure. Subsequently, the indicators were also used to guide the analysis of the contents of targeted national reports and newspaper reports, interviews, and survey results. Despite a comprehensive list of indicators being developed, it was not deemed necessary to use all in the analyses. A comprehensive list was developed.

It is essential to describe the quality and quantity of services, management processes and activities of the trade unions as well as the response of other national entities. Hence the chosen outcomes will take into consideration national goals, standards and guidelines including those which are internationally acceptable and feasible. Recommendation No. 205 was especially helpful in this regard.

The questionnaire for Dominican trade union members was pretested on a similar population of trade union members in the Caribbean island of Jamaica for clarity, unambiguousness, among other variables. A Cronbach alpha test of reliability of scales for internal consistency of the questionnaire scale was done using SPSS statistical software. Cronbach alpha overall was .787. This alpha is based on the covariances among the items whereas the second Cronbach alpha of .811 score result is based on the standardized items result. The results are accepted in the social sciences as satisfactory for the measuring the questionnaire’s scale of measurement.

2.5. Questionnaire administration

The questionnaire delivery was multimodal, as necessary. Prospective participants were contacted first by phone. Google voice and WhatsApp messenger were used extensively. The unions did not have the members’ emails, so they were first contacted by phone (a) to seek permission for their inclusion in the survey and to interview them, if possible, if that were their preferred choice for data collection, and (b) to secure their email addresses. Email addresses were secured in order to send out the questionnaires. Efforts to contact all the persons supplied by the unions, including the 248 from DPSU, to secure an interview, and or secure emails for sending out the questionnaire, were not successful for various reasons. For example, some workers were no longer members of the union. In total, 84 email addresses were secured from all the union members provided, and questionnaires sent to these individuals. To
DPSU members, 54 emails (or 64.3 per cent of 84) were sent; to WAWU members, 24 emails (or 28.6 per cent of 84); to DAWU members, three emails (or 3.6 per cent of 84) and to NWU members, two emails (or 2.4 per cent of 84). Three persons were interviewed even though their email address had been secured. In total there were 51 email responses (61 per cent) collected for analysis. Table 3 shows the breakdown of research participants by union, who responded to the questionnaires.

To increase questionnaire return rates, phone calls were made repeatedly, and email reminders and WhatsApp messages were sent, as required. Generally, three callbacks were made. When called during the workday, contact could not be made in several instances, so late evening to early night calling, and on weekends was done, subsequently WhatsApp was used to make contact. Prospective participants were more likely to respond using this medium. In fact, the questionnaire was the preferred method for data collection for several respondents because of the flexibility and convenience for them. Phone interviews were also done with three participants.

2.6. Analysis

In analysis, consideration was given to learning what happened. What are things/conditions/situations such as in the response and recovery phases of the disasters. The data was coded into a database and quantitative analysis executed, using IBM SPSS Statistics 27, a statistical software platform.

A content analysis of respondents' qualitative responses, media, online organizational reports/documents was done. Notably, the respondents are the best assessors of impact, so their perceptions were analysed in that light. In these cases, assessment through content analysis of literature and speech pertaining to perceptions of intervention outcomes was executed. The content analysis took into consideration, the national, international, individual, family, and cultural contextual issues surrounding Hurricane Maria and COVID-19. It was used to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges, opportunities and the lessons learnt identified in workers', leaders', and official's responses. Observations were made about patterns in responses, trends, and common themes considering the indicators. Evaluative reasoning was done bringing together criteria indicators and evidence to make judgements. Information from all the sources were triangulated in synthesis to corroborate responses and to form a cohesive picture of the whole. To gain deeper insight into the lack of union involvement, the study will also explore alternatives to this claim.

For example, is the union itself also a factor in representation being hindered? In analysis, key related national findings observed in the review of grey literature and media were identified and compared for any corroboration with the trade unions' answers and activities, for example, their involvement in national disaster management initiatives. The study sought specifically to discover possible root causes.

The study also examined some goals and expected outcomes of the National Resilience Development Strategy, National Disaster Plan, and the Climate Resilience Plan to see what has been accomplished so far. This too is determined as impact.

2.7. Quality control

Quality control was ensured by first having the researcher as the sole data collector, cleaner of the data, and coder, thus omitting interobserver variability. Secondly, whenever clarity was needed regarding a matter, help was sought from trade union leaders or a government official as appropriate.

2.8. Study limitations

The research suffered from a setback in terms of lack of data important to the study. The trade unions were unable to supply a complete list of their membership and vital contact information like emails. The lack of this sampling frame affected representative sampling and representation.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions, lockdown measures, researcher being quarantined on more than one occasion, data from the participants was only collected remotely. This severely
affected the return rate of questionnaires. Other factors that limited data collection was the inability to reach a vast majority of participants by telephone, for one reason or another, including the time of day. Additionally, some questionnaires sent by email were returned to sender. Some potential participants without emails whenever phone interviews were mentioned, would state they were rather busy at the time of first contact and later callback attempts failed. In fact, some prospective participants, who agreed to participate later reneged on their promises.

The study is subject to recall bias because all participants had to recall events that occurred three years ago (2017) in the case of Hurricane Maria. It is also subject to response bias because only participants who had active email accounts, and were willing to participate, were sent questionnaires. The study's representation of the perspectives of ordinary trade union members may be a generalization, and therefore may be an issue. Nevertheless, it provides a useful foundation, for understanding the kinds, and scope of issues in their context, and therefore an important framework.
Trade union involvement in national disaster response and recovery initiatives

3.1. Trade union national response/involvement in disaster response and recovery (COVID-19 and Hurricane Maria): Some examples

In an exploratory interview of issues with leaders of DPSU and WAWU, both leaders lamented they were not given the opportunity to be involved in any stage of the government’s national disaster planning, response and recovery strategic initiatives and activities. Neither of them has been granted any access to formalized avenues for meaningfully participation in these initiatives, including in policymaking, to make representation on their members’ behalf. An underlying issue, according to the leaders’ responses and a media account, is that the Government views the unions as troublemakers and driven by partisan politics. On the other hand, this view of partisan politics in government’s management responses and recovery in communities after Hurricane Maria, is also shared by one of the leaders and reportedly echoed by affected communities. Although the Government and the unions highly value the spirit of collectivism in response and recovery to build capacities and resilience, they are apparently wary of each other’s motives.

Through a review and analysis of media sources and administrative reports, the following disaster management activities were discovered and assessed for the presence of trade unions and/or their representatives. In each of the activities described, they were perused for actual stakeholder involvement.

The DPSU has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by seeking to dialogue with policymakers and other decision-makers in the interest of protecting its members from the threat posed by the virus (Dominica Vibes, March 10, 2020). The union laments that it has been excluded from the management of strategic initiatives and issued a national reminder that the voices of its over 2000 members have not been heard in the response strategy. The DPSU sees early involvement as critical.
Response initiatives planned by the union involved an action plan that includes meetings and discussions with workers of the way forward for worker protection. The rationale for the discussions is, workers are best able to identify their needs and then make appropriate recommendations to address these needs. An educational campaign was planned for workers and access to counselling, as necessary. The DPSU General Secretary, Thomas Letang, said (in personal communication, 8 September 2020) some meetings were held with its members.

In an emergency COVID-19 consultation, a national exercise held on 13 March 2020 to prepare for the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic to the country, the DPSU and WAWU were invited to participate. Both DPSU and WAWU presented matters concerning the welfare of their members, and in the DPSU's case, especially those on the frontline of the response such as nurses and cleaners. Welfare matters raised included pay issues such as would there be compensation for working beyond normal working hours and the possible associated psychological externalities for nurses, who would be working from specially prepared quarters, isolated from each other as well as other groups. Letang was also concerned about counselling services being offered to members as needed. Both trade union leaders stated their position on their members working in a safe working environment with provision and use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Both leaders pointed out the need for involvement in employers' and national decision-making processes on matters that would affect their workers. Letang opined that DPSU's involvement at the consultation was late in the process, it should have been earlier in a special forum where there would have been targeted dialogue between the Government and the union. The WAWU leader, Kertist Augustus related his experiences with preparing and advising a bank, and the now defunct LIAT Caribbean Airline employers, on keeping workplaces safe for workers and the public alike.

On a point of interest, a respondent in the survey stated that as a nurse working in the COVID-19 isolation unit, it was stressful living in isolation in specially prepared quarters. However, she has benefited from being able to save her salary because the cost of her lodging has been taken care of. This was a burning concern Letang expressed on behalf of DPSU's nursing members at the consultation. Apparently DPSU's concern was addressed by the Government.

A subsequent COVID-19 response by DPSU, in conjunction with the Caribbean Public Services Association (CPSA) on COVID-19, has been the presentation of a position paper (20 May 2020) to the Government of Dominica. In this paper, the DPSU reiterates it position on workers' protection and the role of the union. The responsibilities of government and workers are also outlined as per the COVID-19 pandemic response. Key recommendations for worker protection highlighted in the position paper include:

a. ensuring decent work during emergencies – stipulates workers’ rights regarding decent wages, right to work, salaries, working conditions and right to union representation; salaries should not be cut; vacation leave should not be affected to facilitate social distancing,

b. targeting social programs at the most vulnerable,

c. adhering to the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families,

d. having a national economic model that directs more funding to public services, and develops and implements policies and safeguards to assist the most vulnerable in meeting social and economic needs,

e. ongoing psycho-social support and counselling for workers. COVID-19 has redefined categories of work as essential services; these workers are now on the frontline and they, as well as their immediate families, need emotional support. Consideration must also be given to those who are more exposed and experience domestic violence because of COVID-19 stress.

f. flexible work-from-home arrangements developed and implemented where possible; where impractical, applicable, social distancing and other measures to make the workplace safe should be the alternative,
g. developing coordinated inclusive multisectoral partnerships: ongoing social dialogue and partnerships are viewed as critical to comprehensively combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among the responsibilities to workers recommended for the Government response to the pandemic are facilitating the testing of exposed frontline workers and their families and establishing a mechanism whereby trade unions will be involved in national planning action for COVID-19 economic recovery. Regarding workers’ responsibilities, they are required to be highly supportive of their union’s activities geared towards their representation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a strong advocate for stakeholder collaboration and coordination from international to local level in the fight against the pandemic. As such, it identifies a role for trade union organizations in curbing the infodemic (an overabundance of information some of which are misleading). While their specific role was not mentioned, apparently their relevance in public education is to facilitate the delivery of the correct educational message to employers and employees about keeping the workplace safe from COVID-19 (WHO, April 14, 2020). In support of the union role in public as well as member education, DPSU and WAWU report that they engaged in public education of their members through continued radio programmes. The DPSU also reports social media (Facebook) is being used to educate their members and the public.

DPSU has also used negotiation sessions with department heads to raise its members’ concerns related to disaster response and recovery.

WAWU has been involved in a renewable energy project. Through the facilitating action of WAWU, working with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Dominica’s largest hospital received in 2018 a Nanogrid Disaster Recovery Office which is off-grid and solar powered. Other partners were involved in the project as well. It was viewed as an environmentally friendly solution in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. It serves as an office for WAWU enabling the building of WAWU’s capacity by providing necessary infrastructure – a labour employment office – after the union lost its office during the hurricane. The nation benefits because there is little to no environmental impact while it also provides renewable energy to a wide range of medical and communication devices at the hospital.

The containerized off-grid office was delivered filled with relief medical and school supplies for distribution to alleviate the hardship to livelihoods resulting from job loss and other impacts. WAWU’s leader, Kertist Augustus, in a speech affirmed the union’s role in the development of the country. This speech showed his cognizance of the union’s role in recognizing the opportunities in disaster response to craft for Dominica a green and social pathway to resilience through the development of partnerships in project and human resources development. This is an example of capacity building through technical and knowledge development.

NWU activities related to disaster management consist of providing information on COVID-19 for its members on its website.

With respect to the TOR question whether trade union disaster coordination efforts regarding Hurricane Maria were well-prepared and coordinated, the unions do not possess the documentation for the study to properly assess union coordination of activities related to disaster management. However, the research relies on the response that the leaders supplied to the questionnaire and the indicators of measurement (See Appendix II) to make a judgment as to their effective coordination. The answers are in the results section of this document.

Table 4 shows the results of the literature review seeking evidence of trade union involvement in response and recovery initiatives with national stakeholder involvement. In each of the activities described, they were perused for actual stakeholder involvement. Also attempts were made to decipher their stage of involvement, if any, based on interpretation of contents.

The following letter code explains the apparent stage of their involvement:  – E=Early involvement; M=Intermediate involvement; L=Late involvement; N=No involvement
### Table 4. Assessment of trade union involvement in national social dialogue for disaster response and recovery (2017 April 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notable event/Programme (example)</th>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Stakeholder collaboration</th>
<th>Stage and presence involvement E; M; L; N</th>
<th>Purpose of TU involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Disaster Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Updates of Plan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td>Implement PDNA</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing Resilient Reconstruction in Dominica (World Bank finance – US$40 million)</td>
<td>Post Maria</td>
<td>Dominica Housing Recovery Project Initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rebuilding and Economic Partnership Consultation</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Building Climate Resilience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame Solar Nanogrid Disaster Recovery Office installation ceremony at Roseau, Port Marie Hospital</td>
<td>1 June 2018</td>
<td>Rebuilding Dominica infrastructure and command centre for emergency response</td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>A beneficiary of the resource. Overt union representation in partnership initiative. Opportunity to lobby for inclusion in national partnerships for national development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Safe Schools Policy Consultation</td>
<td>20 May 2019</td>
<td>Secure national stakeholder participation and consensus building</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Symposium</td>
<td>Nov. 2019</td>
<td>Enhancing skills development and economic competitiveness. Ensuring a sustainable supply of workforce ready labour</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narratives, literature, and media review suggest an apparent lack of national outreach to the unions for their engagement in Hurricane Maria’s disaster process initiatives. Evidence for their involvement as requested by the TOR, was only in the case of the COVID-19 National Consultation. There was some level of involvement by trade unions in disaster response and recovery initiatives and activities principally when the unions took some action to engage nationally. This has been noted mainly in the cases of DPSU and WAWU as shown in the prior text when describing their role. DAWU’s involvement occurred more on the level of workplace intervention when it took the opportunity, during an ongoing collective negotiation with a private bank employer to seek some ‘work-from-home’ concessions pertaining to COVID-19. No NWU involvement was observed.

The answer to the question posed by the TOR as to whether there was trade union and worker representation on national emergency committees and other bodies, such as the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD), National Emergency Planning Organisation (NEPO), National Emergency Executive Committee and its Task Force for Recovery, is in the negative. The leaders in their interviews were adamant there was no representation at all. The research supports this claim. Likewise, regarding the question of their involvement in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), the response to this question remains the same.
Efficacy of the National Disaster Plan (2001) in addressing social and labour issues

Dominica recognizes disaster management as a critical strategy to assure sustainability of its social and economic systems and thus its sovereignty. The preparedness phase involves developing and maintaining a National Disaster Plan and testing and exercising the plan. Recovery approaches incorporate plans for restoration of economic and social activities, service resumption, infrastructure repair or reconstruction.

The National Disaster Plan assumes that proper planning and preparation for disasters will foster outcomes such as preservation of lives and livelihoods through enhancement of sustainable development, environmental protection, and reduction of losses among others, on the trajectory to recovery.

Multi-stakeholders identified, including government, non-governmental, private, and voluntary agencies, bear responsibility for key response activities identified by the Plan. One such stakeholder is The National Emergency Planning Organisation (NEPO) Advisory Committee which reports to the Prime Minister. NEPO is responsible for recommending and designing policies, plans and guidelines for all components of present and future disaster management. The Prime Minister appoints the committee members, who are representatives drawn from the leadership of the public and private sectors.

Table 5 below assesses the relevance of the Plan by examining its contents as they relate and the extent to which they meet the criteria determined by the research's variable indicators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research indicator</th>
<th>Indicator evidenced in Plan (Yes/No/Partial)</th>
<th>A supporting statement/phrase in Plan</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation of all voices, including trade union organizations in disaster planning and recovery</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>National Disaster Management Policy Statement</td>
<td>No trade union representation detected in any phase or at any level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. “The key response activities, in the event of an emergency or disaster, rest with identified government, non-government, private and voluntary agencies” (p.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. “Include all social groups (especially opinion leaders) in recovery and development programmes” (p.39)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No trade union representation detected in any phase or at any level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional framework identified and strategies to integrate a just transition into national, local sustainable economic development</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Economic Task Force Responsibility</td>
<td>Institutional framework identified in the policy statement (pp.2-3); Disaster Plan does not specifically state how country will transition into sustainable economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>“Ensure that plans are made for the recovery of the economy at least to its original state after a disaster” (p.38)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear coordination an functional mechanisms/structure at all levels of government and community for effective communication</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Office of Disaster Management Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibilities for the logistics, for communication at all levels, and with different stakeholders, is highlighted; Communication regarding educational promotion is planned for at the various levels; To date, (2020) an early warning communication system is lacking; Data collection and dissemination being the responsibility of multiple organizations affects the mechanism for systemic data consolidation and sharing; Mechanisms not in place for rapid feedback of data from the field (such as in the area of shelter management) to allow decision-makers to make quick effective decisions. (Government of Dominica Emergency Shelter Management Plan, 2019)</td>
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<td>1. “Ensure that vital communication links function or that prescribed reports are disseminated by alternative means” (p.45)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. “Ensure that the Public Information and Education Task Force informs the general public on survival action; that it is advised on all info” (p.45)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. “Develop a network with government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector for disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency Task Force Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. “Ensure effective management procedures are in place and supported by a disaster communications network for on-site command, information sharing and relay, logistic and technical support” (p.29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research indicator</td>
<td>Indicator evidenced in Plan (Yes/No/Partial)</td>
<td>A supporting statement/phrase in Plan</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-stakeholder identification, their roles and functions clearly described and synergies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><strong>National Disaster Policy Statement</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. “The key response activities, in the event of an emergency or disaster, rest with identified government, non-government, private and voluntary agencies. These activities are detailed in the National Disaster Plan.” (p.3)</td>
<td>The Plan details roles and functions of multi-stakeholders and where necessary, accounts for their synergies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresses pre- to post-disaster recovery planning of social and labour issues at various phases (short and long term)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><strong>Recovery Task Force Responsibility</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. “Coordinate recruitment and deployment of emergency workers”&lt;br&gt;2. “Designate districts requiring recovery assistance and coordinate workforce deployment to them”&lt;br&gt;3. “Ensure existence of sector Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan based on National Development Programmes as long-term planning objectives” (p.39)</td>
<td>Example of a long-term measure is the existence of the national Climate Resilience Recovery Plan (2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies adaptable and alternative plans and strategies in considering options</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>“Ensure that all key government offices have identified alternate headquarters and developed relocation plans” (p.42)</td>
<td>Here, alternative plans are considered only for government infrastructure. However, this is essential because government systems generally spearhead the national coordination of social services. Notably options/alternatives are mentioned for shelters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides clear information on the systems, synergies and protocols for access and referrals to the kinds of essential health and social services available</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifies relevant mitigation strategies, and for responses and recovery for educational, environmental sustainability, health, economic, labour and cultural sector issues</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><strong>Ministry of Trade Responsibility</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. “Adopt appropriate conservation policies and propose the implementation of environmental impact assessments for development projects with a view to reducing vulnerability to natural hazards” (p.49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research indicator</td>
<td>Indicator evidenced in Plan (Yes/No/Partial)</td>
<td>A supporting statement/phrase in Plan</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifies relevant mitigation strategies, and for responses and recovery for educational, environmental sustainability, health, economic, labor and cultural sector issues (cont’d)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2. “Assess impacts on the environmental sector of all disasters and report on the immediate and long-term effects” (p. 37) <strong>Economic Stability Task Force</strong> 1. &quot;Develop strategies and plans that ensure economic stability during disasters&quot; 2. &quot;Implement plans to protect economic stability and collate an after-action report on its status&quot; (p. 38) <strong>Ministry of Health Responsibility</strong> 1. &quot;Monitor the implementation of the Health Services disaster plan&quot; (p. 49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan points to training opportunities, recovery of economic activity, employment, livelihoods, and social protection</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><strong>Ministry of Finance Responsibility</strong> 1. &quot;Develop plans and procedures for the disbursement of financial assistance to victims of a disaster&quot; 2. &quot;Prepare guidelines and qualification requirements for the receipt of financial assistance by victims from the Government in the response and recovery period&quot; (p. 51) 3. &quot;Initiate the formation of a disaster relief fund and develop priorities and procedures for its use&quot; (p. 51) <strong>Disaster Emergency Committee Responsibility</strong> 1. “Assess the social effects of disasters and emergencies and establish rehabilitation programmes sensitive to social needs of the victims” (p. 66) 2. &quot;Coordinate the development of District plans for: Training &amp; public awareness programs&quot; (p. 64) <strong>Health Services Task Force Responsibility.</strong> 1. &quot;Training of First-Aid Personnel for operation at emergency shelters and other First-Aid Stations&quot; (p. 28)</td>
<td>A Hurricane Maria Disaster Relief Fund was set up by the Government of Dominica</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eleven indicators assessed whether the National Disaster Plan (2001) addressed social and labour needs. Evidence of how it supports labour and social issues were assessed through gathering relevant statements (contents) in the Plan and looking at the indicators’ criteria. The status of some aspects of the components of the Plan are mentioned in the remarks section.

The research determined that five (or 45.5 per cent) of 11 criteria indicators were met. An equal amount, (five or 45.5 per cent), was partially met. One (or 9 per cent) was not met. Altogether, six (or 55 per cent) of the criteria that measured effectiveness were only partially or not met. Interestingly, while the Plan points to training opportunities, recovery of economic activity, employment, livelihoods, and social protection, it does not provide clear information on the systems, synergies and protocols for access and referrals to the kinds of essential health and social services available. Notably, there is no evidence of trade unions or their representatives named in the planning process. If any trade union member is present, it is in another capacity, representing their organization, such as the Dominica Water and Sewage Company (DOWASCO), but not in the capacity of a union member or representative. Overall, according to the criteria of measurement, there is room for improvement in the Plan in how well it represents social and labour issues.

The implementation structure of the National Disaster Plan has been clearly identified. Monitoring activity mentioned as a responsible task for some relevant individuals at different phases but there is no monitoring and evaluation strategic plan to better determine the efficacy of the National Disaster Plan.
in addressing social and labour issues. However, it identifies key areas of focus in disaster management, an implementation structure and assigns roles and responsibilities from local to national level including for NGOs, service clubs, various organizations, and individual responsibilities such as permanent secretaries, etc. For example, the Ministry of Local Government and Women Affairs has responsibility for investigating reports of disaster victims needing special assistance and providing service to at-risk individuals and vulnerable groups in the response phase of a disaster. Regarding trade unions, they have not been mentioned in the plan, hence no role and responsibilities has been ascribed to them. Notably, there is no evidence of trade unions or their representatives named in the planning process. If any trade union member is present in the process, it is in another capacity, representing their organization, but not in the capacity of a union member or representative. The Plan also describes the expected actions at the different phases of disaster management, from planning to rehabilitation.
5. Social protections in national law and their implementation

5.1. Summaries of national legislation governing social protection of workers and examples of their applications

In practice, trade unions must be cognizant of what laws are applicable to workers, so that workers’ rights are not infringed upon, and the worker is able to operate under decent working conditions. The laws are therefore reflected in collective bargaining agreements. Whenever there are negotiations to reach a collective agreement, the applicable laws are applied. However, the DPSU has not been engaged in any new negotiations with Government since Hurricane Maria. Some negotiations regarding salary negotiations and other issues are currently nearing closure, and a collective agreement has been reached in one case. Negotiations take place under the auspices of the Industrial Relations Act (1986), Protection of Employment Act (1977), Protection of Wages Act (1961), and Labour Standards Act (1977) as applicable. The negotiations mentioned were on behalf of workers at Dominica Social Security, Dominica Air and Seaport, and Dominica Water and Sewerage Company Ltd. The negotiations centred around pay, hours of work, conditions of service, training, and general employee welfare matters. DAWU was negotiating with the National Bank of Dominica for benefits on behalf of its members in the bank’s employ. The DAWU (DBS Radio, August 3, 2019) notes because contractual agreements are lacking, there is a disproportionate allocation of benefits to older employees as opposed to younger employees. The union is optimistic about the outcome. Before these current negotiations are concluded, DAWU will seek to include a “work from home” agreement, according to General Secretary, Leah Shillingford. Under the present COVID-19 situation, this ‘venture’ is relevant, timely and will likely be a beneficial outcome if an agreement is reached. The applicable law/s undergirding the negotiation is the Collective Bargaining, Industrial Relations Act (1986), Chap 89:01. Notably, the Act stipulates collective agreements are binding upon all parties. After Hurricane Maria, DAWU was also prompted into a pay dispute with an employer in the tourism sector because of the employer’s refusal to pay the workers. The dispute almost forced a closure of the business. The issue is currently before a dispute tribunal under the Collective Bargaining, Industrial Relations Act (1986). Similarly, WAWU, during the COVID-19 pandemic has a dispute with a prominent hotel employer. The employer wanted to force workers employed in certain departments to take their vacation leave because they wanted to close those operations. There was also the issue of pay involved. Under the Industrial Relations Act (1986), the dispute is before a tribunal.
Further trade union activity pertaining to the application of national laws and workers’ rights is evidenced in an online article (EMO News, January 7, 2020). The article reveals WAWU’s response to the call by the Dominica Employers’ Federation (DEF) to review the Employment Act (1977) to have Sundays converted to an ordinary workday. The argument they advance, is to have the public service restructured. WAWU has expressed disagreement. Public sentiment remains controversial, the majority opinion being this is a move primarily beneficial to employers, not employees. Here, pending further developments, the matter of workers’ rights under pertinent law will be a factor.

In pursuit of its resilient agenda, it is the intent of the Government of Dominica to improve its social protection system. and desires a modern, well-structured, and adaptive social protection system. Notably, the Dominica Social Security in 2019, met the requirements of the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) for good financial governance and administration of social security systems. Thus, Dominica has enacted laws for the social protection of workers. Table 6 below outlines the laws and their provisions.

The government reports its social programmes are extensive with a mix of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) administrations. The programmes are developmental, supportive, and preventive in nature, and is applicable to all sectors, both public and private. The targeted individuals are the most vulnerable inclusive of the disabled, indigent, elderly, drug addicts among others. Communities on a whole and households are also targeted. (Dominica Growth and Protection Strategy, 2014 – 2018)

### Table 6. Dominica laws for the social protection of workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laws of social protection</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
<th>Purpose/remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Protection of Employment Act, 1977 (89:02) (Unemployment Benefit) | **Part I**  
  a. provides regulations for the termination of employment,  
b. regulation gives instances of employer rights to terminate employee,  
c. termination of probationary worker without notice allowed,  
d. provides justification for and describes the process of redundancy dismissals,  
e. written notice with reason for termination must be given to the worker (not probationary) before termination.  
**Part II**  
a. provision for a redundancy benefit plan,  
b. employers must pay redundancy benefits and amounts specified,  
c. determines when employee may claim benefits.  
**Part III**  
a. redundancy benefits fund created with a committee overseeing it,  
b. applications to be submitted to the committee for benefits or refunds.  
**Part IV**  
a. governs enforcement,  
b. regulations provided for complaints to industrial tribunal,  
c. penalties provided for offences. | Covers employment protection and its related matters; See text below for categories of workers covered under the Act and more details of the provisions. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laws of social protection</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
<th>Purpose/remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment and Safety Act 1982 (Chap 90:80.) (No. 3 of 1982)</td>
<td>Part I covers the preliminary, inclusive of the Act’s interpretation</td>
<td>Safety and health systems are reorganized and extended so that all workers are protected. The Act provides for the establishment of consultative and advisory committees, as well as the appointment of Safety Officers. NB See text below for more details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part II regulates health and welfare issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Part III covers duties of both employer and employee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part IV covers matters of safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection of Employment (Payment from Redundancy Benefits Fund) Regulations 1998 (S.R.O. No. 24 of 1998)</td>
<td>The Social Security Act allows the Director of the Social Security Board to pay a worker redundancy benefits when the employer is unable to pay, or simply does not pay the entitled worker.</td>
<td>For the payment of unemployment benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Wages Act 1961, Chap. 89:07 (No. 17 of 1961)</td>
<td>a. legal currency must be used to pay workers</td>
<td>Protection of workers’ wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. only form for renumeration must be wages</td>
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<td>c. agreements that specify where and when a worker is to spend wages are prohibited</td>
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<td></td>
<td>d. interest on wage advances forbidden</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. legal and illegal types of deductions are outlined</td>
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<td></td>
<td>f. allows for wage payments to be registered</td>
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<td></td>
<td>g. penalties for offenses</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Standards Act, 1977, Chap. 89:05, (Act No. 2 of 1977)</td>
<td>a. workers must receive overtime pay for work above routine hours</td>
<td>To mandate the fixing of workers’ wages, work hours and welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. equity in pay for genders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. regulations, administration, and enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. referral of complaints to tribunal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. specific records pertaining to employees must be kept</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Labour Contracts Act, (No. 12 of 1983) Cap. 89:04</td>
<td>a. mandates the employer to have the labour contract prepared 14 days before employment commences and stipulates the labour contract’s contents,</td>
<td>Basic labour contracts and related matters are regulated. Regulations stipulate the Act does not apply to persons employed by the state. Effects of collective industrial agreements on employee contracts are highlighted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. the contract must include maternity leave for female employees</td>
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<td>c. provisions are made for the contract’s amendment and penalties are set for violation,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laws of social protection</td>
<td>Provisions</td>
<td>Purpose/remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labour Contracts Act, (No. 12 of 1983) Cap. 89:04 (cont'd)</td>
<td>d. spells out the contents of the basic labour contract, inclusive of the responsibilities of employers (example - pay social security, contribute to redundancy fund) and of employees. The contract mandates hours of work, wages, overtime and holidays, vacation leave, termination of employment, employee rights of appeal, training, probationary periods. (See text below for more details)</td>
<td>Basic labour contracts and related matters are regulated. Regulations stipulate the Act does not apply to persons employed by the state. Effects of collective industrial agreements on employee contracts are highlighted.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part II</td>
<td>a. establishes the Industrial Relations Board and industrial relations tribunals,</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. the jurisdiction and constitution of the Industrial Relations Board are set out,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. pertains to the selection of Board members to hear an application to the Board or a related matter,</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. provisions for rules, powers, and proceedings of industrial relations tribunals,</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. industrial relations tribunal's decisions are binding on the parties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part III</td>
<td>a. sets out that a tribunal may make the distinction between an employee and a managerial employee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part IV</td>
<td>a. applies to recognition of bargaining agents (unions) for bargaining units (employees),</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. covers claims recognition, procedures, and requirements for the making of claims,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. employers obligated to acknowledge claims or issue a notice expressing their unwillingness to recognize and acknowledge the trade union making the claim,</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. the Labour Minister may determine the appropriate bargaining unit under certain conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part V</td>
<td>a. provisions for bargaining agents' recognition,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. covers claims for managerial employees' recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. unions can unite as joint bargaining agents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part VI</td>
<td>a. regulates bargaining agents' termination of recognition.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Part VII</td>
<td>a. covers collective bargaining and industrial agreements,</td>
<td></td>
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<td>b. bargaining units must negotiate,</td>
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<td>c. industrial agreements cannot exceed 3 years.</td>
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</table>

The law relating to industrial relations is brought together cohesively for efficacy; Covers collective agreements, employees’ right to join trade unions and recognition of trade unions as bargaining agents.
5.1.1. Further details of the Protection of Employment Act (1977)

In this Act, employers are mandated to give preference to former employees when hiring if the job vacancy requires the same or substantially the same job duties as what the terminated employee was performing. Notably, Part 1 gives instances when the employee might be terminated for reasons necessitating reduction in the workforce. These include: The employer has automated, modernized or mechanized all or part of his business; the employer no longer operates part, or all of the business; all or part of the business have been sold or disposed of; reorganization of the business to improve efficiency; certain employees' skill set/ qualifications are no longer needed (obsolete - here just transition may be a factor such as if the business is going green and workers must be prepared for the transition and change with the business or face the problem of redundancy); a force of nature, act of God, material shortage, mechanical shortage makes continuing the business impractical or impossible; and economic variables such as market contraction has reduced the business operations. This possibly speaks to disaster situations when businesses are likely to contract. Part 1 further elaborates the employee must consent to reduction in work hours and that the employee must receive pay during suspension from work except in the situation when his employment has been terminated. Provisions are also made for determining the continuity of an employee under certain conditions. Inclusive of these provisions are an act of God/ nature and temporary cessation of work.

However, not all categories are covered under this Act. The Dominica Social Security Department identifies these categories of workers as being exempted:

- government workers,
- managerial staff (who have and exercise authority to hire and fire employees),
- stevedores, and long-shore men
- domestic workers, and
- any employee who is the father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son, or daughter of the employer.
5.1.2. Further details of the Employment and Safety Act (1983)

The consultative and advisory committees must comprise employer and employee representation, to assist with the advisement of the Minister on the Act's administrative issues; assist with the setting of reasonable safety standards, and make recommendations to regulate safe employment practices, procedures, and techniques. Regarding safety officers, they have authority to enter any premises at any hour of the day or night to perform duties and question an employee in the absence of the employer. Safety officer may order cessation of the use of the place if workers' health and well-being are in jeopardy. Offences by employers are subject to penalties.

In outlining the duties of the employer and employee, the Act requires employers to furnish the worker with personal protective equipment, and the responsibility rests with the employee to wear them. It also highlights provision of safety measures in the operation or use of plant machinery, equipment, and premises.


If an employee becomes ill, or sustains injuries owing to an occupation illness or injury, during their employment, the employee is entitled to pay for a prescribed period. At the expense of the employer, if deemed warranted, the employer can request a medical examination of the employee.

Regarding redundancy matters, and as referenced by section 16 of the Protection of Employment Act, except in the case of natural disasters, notice or payment instead of notice must be given to the employee by the employer if the employee's position is made redundant. In periods where there is the risk of lay-off, if for the period amounting to a week, a worker is available for work, and receives no renumeration, this is regarded as a lay-off.

Elaborating on leave of absence; in the event of the death of an immediate family member, the employee is entitled to two days off with pay. In the matter of the provisions for maternity leave, requirements regarding period of application, and medical approval must be met prior to granting leave. If an employee has a grievance against the employer, there are procedures for settling personal grievances. An employee with a grievance should seek to settle the matter in a very timely manner and procedures are set out if a settlement is desired.


In DAWU leader's 2018 May Day address, mention was made of a employer reneging on agreements and that unions should come together in joint action for the betterment of workers and national development. Therefore, this report will highlight what the law says concerning when parties renge on agreements.

The Act allows unions to come together as though they are a single union in joint action as bargaining agents for bargaining purposes to bargain on behalf of a bargaining unit, or a managerial employee. Furthermore, agreements to settle disputes that are made between parties are binding upon the employer, bargaining unit or the managerial employee and the trade union. The provisions for violation of the agreement are also binding for the period covered by the agreement.

The Act also protects employees from any unfair practices of the employer and trade unions. The law allows protection against employer retaliation for employees such as delegates for representing a union and participating in union activities. Provisions are also imposed upon trade unions against any unfair union practice. The law also prohibits trade unions from interfering with an organization's formation or administration.
5.1.5. Further details of the Labour Standards Act (1977)

In specific employment areas, the minimum wage is fixed by the Minister. The Act allows the establishment of advisory boards for advising the Minister on the setting of the minimum wage.

The law also defines the hours of work for a workday and mandates employers to pay overtime for work above this period at a rate one and a half times above the regular pay rate. The law mandates the time for vacation leave and this leave must be with pay. Entitlement for maternity leave, the application and the time allotted for this leave is regulated.

Regarding equity of pay between genders, the sexes must receive the same pay in the business in which both are employed, providing it is under like conditions of work, if performing same or similar job tasks, and the jobs require similar skill sets, effort, and responsibility.

In general, with regards to examples of the laws of social protection and their implementation, according to the PDNA (2017) generally, Dominica provides various social protection programmes including a social security pension for the elderly poor over 70 years of age, an emergency assistance programme overseen by the Prime Minister’s Office, and a National Employment Programme targeting recent graduates and unemployed youths.

In 2016, the social insurance system covered 22,737 persons. The national insurance scheme is a contributory programme to which both the employer and the employee contribute. Benefits derived from the national insurance scheme include retirement pension, injury benefits, sickness payments, maternity grants, invalidity among other benefits.

5.2. Results from the questionnaire administered to trade union leaders, members and the CREAD executive member.

This section will answer the following questions from the TOR based on the results of the questionnaire. It will also highlight the status of national intervention strategies that are used in response and recovery initiatives for both Hurricane Maria and COVID-19.

The responses from the CREAD Executive Committee member are incorporated into the general discussion and other parts of the document as appropriate.

5.3. Terms of reference questions

1. What has been the economic impact on affected members/their households?

2. What are some of the specific challenges and/or opportunities that workers and their representatives faced?

3. What lessons can be learnt from the management of the recovery process?

4. Are workers and citizens in general being adequately sensitized and educated on disaster preparedness, response actions and other related issues?

5. What is the level of satisfaction with shelters, provision of supplies and services for care, social mitigation measures etc?

6. How knowledgeable are they about regional activities relating to disaster management?
Dominica Public Service Union
10th Biennial Delegates Conference
Theme: Preserving Public Services in a Hostile Socio Political Environment.
Date: November 12th 2020

Photo credit: Dominica Public Service Union
Results from trade union survey

6.1. Assessing trade unions meaningful involvement, and role in disaster management processes and initiatives

In assessing trade unions’ meaningful involvement, and roles in disaster management processes and initiatives, the survey yielded the following results. In the case of the Likert scaled responses, the higher the numbers on the x (horizontal) axis, the greater the intensity in attitude and or opinion. The y or vertical axis represents the number of cases.

Figure 2. Importance of trade union involvement in national disaster management

1. How important is it for your organization to be involved in national disaster management including response and recovery processes?

4 responses

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 shows the total number of four trade union leaders who all believe trade unions have a critical role in disaster response and recovery management processes.
In Figure 3, most union leaders believe it is important (25 per cent) to highly important (50 per cent) that they gain early and continued access to national disaster management processes in order to dialogue about concerns affecting the organization and members.

Figure 4 reveals two (50 per cent) of leaders strongly disagreed that they and or their representatives were invited from early in government’s disaster management decision-making processes to make their contributions. The other two (50 per cent) were uncertain if early invitations were issued for their involvement. Overall, apparently national processes did not seek to involve them.
The survey sought to determine if the organizations or their leaders played any part whatsoever or sought to play any part in activities related to disaster response and recovery on behalf of their membership. Therefore, they were asked if their organizations engaged in some specifically named disaster response and recovery related activities pertaining to Maria and COVID-19 from 2017-2020 that aligned with expectations (ILO, 2015, Just Transition Towards Environmentally Sustainable Communities for All and other) of what their roles ought to be. Table 7 shows the results below.

Table 7. Trade unions engagement in disaster related activities from 2017 to 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator statement</th>
<th>DPSU</th>
<th>WAWU</th>
<th>DAWU</th>
<th>NWU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisting in national disaster policy planning and programme development for worker protection</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting trade union, workers and their employers’ involvement in national policies decision-making and implementation for worker protection and rights</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agitating for the promotion of sound occupational health and safety best practices in workplaces in disaster planning, response, and recovery</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist employers to determine the emergent skills needed for workers to enable their recovery and or work transition as needed</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform worker training related activities, including liaise for job training support</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect and share best/acceptable workplace practices and experiences with other unions and others</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the enablement of just transition in the creation of new jobs and income generating opportunities towards sustainable development</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote livelihoods improvement through economic recovery and development initiatives</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise on business continuity for job creation, income generation opportunities expansion and maintenance of employment</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking and maintaining linkages and communication between national and multinational entities for involvement and cooperation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: x = no, ✓ = yes
Table 7 reveals the DPSU as the most actively engaged union in disaster related response and recovery activities on behalf of their membership, accounting for seven out of 11 (63.63 per cent (including ‘other option’) activities. WAWU engaged in the second highest number of activities, (five of 11 or 45.45 per cent). DAWU and NWU leaders reported the organizations did not engage in any of the aforementioned activities for the period. Pertaining to the activities, none of the unions were/are involved in any national disaster related policy development activities for worker protection, yet DPSU and WAWU engage in promotional activities supporting their membership and employers’ active participation for involvement in policy- and decision-making. Interestingly, while they engage employers in helping to determine workers’ emergent skills set, they did not report liaising (including with employers) in support of worker training. Furthermore, no union reported being involved in performing activities related to worker training.

Regarding economics as it pertains to advising on business continuity for job creation, income generation, and livelihood for economic protection and recovery, the DPSU report shows it to be the sole union with activities in this realm.

6.2. Trade union coordination of disaster response and recovery

In the area of trade unions being involved in activities requiring their coordination in response and recovery, Table 8 highlights the areas with which they deemed their activities satisfactory.

### Table 8. Trade union leaders’ satisfaction with union coordination activities related to Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 response and initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordination indicator statement</th>
<th>DPSU</th>
<th>WAWU</th>
<th>DAWU</th>
<th>NWU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme/project activities objectives clearly defined</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinators’ responsibilities and functions clearly defined</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring of activities to achieve goals</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanisms in place to garner collaborative partnerships</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment of resources in pursuing coordination</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication channels available for easy and ready access and feedback</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities held as a forum for discussions, decision-making and solution</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining relationships</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: √ = yes; x = no; na = no answer; M = Maria; C=COVID-19
All four unions were satisfied with elements of their reported coordinating activities in the disaster response and recovery as detailed in Table 8. Out of a total of eight activities that would describe effective and efficient coordination, DAWU reported being the most active and satisfied with seven of eight areas, accounting for 87.5 per cent or 88 per cent of Hurricane Maria related initiatives. The DPSU reported it coordinated satisfactorily in 50 per cent, whereas WAWU and DAWU engaged satisfactorily in 25 per cent. In both Maria and COVID-19 situations, DPSU and DAWU report they commit resources in pursuit of coordination, (implying significant effort) and they are open to easy two-way communication. Interestingly, only DAWU has mechanisms in place, to foster the collaborative partnerships that would be necessary, in coordination of response and recovery exercises. Except for WAWU, all the unions are satisfied they hold discussion forums with a view to decision-making and problem-solving. Maintaining relationships is seen as a key coordinating activity in disaster management for all the unions, yet with the exception of DAWU in relation to Hurricane Maria, they are not satisfied they have the mechanisms in place to foster collaborative partnerships. No response about maintaining relationships was available from WAWU pertaining to COVID-19.

Table 8 shows responses of the unions; however, they are somewhat at odds with that of Table 7 in the case of DAWU and NWU. These unions did not report being engaged in any disaster management related activity for the period under review, yet they report an involvement in coordinating their response and recovery initiatives. This study surmises the responses are a general picture of everyday routine activities and not geared towards activity specific to disaster response and recovery.

Table 8 also shows a dramatic reduction in coordinating actions for most of the unions pertaining to COVID-19. In contrast to Hurricane Maria's initiatives, both DPSU and DAWU show a decline in initiatives related to the COVID-19 pandemic, each accounting for 37.5 per cent or 38 per cent satisfaction with the actions being measured. NWU accounts for one action or 12.5 per cent.

### 6.3. Assessing efficacy and relevance of the National Disaster Plan in responding to social and labour issues

The study sought the trade union leaders' opinions in measuring the National Disaster Plan's efficacy and relevance in addressing social and labour issues.

All four leaders agree the Plan addresses social and labour issues at all phases of the disaster. All, except DPSU, agree it identifies and is compliant with rights and protection pertaining to social, labour, and environmental laws and rights. All, except WAWU, also agree, that at all levels of government and in the community, there are clear coordinating and functional mechanisms/structure in place to assure effective communication channels. Notably, NWU agrees that the Plan responds to all the measured criteria in Appendix II and Table 5.

### 6.4. Perception of social protections in national law and its implementation

The study sought trade union leaders’ perception of their level of satisfaction with the ease of access workers have to social protection services.

Fifty per cent of the leaders (DAWU and NWU) were satisfied that workers had easy access whereas DPSU and WAWU were uncertain as to the ease with which workers could gain access. The question following, sought their perception of the effectiveness of national mechanisms put in place for implementation of these services. The leaders’ answers followed the same pattern as in the question regarding ease of access.
6.5. Assessing trade union capacity

The question as to the availability of the human resource skill levels/partnerships readily available to the trade unions is to determine their potential for fostering their members’ resilience as the country responds and recover as a nation. Table 9 shows the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Available Human Resource Capability</th>
<th>DPSU</th>
<th>WAWU</th>
<th>DAWU</th>
<th>NWU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational health and safety knowledge and or experience</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster management experience and or training</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder outreach and engagement, knowledge or experience</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All unions have access to someone with occupational safety and health knowledge or experience and disaster management experience and or training. Notably, both DPSU and WAWU have internal staff with disaster management training, whereas with DAWU, it is access to a government employee with that skill. Interestingly, only DPSU and NWU have access to human resource with stakeholder outreach experience. The NWU is resource rich, having access to human resources with all the key skills set to enable the enrichment of the unions’ capacities for facilitation of building worker resilience.

Despite unions having certain capabilities, disasters, and the quality of national disaster management, can impact the ability of an organization to fulfil its role and responsibilities to its members. Therefore, the research sought an answer to this possibility. However, the trade union leaders’ responses did not provide clarity. The answers tended to be more focused on government role and response as opposed to the impact on their abilities to provide services to their members. Nevertheless, their answers provide some perspective. Two union leaders said all meetings ceased, and regularity of meetings with members was reduced. Social distancing protocols under COVID-19 presented an obstacle to meetings. Another leader’s response is interpreted to mean, because national response actions are necessary such as curfew and social distancing is necessary, that the union is accepting of the resulting effects on its services and interaction with members.

Identified risks and vulnerabilities affecting the trade unions, can also present a challenge to their effective response in enabling workers’ response and recovery. The research sought answers to identify the leaders’ perspectives on possible major risks and vulnerabilities. The answers include leader commitment to family responsibilities and workload, lack of communication and coordination among workers, and COVID-19’s social distancing protocols.
The research also asked the question of what support the unions offered to affected members and their families during the response and recovery phases of the disasters.

The leader who expressed family commitment as a challenge, admitted concentration on his family and their protection, and building his house caused his support for workers to be minimal. This may be interpreted as the union’s response seeing the respondent is high in the hierarchy of leadership. DAWU, on the other hand, engaged in constant dialogue with members as well as employers. Counselling services were also provided to some members. Regarding DPSU, affected members were given financial support, relief packages and counselling.

Trade union leaders were asked what strategies/actions their unions employed to facilitate the minimization of risk from COVID-19 in the workplaces. The National Workers’ Union (NWU) had no response, and WAWU reported encouraging the implementation of social distancing protocols. DAWU engaged in collaborative partnership constantly and sociably with employers and was satisfied that they followed national protocols to keep the workplace, and workers safe. Some essential workers at higher risk than most, were asked to take due vacation days. DAWU’s leader said the employers kept the union abreast of any changes. Regarding DPSU, a trade union response document to deal with COVID-19 was developed (mentioned before). Recommendations were submitted to Government as it relates to the protection and safety of public officials especially frontline workers.

6.6. Assessing Government responsiveness from the union leaders’ perspectives

In assessing Government’s responsiveness, particular variables are of interest that were targeted including stakeholder involvement in disaster response and recovery initiatives. The leaders were asked to express their opinion of Government stakeholder initiatives by responding in agreement or disagreement to the following sentences/phrases in Table 10 that is mentioned as criteria in the CRRP (2018) for stakeholder engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria sentence/phrase of satisfaction</th>
<th>DPSU</th>
<th>WAWU</th>
<th>DAWU</th>
<th>NWU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of an all-inclusive agenda</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation of diverse affected individuals and groups perspectives</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity in considering the various perspectives</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts and non-experts’ access to decision-making including from planning to evaluation stages</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities provided for face-to-face deliberation and trust-building</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: ✓ = yes; x = no
Table 10 shows that for DPSU, the Government stakeholder collaboration falls woefully short of expectations in all five criteria. WAWU agrees with DPSU’s opinion, except for expressing satisfaction with the Government’s effort/outreach to include all the varying perspectives in the populace. Both DAWU and NWU have a high level of satisfaction with Government’s performance in this area. However, as observed previously, both DAWU and NWU are in strong disagreement about Government extending an early invitation to the unions and their shop stewards to these stakeholder initiatives. The NWU leader has further expressed they were not involved in any stakeholder exercises pertaining to the National Disaster Plan. Both DPSU and WAWU leaders concur, in an interview (held 15 June 2020), that they were not invited to any disaster management related stakeholder exercises, except once during an early response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The nation has proclaimed some noteworthy recovery accomplishments since the passage of Hurricane Maria. Therefore, the leaders were asked to rate the overall national level of accomplishment from 2017 to April 2020 – the period under review.

Two (50 per cent) of the four union leaders rated the accomplishments as excellent, whereas two leaders rated it as fair. Additionally, the leaders were asked if Government evaluated options and alternatives in its decision making process in:

- a. housing allocation for affected workers’ families and communities,
- b. housing,
- c. community relocation,
- d. community restoration of the built and natural environment,
- e. other (specify).

All the unions agree that the Government considered options and alternatives in housing generally. Except for one leader, all the others agree that in allocating houses for affected workers and their families, options and alternatives were considered. The two unions that rated the accomplishments as excellent believe all options and alternatives were considered.

The leaders’ opinion on the adequacy of the Government’s COVID-19 response and recovery was sought. Table 11 shows the responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11. Perception of the adequacy of Government COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating job creation and protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring safety standards and provisions for safe workplaces and for their re-opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection to enable resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government accountability and transparency with social dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The four leaders opined that the Government’s COVID-19 initiatives to assure social protection to enable resilience is adequate. Except for WAWU, all other unions believe Government’s effort to assure income protection is adequate. Notably, DPSU disagrees with the other unions with respect to the adequacy of Government’s response to ensure the provision of safe workplaces during the pandemic. DAWU and NWU believe Government’s response is adequate in all areas excepting in its accountability and transparency with social dialogue.

Government initiatives in public education about disaster awareness including, those relating to COVID-19 were assessed for effectiveness and responsiveness from the union leaders’ perspectives. Most union leaders agreed (75 per cent), COVID-19 public education messages are effective and responds to the public’s needs. One (25 per cent) was uncertain as to the effectiveness. All agreed about the clarity of the message and that it contains critical information. Regarding educational messages related to Hurricane Maria, all leaders agreed they were effective and responded to the public’s needs.

When asked if the public was guided to opportunities to build back better and more sustainably, both DPSU and WAWU leaders did not provide their perspectives. However, both DAWU and NWU agreed.

6.7. Assessing employer responsiveness

Because the unions represent both public and private sector workers, the private sector employers’ responsiveness was also assessed from the leaders’ perspectives. Therefore, the leaders were asked to give a rating of the responsiveness of private sector employers to their workers affected by both Hurricane Maria and COVID-19. Apart from NWU, all the other leaders were uncertain, whereas NWU leader responded they met expectations. The NWU leader stated he was aware that food supplies were provided to some workers employed at a gas station.
Trade union members’ questionnaire results and analysis

7.1. Overall assessment of national responses and recovery in disaster management

Respondents were asked to rate the effects of national response and recovery initiatives on citizens’ livelihood and their quality of life overall, after Hurricane Maria from 2017 - April 2020. Likewise, they were asked the same about COVID-19. Workers believed the nation has done better at response to and recovery from Hurricane Maria than with its response to COVID-19.

Figure 5a. Union members’ rating of Hurricane Maria’s national response and recovery initiatives
A total of 58.8 per cent of the respondents (30 individuals) rated the impact of Hurricane Maria’s national response and recovery on the citizens’ livelihood and quality of life as being overall satisfactory to very satisfactory. A rating of fair to very poor was given by 41.1 per cent of the respondents (or 21 individuals).

Figure 5b shows national response and recovery for COVID-19 is viewed by most of the 51 respondents in a less favourable light than response and recovery initiatives implemented after Hurricane Maria. Thirty-three individuals (or 64.7 per cent) are lukewarm to outright disapproving of the national COVID-19 response and recovery impacts, with 24 of the 33 individuals (47 per cent) giving the initiatives a fair rating and the other nine (9 or 18 per cent) giving them a poor rating. Eighteen (or 35.3 per cent) rated the initiatives as having a good impact.

In assessing the national response and recovery in disaster management, respondents were asked if they were satisfied that individuals and communities were treated fairly in the disaster management process. They were also required to supply their level of agreement or disagreement as to whether Government considered the needs of vulnerable individuals and minorities. Table 12 displays their responses.
A total of 22 of the 50 respondents (44 per cent) agree that Government considered the needs of vulnerable individuals and minority groups. Conversely, a total of 20 respondents (or 40 per cent) disagreed with the rating statement. Six individuals (or 12 per cent) were uncertain. Regarding satisfaction that the process had little to no concerns about fair treatment (equity) in the processes, 15 of 50 persons (30 per cent) were totally dissatisfied and 18 (36 per cent) gave very lukewarm ratings of satisfaction. In all, 33 individuals (66 per cent) held perceptions that range from lukewarm satisfaction to being totally dissatisfied. In contrast, 17 persons (34 per cent), were satisfied there were no concerns about equity in treatment of individuals and communities. The crosstab results of the two variables show a total of 15 persons (30 per cent) insist there were concerns about fair treatment and that vulnerable and minority individuals’ and groups’ needs were not adequately considered. Twelve (or 24 per cent) of those who took no issue with the matter of vulnerable and minorities groups needs being considered, reneged when it concerned matters about fair treatment of groups and individuals. Conversely, 12 individuals (24 per cent) were satisfied there was neither equity concerns, nor problems with the response to vulnerable and minority groups.

### 7.2. Assessment of the trade union role in response and recovery initiatives

Trade union members’ opinions were sought on the matter of the importance of their unions representing them in national public and private disaster management policy planning and decision-making forums. Their responses are given in Figure 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
<th>Needs of the vulnerable &amp; minorities considered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not at all satisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slightly satisfied</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moderately satisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>completely satisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. Frequencies of the number of individuals in each scale category. One individual had missing responses and was not included in this respective analysis. Percentages in the text, are therefore based on 50 individual responses.

Table 12. Equity concerns addressed in national process related to Maria: Needs of the vulnerable and minorities considered – cross tabulation
Trade union members mostly are in strong agreement (62.7 per cent) regarding their unions representing the membership in national public and private (internal workplaces) policy- and decision-making forums. Overall, in combining the two levels of agreement, a total of 43 persons or 84.3 per cent agree with this principle.

The members also rated their satisfaction with how their trade unions represent workers affected and not affected by the disasters. Figure 7 provides the responses.
A total of 50 persons responded to the question of worker satisfaction with union representation. One person (or 2 per cent of the sample) provided no response so is eliminated from this question analysis. A total of 20 persons (40 per cent) agree they are satisfied with how their unions represent workers affected and not affected by the disasters. Thirty persons (60 per cent) were either uncertain or in disagreement.

When satisfaction with union representation was assessed by gender, even though women were much more represented in the research than men, there was a higher level of dissatisfaction among women respondents. Fifteen of 33 women (45.5 per cent) were dissatisfied, whereas three of 17 men (18 per cent) were dissatisfied. However, when men who were undecided were added to those in the disagreement category, the percentage of men increased to 59 per cent. For women, the percentage increased to 61 per cent. This reveals most of the men were leaning towards uncertainty, but women were more definite in their disagreement. Men satisfied with the unions’ representation comprised 41 per cent, whereas only 39 per cent of the women were satisfied.

The fact that more women showed disappointment in union representation may have to do with work and family responsibilities that tend to affect women disproportionately. Women are mainly the caregivers at home, and in Dominica, 40 per cent of households are headed by women. Hence, if these issues are not being addressed directly by the union, it may account for the dissatisfaction among their female members.

An analysis of the responses of worker satisfaction with union representation based on which union represents the workers, was executed through cross tabulation of the two variables. Responses of 49 respondents are analysed in the crosstab because two members (3.9 per cent) provided no response on their union membership.

Regarding the DPSU, 22 out of the 36 members (61.1 per cent) who responded to this question answers ranged from, being undecided about satisfaction with how the union represent their concerns, to the majority of this 22 being overtly in disagreement. Conversely, 14 (38.8 per cent) of members were happy with its representation. Five (or 56 per cent) of the nine WAWU members, who participated in the research and responded to the question, gave answers which ranged from undecided to disagreement that its representation of their concerns was satisfactory. Four (or 44.4 per cent) were satisfied with the representation. In DAWU’s case, one member was satisfied and the other one was dissatisfied. Two NWU members participated: one was uncertain of any satisfactory outcome from the union representation and the other was satisfied.

The research further sought to know whether trade unions had engaged in any disaster related activity on members’ behalf, that increased their understanding of their rights, and social protection. This was done through some statements that assessed the unions, and to which the workers had to respond to each, as applicable to them. This question explores workers’ views on their unions’ engagement in activities to increase their (workers’) capacities and facilitate building their resilience. The results reveal the following:
Twenty-three members (or 45.1 per cent) opined trade unions do not engage in any of the activities to be assessed so their understanding has not been heightened in any of the areas. Two (3.9 per cent) chose the ‘Other’ response category and stated (a) “unions need to apply more pressure when negotiating” and (b) “the union never worked on behalf of myself and my staff; two years after Maria, no”. Notably, the individual who critiqued the union’s negotiating skills, declared satisfaction with how the unions represent the workers in disaster related matters. The second statement is interpreted to mean that even two years after Hurricane Maria struck, no help has been forthcoming from the union of which the person is a member.

According to the 17 respondents (or 33.3 per cent), the two most recurring areas showing union activity in capacity building, is in workers’ rights in disaster related situations, and the kinds of national social protection available to them during such times. Issues of rights would understandably prevail at this time when employers are tempted to tamper with workers’ vacation leave to defray economic costs to the business, among others.

To gain more in-depth understanding of how trade union members perceive satisfaction with their unions’ representation in the light of the unions’ disaster related activities, these two variables were cross tabulated. Notably one individual’s response is missing from the analysis of this question. Tables 14–17 show the results of the measured scales.
Twenty-five of the 50 respondents, (or 50 per cent), who were undecided and in disagreement with the outcome of their unions’ representation in disaster situations, is still disagreeable, and adamant about the uncertainty, that they gained an increased understanding of their rights through union activity. Nine (or 18 per cent) who were satisfied with their union representation, opined that their knowledge of their rights in disaster situations, was not upgraded. Eleven respondents (or 22 per cent) agreed that owing to union activity they have an increased understanding and so, are happy with their unions’ representation.

A little over half of the 50 respondents, twenty-six (or 52 per cent) of them continue to be uncertain and disagree about whether they increased their knowledge about how to better utilize the available social services.
services. They are therefore not satisfied with union representation. Conversely, 12 persons representing 24 per cent of the sample, who did not report increased awareness, are nevertheless satisfied with union representation. Four of those (8 per cent), who agreed they had increased understanding through union activity, are not satisfied with union representation, thus, implying there is room for improvement. The other 8 per cent who reported having more understanding of the social services remained happy with union representation.

Table 16. Satisfaction with trade union representation: Relevance of green jobs in building resilience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with union representation</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
<th>Relevance of green jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undecided</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. Frequencies of the number of individuals in each scale category. One (1) individual had missing response and was not included in this respective analysis. Percentages in the text, are therefore based on 50 individuals’ responses.

Over half (27 or 54 per cent) of those, who were both undecided and had no increased understanding of the role of green jobs in helping the nation to build back better, continue to see union representation in disaster related matters as unsatisfactory. Moreover, 30 per cent who were satisfied with union representation, reported no increased understanding about green jobs. On the other hand, five persons (or 10 per cent) believe their union helped in raising their awareness about green jobs and its connection with sustainable development and continue to be happy with union representation.

Table 17. Satisfaction with trade union representation: Provision of national social protection in law

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with union representation</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
<th>National Social Protection Provided for in Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undecided</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. Frequencies of the number of individuals in each scale category. One individual did not respond and was not included in this analysis. Percentages in the text, are therefore based on 50 responses.
Table 17 reveals nineteen members (or 34 per cent) are undecided and unhappy about both satisfaction with their union’s representation and their perceived meagre activities in heightening worker awareness of the social protections afforded under national law.

Fifteen respondents (28 per cent) reported being content with their union’s representation but not with their activities in heightening members’ awareness about the national social protections covered by law. Eleven (22 per cent) are uncertain and dissatisfied with union representation but agree that their heightened awareness of the social protections came about because of the unions. Six (12 per cent) are satisfied with the unions in both their representation and awareness raising of the variables in question.

There are individuals who claimed they gained no increased understanding of the subject areas previously mentioned, based on the unions’ disaster related activities. These seventeen individuals (or 34 per cent) are also undecided and find the unions’ performance in representation unsatisfactory.

Overall, there is more of a perception of discontent with union representation in disaster related matters. This discontent is specifically more overt when assessed in the light of some of the unions’ roles.

Satisfactory communication is a vital instrument in developing capacity and thus building resilience. In an effort to determine the quality of the unions’ communication processes with their members, they were asked whether members believed their unions provided regular, timely updates and feedback on workers’ concerns in the response and recovery phases of disasters. Figure 8 displays the responses to this question.

Overall, most of the respondents are not satisfied with their unions’ performance in providing regular, timely updates and feedback on their concerns in the response and recovery phases of disasters. Of 50 responses, 72 per cent of the answers ranged from undecided to being in strong disagreement. Of the 72 per cent, twenty of individuals (40 per cent) were undecided. Those in agreement regarding the unions’ propensity for satisfactory communication, accounted for 14 (28 per cent). In a breakdown of the responses by unions, excepting NWU, most responses lie in the ‘undecided to strongly disagree’
categories in assessment of the unions’ communication with their members. In NWU’s case, the two responses are split evenly (50 per cent) across the ‘disagree and agree’ categories.

### 7.3. Assessment of public education in disaster preparedness and response

In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its actual and potential negative impacts, the research sought to know whether respondents received guidance from national sources on how to cope with COVID-19 in the workplace. Most of the respondents (39 out of 51 or 76.5 per cent) answered affirmatively. Nine (17.6 per cent) said no. Three (5.9 per cent) were uncertain about receiving any guidance. Workers will have to now perform in workplaces while adjusting safely to an environment changed by the new situation that COVID-19 presents. Therefore, the research attempts to capture respondents’ views particularly on aspects of environmental health and safety.

Table 18 shows in descending order, based on the most frequently occurring answers, the respondents’ responses for the subject areas for which they reported they received guidance on COVID-19 in the workplace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment statement /phrase</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning and disinfecting of workspace and equipment</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When to use personal protective equipment (PPE)</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal hygiene in the use of PPE</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper waste management for PPE and other waste</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What PPE is necessary and applicable for me</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of PPE to be used</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cleaning and disinfection of the workspace and equipment is the topic on which most emphasis is placed, whereas the types and applicable PPE that applies to the individual, are the topical areas for which less than half the respondents received the least instruction. The results are interesting and possibly reflects the types of jobs the individuals do and whether the person is regarded as a frontline worker.

The respondents were further required to give their opinion on if they were satisfied with their employers’ responses in keeping the workplace safe during COVID-19. The results are based on 49 responses (96.1 per cent) of a possible 51 responses. A majority of 58.8 per cent are satisfied with the employers’ responses, whereas 37.2 per cent were moderately satisfied or not at all satisfied.

The study further assessed the quality of the national public education in facilitating resilience through bringing a heightened awareness of the individual’s roles in disaster preparedness and recovery. Respondents were asked to express their level of confidence in the public education messages being able to assist them in better preparing and recovering from disasters. Figure 10 yields the results.
According to Figure 10, most individuals (30 of 50 responses or 60 per cent) believed public education has enabled them to be more prepared for disasters and increased their capacity to respond. Fourteen (28 per cent) were cautiously confident in their abilities to prepare and respond. Six (12 per cent) expressed very little confidence to no confidence whatsoever.
Of 50 responses, 24 (48 per cent) opined the disaster recovery messages were effective in raising their awareness of the possibility of their jobs and daily activities being triggers for environmental disasters. Eleven respondents (22 per cent) believed the messages did a moderately effective job in raising awareness and 15 (30 per cent) were extremely lukewarm or non-receptive of the messages effectiveness in raising their awareness. Overall respondents therefore perceive that national disaster recovery messages do a fair to effective job in raising awareness of the possibility of their jobs and daily activities being triggers for environmental disasters.

Respondents were then asked to state the source/s which contributed to them being more knowledgeable about the connection between their jobs and the wise use of environmental resources. Table 19 reveals the results.

### Table 19: Knowledge sources of more environmental awareness of job connection and wise use of environmental resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Source</th>
<th>Number and % of respondents</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues in my workplace</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade union and or shop steward</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government public campaign</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, Table 19 shows respondents mostly proclaim themselves (39 per cent) as the chief source from which they derive more environmental awareness of the connection between their job and the wise use of environmental resources. This is interpreted to mean they have taken the initiative themselves, as information seekers, to avail themselves of this knowledge, thus becoming the primary receptacles. It also implies a level of consciousness of environmental sustainability matters. External sources such as the media is the next major source accounting for 24 per cent of respondents’ choice. The Government’s public education campaign accounts for 15 per cent of the responses. Notably, it may appear contradictory that the media and not, the Government public campaign is the second main source of awareness raising after ‘self’, based on the answer to the foregoing question. However, firstly, government campaigns use some media sources for educational purposes and secondly, some respondents chose more than one item from the list of prescribed answers.

The awareness of the role that the international and regional organizations play and their interlinkage with national goals and outcomes is critical in disaster management. Therefore, respondents were questioned if the public education they received enabled them to be more knowledgeable about the roles these organizations play in assisting Dominica. Furthermore, are they able to identify at least one regional activity that assisted Dominican communities to build back better. Forty-two of 50 persons (84 per cent) could identify at least one regional activity. This points favourably to the Government’s goal of having at least 90 per cent of citizens being cognizant of one regional activity. Thirty-two respondents
(64 per cent), who affirmed public education has upgraded their knowledge about these organizations and their roles, agreed they could name a regional activity/organization that came to Dominica’s aid. There are 10 respondents (20 per cent) who while agreeing they know of at least one regional activity that assisted Dominica, were uncertain, and disagreed that public education about disaster management gave them this knowledge. A minority of 7 persons (14 per cent) who say they are either uncertain or disagree with the role public education play in increasing their knowledge, insist they are uncertain if they can, and or disagree that they can, name any regional activity. Overall, the results suggest that the public education relating to disaster management available to citizens, do play an important part in citizens becoming more aware of regional integrated action in disaster preparedness response and recovery.

7.4. Assessing economic impact on workers

The research sought to discover the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the income workers receive from their present jobs. Table 20 below presents the impacts. Notably, some persons gave more than one answer in the prescribed lists that were provided. Therefore, the assessment is made based on the number of times the item or phrase was chosen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income impact</th>
<th>No. of persons</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was reduced</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It remained the same</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job was eliminated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily had no income</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemented income by learning new skill</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was furloughed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most individuals 40 of 50 persons or 78.4 per cent reported their salaries were not affected (One individual was dropped from analysis). An individual who said her salary was reduced said she learned a new income generating skill showing some resilience on her part. The income impact was also assessed by looking at the impact by the sectors with which the respondents identify. Fifty individuals responded to the identity of their sectoral employment. Statutory Board is coded as neither public nor private, so it is regarded as a quasi-sector for the purposes of this research. Twenty-eight of 35 persons (85 per cent) who identify as public sector workers said their job income was not affected, whereas eight of 14 (57.1 per cent).7 per cent private sector workers said it was not affected. The three persons (100 per cent) from the Statutory Boards also said their job incomes were not affected. Those who said their incomes were reduced were from both the public and private sector. There were three or 9.1 per cent of a total of 33 persons reporting income reduction in the public sector and four (or 29 per cent) of a total of 14 workers in the private sector. Two persons in both the public and private sectors reported they temporarily had no income. In view of certain comments made by the respondents, the researcher realized other factors affected the workers’ situation which was not strictly related to COVID-19; this can present a confounding picture with respect to income reduction during the COVID-19 period. For example, an individual reported, she resigned from her job at the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, there is no evidence that any government mandate affected salaries.
Public employees who were not appointed were required to take vacation leave.

The research also sought to know if the pandemic affected the amount of money, in any way, an individual is able to expend on household and other expenses. The following Table 21 show the responses. Items listed are those on which the respondents spent most money.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item expenditure</th>
<th>No. of individuals</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle expenses</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable donations</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage payments</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1. Expenditure on electricity bills because of relatives who lost their jobs and came to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Recreational purposes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food accounted for the greatest expenditure for 31 persons (60.8 per cent). This can be understandable because of the stay-at-home order imposed. People are locked down at home the entire day and so may become frustrated and bored because their daily routine is disrupted. Boredom can result in food bingeing, which could explain people reporting food expenditure as a COVID-19 effect. It is also plausible for there to be an increased expenditure in medicine as reported by 12 persons (23.5 per cent). The uncertainty that comes with grappling with and living with COVID-19 at all levels of society causes psychological impacts (Venkatesh & Edirappuli, 2020) such as mental stress which in turn affects physical well-being. Therefore, some medical conditions may be exacerbated. Furthermore, an individual mentioned that relatives moved in because of job loss experienced during this period. This can be an issue for added stress as adjustments to living have to be made to accommodate unplanned for house guests. For the other items mentioned, the amount of money respondents could expend, may be the resulting impact on those who said their salaries were affected.

Because disasters not only impact individuals, but families collectively as a unit, it was necessary to discover how Hurricane Maria also affected trade union members financially. Table 22 shows the findings. The item response options are placed in ascending order based on the frequency of times it was chosen as an impact.
Damage to property (land, houses) was the chief impact reported by 35 members (68.6 per cent). Loss of personal possessions (for example, vehicles, clothes) was reported by 23 individuals (45.1 per cent) as the second major negative impact. The third major effect respondents reported (16 persons or 31.4 per cent), was loss of property (land, houses). At that time, the country experienced extensive property damages and losses so their reports bear resemblance to the experience of the nation as a whole. Notably higher incidence of job losses was reported for Maria than for COVID-19. Whilst the contextual situations of the two disasters under study are different, despite this, and all things being equal, overall, Maria’s negative economic impact was greater on the respondents than COVID-19 is now.

### 7.5. Assessment of national shelters

Emergency shelter management is a critical goal of Dominica’s climate resilience strategies in helping the nation on the road to quick recovery and normalcy. Therefore, in assessing the state of the public shelters, respondents were asked if they had to stay in a shelter and were given a set of criteria by which to assess their satisfaction with the shelter. They had flexibility of choice based on their perceptions. In view of factors affecting shelters and management in Dominica, and in the light of the research indicators (see Appendix II) assessing respondents’ level of satisfaction with the shelters and their operation, the following results are highlighted.

Six (or 11.8 per cent) of 51 respondents reported having to stay in a shelter. The following result shows the items which were most frequently chosen by the six (6) individuals who were satisfied with their stay:

1. Shelter management (chosen 67 per cent of times - 4 individuals)
2. Environmental conditions (chosen 50 per cent of times- 3 individuals)
3. How safety and health issues were addressed (chosen 33.3 per cent of times -2 individuals)
4. Access to social services (chosen 33.3 per cent of times - 2 individuals)

5. Equity in consideration of people's needs (chosen 16.7 per cent of times - 1 individual)

Basically, most of the six (6) respondents were content with the way the shelters were managed. Half of them were satisfied with the environmental conditions at the shelter. Safety and health, access to social services, and fair treatment of individuals were much more concerning to individuals. The experiences of the individuals lend some credence to the challenges in shelters identified by the National Shelter Management Plan (2019).

The national policy manual for shelters addresses the international protocols for humanitarian treatment of individuals; the manual serves as a guide for shelter recipients to be treated fairly and with dignity and not have their rights infringed upon. In keeping with the country's intent to construct resilient shelters, the shelter policy manual also outlines the international standard for the basic requirements for shelters which further contributes to respecting shelter residents' dignity. They include provision for adequate potable water supply, infrastructure for bathing, drinking and other purposes (one shower per 30 persons, 30 litres per person per day and 250 persons for each tap), recommended space to avoid overcrowding (40ft² per person), adequate excreta disposal facilities (maximum 20 persons per unit considering gender separation), satisfactory waste management including disposal (100 litre container for 10 households) (Government of Dominica, Shelter Manual for Emergency Shelters, 2019).

Regarding the level of satisfaction with the national shelters, a trade union leader described the shelters' infrastructure as overall not satisfactory, the reason being many of these shelters are public buildings such as schools and churches temporarily converted into shelters during periods of disasters. These buildings lack the critical resources to accommodate mass sheltering. There is no building specifically dedicated solely to the use of shelters. The manual endorses this account and declares that evacuation shelters are being constructed in the towns of Layou and Castle Bruce.

The manual identifies factors affecting satisfactory shelter management in Dominica. Shelterers contend with unsatisfactory lighting and communications, psychological and physical abuse, invasion of privacy, molestation, and theft. For shelter managers, it is a thankless task as they are not provided with protective gear/equipment. Furthermore, they are not compensated (p.46). Regarding the physical infrastructure, WASH facilities are inadequate. The needs of individuals with disabilities for satisfactory accommodation and access, have not been met. The shelters also lack adequate equipment and supplies. Coordinators and service providers face a plethora of problems ranging from political interference and confusion of roles. Service providers also grapple with access issues, communications technology and systems are inadequate, and resource deficiency. To combat the ills, the manual provides recommendations (p.48).

Currently, Dominica has a housing project to provide housing for displaced and affected populations who lost their homes after Maria. It is lauded as a milestone in emergency shelter management in Dominica (Government of Dominica, 2019, p.47).

The research also provides results from the literature review, related to the national response initiatives and their status (See Appendix IV).
Workers’ challenges and opportunities

To gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 that impacted workers, a contextual analysis reveals the theme and patterns underlying the issues. Emergent issues possibly exacerbated by national contextual variables in disaster situations, and specific to individuals and their families, are highlighted.

8.1. Opportunities reported by respondents

Fifteen persons out of 51 (29.4 per cent) reported obtaining opportunities for some form of personal advancement owing to Hurricane Maria and or COVID-19. Figure 11 presents a snapshot of their responses. The responses are ordered thematically and according to their frequency of occurrence in ascending order.

![Figure 11. Reported opportunities resulting from Hurricane Maria and COVID-19](image_url)
Figure 11 shows that personal development was the most frequently occurring answer. Areas of personal development include workers acquiring a new skill set and utilizing them. For example, a respondent said while on the job when he observed the unsatisfactory logistics surrounding the distribution of relief supplies in the country after Hurricane Maria, he developed a more satisfactory, transparent system of distribution. The system made his job and those of other pertinent individuals more effective and efficient resulting in more individual capacity. It is still being used in his organization. This worker realized he possessed untapped organizational skills of which he was unaware prior to Maria. Another individual recounted that having to work online from home during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an upgrade of her computer skills. Whilst others may view work from home as being accompanied by the technological challenge of learning or upgrading computer skills, others may view the increased use of technology, (brought about through social distancing) to perform various everyday tasks as a blessing in disguise. Another respondent informed: “COVID-19 has taught me the importance of technology in everyday life, not just to stay in touch but as an alternate means of performing daily tasks normally done face-to-face, such as classes, meetings, bill paying, and even working.”

A few workers found the national ‘stay-at-home’ work order enabled a closer bond to be developed with their families. This is advantageous because family bonding creates stronger families within which an individual can thrive while acquiring social skills. The family, as a social institution is recognized as the basic unit of society and so a family which is not dysfunctional, contributes to building sustainable and resilient communities.

The lack of pipe-borne water to carry out basic sanitary tasks and washing meant all affected citizens had to use available options such as rivers. One worker said this was an opportunity for bonding with community people, and it was rewarding to see economic status torn down and everyone, despite their economic status in the community coming together collectively and amicably to use nature’s bounty while sharing experiences. It was also the same with food. People shared what they had with each other. The spirit of collectivism is highly valued by the nation as a goal to be achieved and maintained in its climate resilience agenda (CCCP, 2020).

### 8.2. Challenges experienced by respondents

Table 23 sets out the challenges that respondents experienced owing to the impacts of Hurricane Maria and COVID-19. Notably, the list is an example of narratives, and while they are not exhaustive of the comments that were supplied, they show the diverse issues of concern. The comments have been left unedited to capture the context and rich experiences in their entirety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic impact</th>
<th>Context factors</th>
<th>Examples of workers’ narratives of challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic</td>
<td>Closure of key institutions affecting quality of life</td>
<td>“During Maria my challenges were the hustle to try to get money to be able to get food to feed my family because all financial institutions were closed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work impact related issues</td>
<td>“After Maria, I became the primary caregiver for an older relative with mental health issues. However, my presence in the workplace was adversely affected and I was forced to apply for sick leave so as not to lose my vacation leave.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earning potential from other possible income sources obliterated or reduced</td>
<td>“No additional income was coming in.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic impact</td>
<td>Context factors</td>
<td>Examples of workers’ narratives of challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic (cont’d)</td>
<td>Care for loved ones in the spirit of altruism</td>
<td>“My family's expenditure for amenities and food increased after I temporarily housed relatives who had lost their jobs under COVID-19.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Job loss</td>
<td>“It was challenging not having a job after Hurricane Maria.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government responsiveness</td>
<td>National criteria for determining recipients for social relief distribution.</td>
<td>“Government gave most of the relief supply to citizens it determined as being poor. Civil servants got little to no help because Government perceives them as financially more able to fend for themselves, whereas this is not the case.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust in government</td>
<td>“My community was extensively damaged and up till now (August 2020) people are homeless and roofless and suffering. It is difficult to live with this, knowing I am one of the fortunate ones and so many people need help, and they are still not getting it, all those years later.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Equity in response</td>
<td>“During Hurricane Maria, our house was completely levelled. I could not access a loan at any financial institution for construction of a new home. Have written to the Government several times for assistance but....... for whatever reason.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19 protocols</td>
<td>Resulting impact/s from social distancing requirement and travel restrictions</td>
<td>“With Covid the challenge was the long wait standing in lines to buy stuff and to get business done.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“I had difficulty getting to and from work as there were only a few buses on the road and they couldn't carry too many persons.”</td>
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<td>“It has been a challenge not being able to interact and be social during COVID-19.”</td>
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<td>“Some of the challenges were - staying at home, unable to attend church services, unable to go to work”</td>
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<td>“Travel restrictions under Covid disrupted my usual out of state vacation travel plans.”</td>
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<td>Scarcity/Lack of basic supplies and utilities</td>
<td>Availability, access to basic needs, and which also preceded other resulting impacts</td>
<td>“We had difficulties in getting proper drinking water and food for a little (Maria impact).”</td>
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<td>“Living without normal amenities...electricity and water” (Maria)</td>
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<td>“No electricity for months affected my earnings from other income generating source such as making ice pops for sale.” (Maria)</td>
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<td>“Lack of electricity caused excessive food spoilage” (Maria)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Emotional state from concerns arising from the disasters</td>
<td>“I was scared.” (Pertaining to COVID-19)</td>
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<td>“…with COVID-19 now present, it has just been frustrating.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic impact</td>
<td>Context factors</td>
<td>Examples of workers’ narratives of challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Emotional state from concerns arising from the disasters</td>
<td>“Coping with the post-Maria stress. Living in shutdown mode... Not able to move freely. Coping with the stress of wearing a mask to go everywhere despite the heat. Not being able to visit my elderly mother and other elderly friends.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Damaged/impacted infrastructure like houses, roads</td>
<td>“Access to my home because of Hurricane Maria” “The challenge of repairing my home with the available insurance money. Property having been deemed underinsured.” “Closing of roads. Blockage from debris is a main contributing factor.” “Having to find shelter at the home of a neighbour for 5 months due to damage suffered to my rental home and being dependent on others for basic needs.” “My community was extensively damaged and up till now people are homeless and roofless and suffering.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Concerns particularly troubling to a specific gender</td>
<td>“Sudden increase in the cost of food and hygiene/sanitation items; the restructuring of working hours when still expected to perform the same duties with specific time deadlines.” (NB. challenge faced by a female) “No priority list made for women with babies prior to event. No priority list was made for babies in the city for food, medicine, and other supplies. No surveillance was done for baby nurseries post event by authorities.” (NB, challenge faced by a female) “Difficulty getting to and from work. Sitters for my children.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td>Conditions in the workplace</td>
<td>“Challenges at work with poor working conditions.” “My only challenge really is the discomfort of having to wear hazmat suits and N-95 masks in unbearable heat and the high risk that comes with working directly with COVID-19 positive patients.”</td>
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<td>safety and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Challenges experienced with communications; adapting to present conditions; coping with environmental sanitation issues and trade unions’ role/responsiveness</td>
<td>“Three years after the passage of Hurricane Maria, cable and internet services have yet to be restored.” “As an online university student this poses a serious challenge to me in completing my schoolwork.” “During Hurricane Maria I could not communicate for a few days with my daughter who lives in the US.” “Sanitation problems because of lack of pipe-borne water to flush sanitary water closet, and for other household uses.”</td>
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Table 23 shows the diverse range of thematic areas including: government responsiveness, COVID-19 protocols, scarcity/lack of basic supplies and utilities, socioeconomic, psychological, infrastructural, gender, and occupational safety and health issues, as well as and other challenges experienced with communications; adapting to present conditions; coping with environmental sanitation issues and trade unions’ role/responsiveness. The contextual issues undergirding them reveal work issues such as allowable leave, and those impacting access to work and therefore productivity; social distancing effects; psychological responses; question of equity in government responses; economic matters such as job loss; personal and workplace safety; and the impact on online education.

Among the challenges pertaining to government responsiveness that reportedly irked some 6 per cent of respondents was the charge that distribution of food and other supplies related to Hurricane Maria were sent first mostly to rural areas in the country and city residents were subsequently considered. The perception is that what appears to be an unequitable action, was driven by a political agenda. An individual (also pointed out that government perceives civil servants as being financially proficient to take care of their own needs when impacted by Maria, so this group received little to no help. Another individual recognized the fallacy of that premiss by saying “even those who may be considered to be able to afford, may lose that ability during a disaster and need assistance as well.” Furthermore, another respondent echoed that “many of the people affected in both situations (Maria and COVID-19) have not received direct assistance.” The foregoing shows trust and confidence in Government’s response and recovery initiatives is in question.

Some female respondents had concerns which were exacerbated by being caregivers, mothers, and breadwinners. A female respondent’s spoke of the challenge of “restructuring of working hours when still expected to perform the same duties with specific time deadlines” may be suggestive of gender related issues stemming from family responsibilities which would require personal adjustment as well as adjustments of work assignments. As noted in Table 23, another female, being cast into the role of caregiver after Hurricane Maria, compromised her allowable vacation leave from her job. The situation placed her in an uncomfortable position regarding gaining leave of absence from work to attend to a domestic situation. The respondent’s use of the word “forced” in Table 23 is noteworthy. It apparently describes a situation where there is the perception of individual vulnerability and rights at work in question. The question arises, was this a case where some form of intervention for protection of rights was needed but not sought? Also, two females (4 per cent of the total respondents) who indicated they are breadwinners for their families, cited they received no financial assistance when they applied for it, despite being in an adverse situation which also affected their dependents including children. One of the females questioned the sensitivity of those in authoritative position/s in organizations from which help was sought. Another pointed out national authorities reneged on promises to provide her with accommodation after loss of her house. The implication is, individuals, including females who are the main breadwinners, may have ‘fallen through the cracks in response and recovery initiatives and that accountability and record keeping may be a factor in relief programmes. Notably, national data reveals
women accounts for the majority of the unemployed. Forty per cent of households are also headed by women (Government of Dominica, Emergency Shelter Manual, 2019, p.43).

Hurricane Maria had a greater economic impact on workers than the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, in the aftermath of Maria, a worker even reported gaining access to his bank account to buy resources was a problem because of banks closure. Such is not the case in Dominica up to this point of writing, in the time of Covid). Most respondents expressed damage and loss to their houses, lands, and vehicles as the most significant losses during Maria. At that time, the country experienced extensive property damage and losses as well as a higher incidence of reported job losses.

Psychological and emotional stress resulting from both the dislocation of Maria and COVID-19 social distancing were reported as a challenge. In both cases, the forced social isolation prevented social interaction with near relatives, church congregants, work colleagues, and friends. Pertaining to social distancing, the literature supports the claim of mental health effects from social distancing (Venkatesh and Edirappuli, 2020; Marroquin, Vine & Morgan, 2020). Accurate clear risk communication is therefore essential to give as much information as necessary about what is known to reassure the population amidst uncertainty that breeds anxiety. In disasters as well as in everyday life, the perception of loss of control over one's life is frightening so people need to know they have some measure of control. There is also the need for easy access to social services such as counselling, available through virtual means, especially in the case of persons with pre-existing conditions that heighten their susceptibility. Access to social resources and support can aid individuals to better adapt to stressors (Marroquin, Vine & Morgan, 2020, citing Cohen S., Wills, (1985) and Thoits P.A, (2011).

In both Maria and COVID-19 situations, workers had difficulty accessing their jobs for different reasons. In the case of COVID-19, protocols enforced on public transportation regarding social distancing caused transportation difficulties such as accessing quick transportation as previously experienced. Getting to work, and getting to work on time, became very challenging. Notably, social distancing on public transport means fewer passengers than normal could be accommodated in the vehicles. It would also be a violation subject to penalties if the protocol was disregarded. Regarding Hurricane Maria, living in vulnerable geographical areas prone to landslides and other hazards, contributed to blocked roads, which prevented workers from accessing public transportation and their jobs. These situations created challenges for workforce productivity and thus became a cost to employers and the nation. In such cases, it is essential that employers and the nation have a disaster risk management plan involving business continuity measures and addressing minimization and or eliminating hazards based on geographical location and features.

In the matter of an aspect of trade union’s responsiveness, a worker overtly expressed her lack of awareness of any input from her union, in raising worker/public awareness on COVID-19 guidance in the workplace. The implication is that trade unions play a very important role in preparing workers. They therefore must be proactive in anticipating that problems pertaining to COVID-19 and worker safety and health and social protections can arise in the workplace and prepare to act accordingly. The study reiterates, the role of the unions in the COVID-19 situation is critical to increase workers’ capacity and encourage resilience through satisfactory working conditions.

Workers and their families and communities were at risk for contracting contagious, infectious diseases after Maria because they reported sanitation issues such as lack of, and access to potable pipe-borne water, and water to flush/clean sanitary facilities, and carry out other personal and household tasks. However, citizens found resourceful ways of circumventing this obstacle, and reverted to the culture of using the spring water originating from underground rivers, and surface waters to fill the gap. While the safety of the supply was an issue, which could be solved by individuals doing emergency water treatment (boiling water, use of chlorine bleach etc) their resourcefulness is commendable because they accessed a critical lifesaving resource.

The feedback can provide insights as to the areas of interests and challenges that workers, who are also citizens face that affected them as individuals, as families, and communities. What affected their
communities and families will also affect their environment, work and productivity. These insights can provide areas of focus in disaster management for discussion with workers on the trajectory to sustainable development. Discussions will warrant involvement or greater involvement of unions and workers in decision-making. A worker declared: “Decisions were sometimes made without all major stakeholders, thus limiting the ability to adequately resolve issues.” Furthermore, respondents declared they have learnt lessons that open the door for deeper discussions that can guide unions, policymakers, and other interested parties in developing targeted response initiatives to better manage expectations.

8.3. Discussion of key findings of the research

Disasters present opportunities to rethink the course of development, forcing consideration for a more sustainable development. The country therefore must prepare citizens, including the workforce, for the transition and in such a manner respectful of values, rights, and the dignity of all. This transition will not take place without the workforce, on whose back mainly lies the productivity and advancement of the country. Therefore, unions as representatives of the workers have a role in preparing the workforce for the transition. Unions too must prepare and reinvent themselves if they must be current and relevant and evolve as necessary to meet the needs of their members and the society. Respondents (also called members and workers interchangeably) also believe unions have an important role in representing them. At the core of this representation is the unions active participation in public and private policy- and decision-making forums to effect positive change as necessary on workers' behalf.

Although a slight majority of trade union members rated hurricane Maria's national response and recovery on citizens livelihood and quality of life as being overall satisfactory to very satisfactory, some took issue with aspects of Government’s responsiveness. Although trade unions leaders gave the overall accomplishments a rating of fair to excellent, they too had issues with government’s response on certain issues.

Government's apparent lack of responsiveness to the unions and representation of their membership in disaster management initiatives is overt. This includes not involving the unions or their representatives in the most crucial, identified stakeholder collaborative initiatives. As said before, the workforce is critical to sustainable nation-building. To not involve them is a question of their right to access public decision-making to air their concerns and see them reflected in policy decisions. Most respondents (workers) consider it an important role of their union to represent them in national policy- and decision-making as relevant. In review of the Government plans and initiatives, evidence for trade unions' involvement could not be found except for in the case of an early COVID-19 stakeholder collaboration exercise at the inception of the pandemic.

The lack of understanding of, and thus government officials' respect for the unions' role in disaster management may be an issue as reflected in the CREAD executive member’s response. The official was not sure if trade unions had a role in disaster response and recovery which may explain the trade unions' lack of invitation in CREAD stakeholder initiatives. Furthermore, the executive is uncertain if trade unions were involved in Hurricane Maria’s policy programme planning, implementation, and monitoring activities and if they were invited at any time to participate. However, the executive believes “safeguarding employee work status post – disaster to ensure business continuity” is their role. Implied is that a pre-disaster role for unions is not applicable, therefore their involvement is not necessary in planning but in recovery processes. Mentioning their possible role in recovery processes through safeguarding of jobs and business continuity, means they must first have a role at the table of disaster management planning. Workers (respondents) are aware of this role when they affirmed the importance of the unions' presence in disaster management policy planning and decision-making forums. A successful recovery starts with pre-disaster preparedness which evolves from strategic planning. Essentially then, one must plan for business continuity and, creation and protection of jobs from at the pre-disaster stage. Nevertheless, the respondent acknowledged the critical need for an all-inclusive agenda in response and recovery initiatives and that all voices be heard, and opinions receive equal weight. In mentioning this singular
Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

union role, the respondent implied that union involvement is likely facilitating to outcomes for Pillar 3 of the CRRP which is, ‘effective response and recovery’. An effective response and recovery strategy “will involve developing robust business continuity measures for both the public and the private sectors, so that essential operations may be resumed as quickly as possible…” (CRRP, Govt. of Dominica, 2020, p.23). Resumption necessitates that livelihoods must quickly be restored. “Most importantly, it necessitates levels of community, district and national coordination and cooperation that surpass anything we have achieved in the past” (CRRP, Govt. of Dominica, 2020, p.23). Here the Plan acknowledges the nation’s course to economic recovery and building back better, must come through an elevated level of stakeholder involvement which must include ‘all hands-on deck’ from public to private sector. Seeing some may have a narrow view of the unions’ roles, then ultimately, there is need for more promotion of awareness of unions’ roles and responsibilities in disaster management and the nation’s resilience building.

Further, regarding government responsiveness, there is some discontent among the research respondents and some trade union leaders about the inequitable distribution of aid, including for housing, during Hurricane Maria among other burning issues on the ground. Notably, only 50 per cent of unions believe options were considered in housing allocation. Therefore, the research sought to know how the CREAD committee assured the effectiveness and efficiency of information obtained about applicants and beneficiaries in crisis response and recovery. The response was “all beneficiaries are selected based on established criteria and guidelines which encourages transparency and inclusiveness.” Furthermore, the executive says the committee assure transparency and accountability in its management processes and actions through stakeholders’ consultations at all societal levels. Here it indicates that unions, because they have minimal to no involvement in the collaborations may be ‘short-changed’ in national disaster related management processes as it pertains to transparency and accountability.

In the area of representation in disaster related matters, most respondents perceived their unions as lacking in effectiveness. However, there may be contributing factors such as the context of the issue for representation which require collective bargaining, and benefits derived collectively, instead of directly catering to a single individual’s need. Another factor may be the members themselves are not overtly responsive to union efforts to meaningfully engage them as the DPSU relates in its strategic draft plan. Unions need to take note of this perception however and have more dialogue with their members. This dialogue should be for fact-finding of the main issues that plague members and factors affecting the membership’s responsiveness to the union, so that the union’s approach to problem-solving can be targeted, focused and outcome oriented with indicators for monitoring. There is need for a strategic plan, and or more strategic planning, in areas of focus. Except for the DPSU, none of the other unions has a strategic action plan. Lack of a strategic plan may also mean lack of a disaster management plan that would provide a more focused coordinated response to disaster management and better prepare them for dialogue in national disaster planning and decision-making forums such as those for economic development. In fact, there was no evidence that the unions possess a disaster management plan. The CREAD executive committee member’s response on the questionnaire of a possible role for the unions in ensuring business continuity validates this point for their presence in economic development forums.

Concerning coordination of disaster management activities, no union indicated they had their programmes/project objectives clearly outlined. Objectives are critical to provide focus and for effective monitoring and for efficient resource allocation, among others. This indicates there may be an ad hoc approach to disaster planning.

The unions’ lack of a quantitative database of their membership, and of those affected by disasters, among other pertinent variables will affect the union’s ability to respond effectively to workers’ needs and possibly when representing them in disaster situations. Quantitative data are needed for decision-making, forecasting etc.

Mostly, members did not perceive the unions as being a source for their awareness of environmental sustainability as it relates to their jobs and the country’s sustainable development. This research identifies this as a training need especially when green jobs and processes are being promoted to minimize
environmental impacts and promote adaptive measures to climate change. On the questionnaire, no union reported being involved in performing worker training activities in disaster response and recovery, despite DPSU and WAWU reporting that they engage employers in determining emergent skills set of employees. In fact, in its draft strategic plan (undated), the DPSU identifies inadequate/insufficient members’ training as a weakness. If unions want/need to reach out and collaborate with potential stakeholders to initiate involvement in development policy planning and other activities, having internal staff or access to an external individual with this training/ability would enhance the union’s capacity and could facilitate beneficial outcomes.

Unions need to create an opening to dialogue more with employers to develop a working partnership for targeted, applicable worker training, especially as the need for more green jobs and processes will arise as Dominica moves forward in its transition to a greener development. The fact that 39 respondents (76.5 per cent) identify themselves as the source that makes them more knowledgeable of the connection between their jobs and the wise use of environmental resources, may indicate some level of environmental consciousness among a significant number of members. Therefore, they may be open to dialogue with employers about making the workplace, and if possible, their jobs and or job processes greener and contribute to building climate resilience. Although only 9 respondents (17.6 per cent) said because of trade unions activities, they are more knowledgeable about the relevance of green jobs in contributing to Dominica building back better, here is a possible opportunity for the unions to be more relevant in this area. While Letang applauded the government's push towards sustainable development, and a green economy, Letang (personal communication, 18 June 2020) reported he is not aware of any evidence of workers being trained in green jobs. Green jobs require a new skill set and training opportunities. Unions could be more relevant by promoting training and job creation and employment in this area.

Also, the recent COVID-19 brought some awareness, Letang said, of the need for workers to develop new skills to address technological requirements. However, some workers did not have the technological skills required to work from home, so worker productivity was affected. This illustrates just one of the ways workers' capacity building affects the country's resilience. Because workers were not prepared for the change, Letang said there was a psychological effect on the worker to adapt to changing conditions. Here unions can make a push for continued dialogue with employers in pursuit of pertinent training opportunities in technological areas to have a better prepared workforce in the highly technological twenty-first century.

A few members lamented what they perceived to be some unfair, unsatisfactory government responses in the granting of personal and community assistance. One respondent, who possibly looked for help from the union, said no help was forthcoming. A quantitative database documenting the affected members and their needs would empower the unions to better look at and analyse options for supplying help in situations like these if representation for applicable social services is needed. Notably, all unions lack this essential database. Notably, another critical database that is lacking in all unions is a data collection on the numbers of members and their essential contact information.

Seventy-two per cent respondents were not satisfied with their unions' performance in providing regular, timely updates and feedback on their concerns in the response and recovery phases of disasters. This indicates a communication problem that may be multifaceted. Unions need to review how accessible they are to members. This review may consider their infrastructural resources, as well as the human resources aspect. The human resource aspect is in view of the numbers, accessibility/availability, of staff and the training they possess, to facilitate satisfactory communication in required areas. The modes/channels of communication may also be an issue. However, both DPSU and WAWU informed in an interview that they use weekly radio programmes as a platform for updates on information. In this matter, dialogue with members can help to discover their preferred modes of updates. Another implication of this communication issue is that trust in unions' abilities, quality and relevance in representation may be at stake.
On another matter related to communication, from the perspectives of trade union leaders and members, the disaster public education messages have been effective in raising a heightened level of awareness (See Appendix II for the assessment criteria indicators). From most of the trade union members' views, this heightened awareness has given them the ability to be more prepared to respond and better recover from disasters. The messages owe their success to the ability to connect with people and their values. Particularly, the COVID-19 public education messages have been delivered taking the cultural heritage into consideration. Some older folks are not fluent in English and Creole is recognized as a cultural language defining their heritage. Messages are delivered in both English and Creole. Therefore, a wider net is cast to effectively capture the attention of the target population. Traditional and scientific knowledge, behaviours and perceptions are factors which come into play when people interpret and respond to messages. Realizing this, the messages display an understanding of the cultural perspective. Multimodal sources are also engaged in message delivery taking advantage of social media technology.

In this discussion some risks, vulnerabilities and challenges were highlighted that threaten not only the national response and recovery capacity and resilience but also the capacity and resilience of trade unions and workers. Identified risk and vulnerabilities affecting leaders in facilitating workers' resilience also shows the importance of a work life balance in leadership. Leaders may themselves while guiding members to and offering them some form of psychological services (counselling), may also have to avail themselves of psychological and emotional support during disasters.
Lessons learnt from the disasters and their management processes

9.1 Lessons learnt from the perspective of trade union leaders

According to the trade union leaders, proper planning for a disaster is very important so a disaster plan must be prepared before a disaster. The research concurs and adds that proper planning will involve some form of social dialogue. Social dialogue in national disaster management processes is critical for putting the country on an acceptable, success-oriented trajectory for sustainable recovery. This dialogue is essential not only in the post-disaster phases, but also in the pre-stages of disaster management where plans are initiated, options iterated and honed, taking into consideration multiple perspectives. Furthermore, an effective communication network that facilitates timely and efficient communication between organizations and individuals during and after a disaster is also viewed as critical in management processes.

Pertaining to the management of the distribution of relief supplies nationwide, a union leader is cognizant that the programmes and processes lacked proper organization. The leader therefore called for a better organized system. Another leader’s insight was the necessity for the establishment of “a sound and collective agreement from government, public and private sectors”.

Perusal of the joint position paper from DPSU and the Caribbean Public Services Association, (CPSA (20 May 2020) presented to the Government of Dominica, presents more lessons learnt from the perspective of the DPSU General Secretary, Thomas Letang. It says “COVID-19 is a wake-up call for rethinking our preparedness, placing greater value on our professionals and realigning priority investment in health, crisis management and reshaping the work paradigm of the future.” Furthermore, more emphasis should be placed on diversification of investment into the technological sector, agricultural sector, and renewable energy. In other words, a more sustainable development, which while it promotes food security and sustainable jobs, will address trade and debt imbalances, and increase resilience. From his perspective, COVID-19 has also brought the awareness and opportunity to adopt safe working spaces and prevent cramp spaces through social distancing.
9.2 Lessons learnt from the workers’ perspective

Lessons learnt by the respondents (workers) centres around individual, household, community, and national preparedness. They range from having a family disaster preparedness plan, savings, adequate insurance, housing standards to early warning systems.

9.2.1 Preparedness

To summarize the various statements, respondents believe better preparedness is key to effectual individual, family, and national response. Preparation will necessitate not only the production of a plan at individual, family, community, and national levels but also economic protection measures to mitigate disaster impacts like adequate savings and insurance. A respondent had this to say in evaluating the preparedness aspect of national management processes. “A lot of changes are needed in the public system to better facilitate its citizens. Communities need their own disaster and mitigation plans to help themselves. The Government system is overwhelmed, and it will be difficult to ensure all get the help needed from the national level. I believe it should be from a community approach or Village Council; they know their people and are aware of who needs help more urgently as opposed to those who do not, and so can order them into these categories. I believe what happened in the response initiatives is the vulnerable individuals did not go to the top of the priority list. Training, education and implementation of programmes will get the ball rolling.” Here is the recognition that community empowerment and more involvement of citizens in public decision-making through social dialogue, can lead to more targeted, effective social justice and protection solutions. Citizens’ involvement is necessary at all stages of the process, from as early as planning (Letang, 2017), as implied by this response. Citizens’ (including workers) and community empowerment are critical ingredients for building resilience through social capital.

Other mitigating strategies were deemed necessary under the preparation theme. They include, houses being built to standards that can mitigate against disasters of significant magnitude. Having effective early warning communication systems placed in strategic locations in the capital city, Roseau, is also viewed as a critical preparation strategy. This discourse on the importance of preparation to minimize impacts can be summed up with a worker’s statement “proper planning and timely implementation of plans are the epitome of good results and efficiency.”

9.2.2 Management process

The respondents indicated the lessons learnt from the management process by primarily assessing government’s responsiveness and effectiveness. The highlighted lessons are collated as follows.

Economic recovery is a stepping stone to a nation’s resilience. It must be approached from a comprehensive perspective and include the input of key stakeholders which will lead to feasible, acceptable solutions to mitigate against present and future challenges. Economic recovery must include strategies that stimulate job creation and growth and to reduce affected citizens’ dependency on state resources. A resilient nation will engender economic growth and citizens will be able to meet their basic needs. However, having decisions made and carried out mostly from a centralized perspective without having the input of all major stakeholders “limited the ability to adequately resolve issues.” (survey respondent, 2020) “Therefore, the need for collaboration, transparency, proper planning became very apparent.” (survey respondent, 2020) The foregoing requirements mentioned will foster more trust in government, and the competency and management of the disaster management processes to facilitate sustainable development.
9.2.3. Other lessons learnt from workers’ perspectives

Below is a list of lessons workers reported they learnt through introspection:

1. The importance of individual awareness raising and the role each person must play in being responsible for individual and community environmental and personal well-being cannot be overemphasized.

2. “One can have money and still have nothing (food, etc) to buy, I felt like a pauper. It was frustrating.” one respondent said.

3. The importance of family relationships (values). A respondent said she was so close to her family, yet so far, when her relatives were inaccessible to her because of broken roads (no egress), no means of communication. Furthermore, she realized how essential a proper up-to-date system of communication infrastructure and networks were.

4. People are affected in like manner regardless of their economic status. Disasters are no respecter of persons and impact both poor and rich alike requiring the sharing of natural resources (like the river to bathe and wash) and the pooling of individual resources to survive hardships and recover through shared solutions. Such was the spirit of collectivism after Hurricane Maria. Communal living was critical during the response phase.

5. Experiences coming out of Hurricane Maria’s taught a respondent how to better prepare for disasters to minimize impact. This preparation includes the logistics of how to better distribute food on his job where he works in an agency with the primary responsibility for food distribution. The challenges of equitable and satisfactory national distribution faced after Maria, prompted the realization of a more organized system of distribution through proper data collection. This system has now been implemented at his workplace. The challenge also brought out a dormant analytical, problem-solving skill set the individual possesses which may have gone underutilized on his job in the absence of Hurricane Maria’s challenge. This respondent’s preparation for disasters has extended to actions in community preparation. He is now spearheading the formation of a Disaster Preparedness Committee in his village. This individual is being wooed for a position of shop steward for his union. The union would definitely benefit from this resourceful individual in a position of responsibility.
Lessons learnt and recommendations from the research

In keeping with its resilience theme, the nation is serious about its goal of achieving the status of climate resilience as determined by the intervention strategies already in place within its strategic and climate resilience plans. However, it is critical that no groups/organizations be left behind even as the nation shouts to the citizen the need for all 'hands-on board' in this endeavour.

To assure long term success of policy initiatives, open, transparent social dialogue, with collaboration from multiple stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives (opposing and not opposing) must be captured. Therefore, a concerted mechanism that works to secure the critical social capital needed for a unified effort is vital. Stakeholder outreach for disaster management has been operationalized to some extent in CREAD but an institutional framework is needed where there is a structured and adaptive protocol to guide stakeholder collaboration so that issues of stakeholder coordination, mapping, outreach, and monitoring is executed by informed decision, as well as fairly and effectively. In mapping stakeholders, the exercise also takes into consideration roles and responsibilities of possible participants in view of their perceived abilities to effect outcomes based on goals. Implied here is that the stakeholder analysis and mapping processes were affected by some deficient factors that caused omission of actors, (for example, unions) with the potential to enrich social capital and enhance responsibility. If the roles of unions are not perceived as necessary in the initial stage, then a process whereby they can later be phased in as appropriate would be important. Even though unions may come with their own agendas, as expected in a stakeholder collaboration process, they must be given the opportunity to share their agendas and concerns. A disaster’s impact cuts across societal sectors and enhances the need for equity and collective values in response, so as to achieve sustainable businesses and communities,

Seeing that some in positions of authority possibly have a narrow view of the unions’ roles, then ultimately, there is some need for more promotion of awareness of unions’ roles and responsibilities in disaster management and their applicability in the nation’s resilience building. There is need to educate union members in this area also. Unions can seek feedback also, to see how this role can be improved. An aggressive awareness building agenda, using strategic planning, should be carried out and coordinated by unions.

A climate of mistrust seemingly exists between Government, and some unions and some members. Social dialogue is essential to building trust and understanding of perspectives. Social dialogue among policymakers, employers, workers’ organizations, and workers facilitates the building of resilience in the
workforce and thus the nation especially in crisis response situations such as Maria and COVID-19. Social
dialogue is critical at all stages of the crisis, through planning, implementation and monitoring activities
and encourages better acceptance of policy measures and outcomes. (Letang, 2017) Restricting social
dialogue by not making all possible channels available and accessible for the participation of people and
organizations is an obstacle to the achievement of transparency in national policy decisions.

Unions and members need more and continued targeted dialogue with each other so that unions and
their representatives are well-prepared for participation in different national forums, including decision-
making and policy-setting forums, and that their positions are better reflective of the members’ concerns.
Members themselves must be cognizant of their role as active supporters of the union’s efforts if they
desire more effective representation. Therefore, appropriate channels for effective, continuous, relevant
two-way communication are critical and must be maintained.

Unions need to become more resource rich in other aspects apart from financial, to increase the capacity
of their membership and thus the resilience of both unions and members. Being more resourceful also
means having access to, or the human resources with the relevant skill set and training to facilitate
capacity building in pertinent areas. It may also mean assessing staffing needs (organizational capacity)
to adequately serve the members if feasible. For example, at DPSU at present, for approximately every
250 members, there is one staff member; for WAWU, there is one for every 500 members. Being in
possession of, and or having access to the relevant critical resources will build the unions’ capacities to
better meet the needs of their members, including at the decision-making policy level. Human resources
with specific skill sets (for example, knowledge base and practical experience) corresponding to the
union’s needs, may also be found and tapped from within the membership to assist with development
of training programmes etc. The unions can also become more resourceful by uniting around certain
national efforts as feasible and sharing best practices. An avenue for this unity and sharing of resources
and best practices can come about through the long awaited and desired trade union congress in
Dominica. Sharing best practices for the advancement of the members and the country should mean
also taking greater advantage of their affiliation with regional and international bodies in the sharing
and adoption of best practices.

Trade unions being more resourceful also means having an effective reliable data information system
and the technology to facilitate timely collection and dissemination of relevant data and information.
Not all the unions possess a website. Having an up-to-date digital platform, such as a website, which
is regularly populated and updated with necessary information, is a critical knowledge management
tool. This would assist unions in their internal membership communication as well as provide them with
a tool for risk communication, research and educational purposes, and general knowledge-sharing —
for example, links pointing to national social services, regional related associations and what they are
doing etc. An example is in the matter of South–South cooperation among developing countries and the
disaster and climate change responses in the regions. NWU possesses a website that provides useful
information about workers’ rights, social protection, and some educational links.

Unions need more preparation for their role in capacity and resilience building. Building capacities will
also require careful strategic planning to give the unions direction and measurable benchmarks and
goals to which their organizations can aspire, and for monitoring progress.

The discovery, enhancement and development of workers’ skills are necessary in resilience building
and sustainable development. Dominica has the overarching goal of becoming a green nation through
a sustainable development trajectory which must incorporate environmental sustainability. Most
respondents are unaware of trade union activity promoting awareness of the relevance that green jobs
have in building a sustainable resilient nation. Trade unions have a role in preparing themselves, and
the workers for a just transition through tripartite social dialogue, even as the country transitions. In
this context, needs and expectations can be deciphered, roles and responsibilities defined for the clarity
which is necessary to move forward. Transitioning to a green economy should stimulate job growth.
Therefore, promoting and training for green jobs, realigning job processes to facilitate green production
and outputs will become necessary if the country is to meet its goal for a low carbon emissions future.
Lessons learnt and recommendations from the research

Letang, DPSU General Secretary, in agreement with the CPSA, said diversification of investment in the technological, agricultural, and renewable energy sectors should receive more emphasis. This emphasis may necessitate unions reinventing themselves to provide the relevant quality services that the membership would require.

The citizens are buying into the message of preparedness and response to set them on the road to being climate resilient as reflected in the respondents' responses. The unexpected severity of Hurricane Maria has been a strong wake-up call that preparedness must occur, starting from the individual and family levels.

Environmental protection is one of the main tasks of the National Disaster Plan. The Chief Environmental Health Officer and or an environmental specialist in the Ministry of Environment who oversees environmental and conservation issues should be represented (in the event they are not) on the National Emergency Executive Committee and National Emergency Planning Organization (NEPO) because environmental factors are brought to the forefront in all phases of disaster management. The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) recognizes the need for environmental impact assessments and the development and implementation of environmental management systems in all sectors. Environmental issues cut across all societal and business sectors and their management is crucial for risk reduction and sustainable development, and therefore resilience. Pillar 1, one of the foundational aspects of the CRRP, reveals that there is an understanding that climate resilient systems are realized through conserving the natural resources and the environment (ecosystem services) on which social and economic systems depend.

There is also a role for unions in a National Disaster Plan Committee because they represent the public and private sectors and the interest of workers in general. Workers are the building blocks of economic rehabilitation and stability so their input through their representatives is vital in disaster planning.
Conclusion

Issues around rights, social protection, social dialogue, employment, government responsiveness, trade union responsiveness were revealed in this research. These issues can be explored more in depth and used as a platform for tripartite discussions so that as Dominica continues its recovery from Maria and COVID-19, it does so in a manner that fosters social capital, social cohesion, and stability. These are all critical ingredients for sustainable development. Workers are aware that satisfactory progress on the matters that affect their lives on many levels, rests with the effective trade union representation at the table of national policymaking. It is therefore essential that unions gain authentic access to these forums. Gaining access also means policy- and decision-makers must develop a clear understanding of the role of the unions in disaster management and how it relates to sustainable economic and social recovery. There is also need for workers to become more aware of the critical role the world of work and daily activities play in environmental protection and transition to a safer more secure world with reduced risks from climate-related and public health disasters. Trade unions themselves must be prepared for effective social dialogue by increasing their capacities and having a more targeted strategic approach to their roles of engaging in national policy planning and decision-making.
References


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GkeEM763-g


https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1971-03263-001


Appendix I. Research terms of reference


Methodology and scope of work
The study will seek to answer inter alia, the following guiding questions:

1. What was the involvement of trade unions in the recovery from Hurricane Maria (2017)?
2. Was it well prepared and coordinated?
3. Were unions able to include their concerns in recovery planning and implementation?
4. Was there worker representation on National Emergency Committees and other bodies (for example, Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD), National Emergency Planning Organisation (NEPO), National Emergency Executive Committee and its Task Force for Recovery)?
5. Were trade unions involved in the PDNA undertaken?
6. How effective was/is the National Disaster Plan (2001) in addressing social and labour issues?
7. Do unions have quantitative data on how many of their members/other workers were/are affected by the disasters?
8. What are the protections (unemployment, etc.) guaranteed by law and how were they implemented in practice?
9. What has been the economic impact on affected members/their households?
10. What are some of the specific challenges and/or opportunities that workers and their representatives faced?
11. What lessons can be learnt from the management of the recovery process?
12. Are workers and citizens in general being adequately sensitized and educated on disaster preparedness, response actions and other related issues?
13. What is the level of satisfaction with shelters, provision of supplies and services for care, social mitigation measures etc.?
14. How knowledgeable are they about regional activities relating to disaster management?
Appendix II. Indicators and expected outcomes


Indicators and expected outcomes for the ILO trade union study

1. Consultation and meaningful involvement of trade unions in social dialogue (including through collective bargaining). Indicator applies to the numbers, kinds and context of disaster management social dialogue activities trade unions were involved in with employers, (public and private sectors) other interested organizations, and or implementing activities in these areas to develop/enhance worker capacity:

- assisting in national disaster policy planning and programme development for worker protection in pertinent areas,
- promoting workers and their employers’ involvement in national policies decision making and implementation for their protection,
- promote employment-intensive investment strategies and programmes,
- livelihoods improvement through economic recovery and development initiatives,
- business continuity for job creation, expansion of income generation opportunities and maintenance of employment,
- emphasizing initiatives for financial access to create and restore businesses,
- encouraging the enablement of just transition for creating new jobs and income generating opportunities towards sustainable development,
- support government with promotion of sustainability focused public partnerships and other ways to foster capacity, including skills building to generate new employment,
- support and promote social protection and employment,
- liaise with public and private employers, vocational trainers for job training support to aid in recovery of the employment sector,
- support for maintaining linkages and communication between national and multinational entities for cooperation,
- agitate for and promote sound occupational health and safety best practices in workplaces and in disaster response utilizing health and safety awareness strategies and training,
- determine through assisting with assessment of educational, training and retraining programmes, the emergent skills need for workers to assist in their recovery and or transition,
- promoting workers’ rights, cognizant of international labour standards,
- collect and share best/acceptable workplace practices and experiences,
- develop actions that show evidence of gender responsiveness and equality,
assist as necessary to review, establish, re-establish, or reinforce applicable labour legislation, including legislation governing labour protection and occupational safety and health,

agitate for provision of, access to and maintenance of basic social protection services and essential health care for workers.

1.1 Level of preparedness in disaster response and recovery
Indicator examines how prepared unions themselves are for effective disaster response and recovery

Outcome indicators
- presence or absence of unions disaster management strategic plan with detailed work plan and stakeholder mapping,
- plans in place pertaining to strategies to address possible change in market conditions example; business, skill development and training; adequate and sustainable social protection for job losses, etc,
- plan identifies various risk (including financial) to workers and families and offers risk reduction strategies, including negotiating activities to minimize financial risk,
- relevant, timely activities/programme implementation according to plan,
- level/extent of achievement of plan's goals.

1.2 Quantity and quality of worker awareness promotion and education (quality and quantity)
Outcome indicators
- (Increase in) best/acceptable workplace practices and experiences collected and shared by unions and between unions,
- Number of workers and staff educational activities implemented by union and or facilitated in conjunction with employers or other parties,
- Workers (respondents) report of an increased understanding of sustainability and resilience principles pertaining to available opportunities during and after recovery from COVID-19 and Maria through union related activity,
- Workers guided to mitigation opportunities and resources to build back better and stronger,
- Workers (respondents) report of an increased awareness and understanding regarding just transition, green jobs, their rights, social services, and protection, including safety and health,
- Workers (respondents) have enhanced awareness of local, regional, national, international coordination of resources, requirements, and support for the building of community capacity and community recovery planning through union related activity,
- Infrastructure support facilities provided to facilitate training.

2. Indicator: Effectiveness and quality of trade union response coordination
This indicator examines factors pertaining to trade union’s logistical control that encourages and facilitates the possibility for their effective coordination of response initiatives.
Outcome indicators
- Clear identity/definition of roles and functions for coordinators (who is responsible for coordination),
Appendix II. Indicators and expected outcomes

- Clear chain of coordinating command in place,
- Clearly defined objectives of programme/project activities,
- Effective monitoring frameworks in place to achieve goals,
- Mechanisms in place to garner partnerships (partnership/stakeholder coordination and collaboration),
- Clear established information channels for communication flow, including for members, to gain ready access and for feedback),
- Commitment of resources (staff, etc) in pursuing coordination,
- Maintenance of coordination through continued relationship and communication,
- Staff meetings, conferences, and other related activities implemented as a forum for discussions, decision-making and problem-solving,
- Evidence of liaising and adaptability as needed.

3. Indicator: Level, quality, and quantity of access for trade unions meaningful participation in recovery planning and implementation

This indicator assesses whether an enabling environment has been created for trade union’s involvement and if unions themselves actively pursued involvement.

Outcome indicators
- Trade unions and other respondents report of the level, quantity, context and quality of national involvement as per their roles and in relation to national stakeholder objectives (survey and trade union responses).
- Trade unions are identified/recognized as stakeholders and they are privy to the established consultations mechanisms (CREAD and trade union).
- Evidence of meaningful participation in national stakeholder collaboration activities including decision-making processes:
  - face to face meetings, outreach, implementation etc
  - number of activities/ programme/projects involvement
  - stage of involvement (Early, mid or late)
  - extent /duration of involvement
  - reason/context for involvement.
- Trade union own behaviour seeking actions, both formal and informal, for involvement (for example, linkages sought, acquired, and maintained) (trade union response)

4. Indicator: Existence of worker representation on National Emergency Committees and other related bodies

Indicator assesses for actual evidence of worker representation

Outcome indicators
- workers/unions/ representatives self-report of representation (Survey response)
emergency Committees and media evidence of actual representation
number of pertinent committees on which there is representation

5. Indicator: Existence and extent of trade unions involvement in the PDNA
Indicator assesses for actual evidence of meaningful trade union involvement

Outcome indicators
- evidence that trade unions are identified and sought as stakeholders in the assessments,
- evidence of collaborative linkages forged by unions and utilized,
- trade union input is recognized and used in the assessments,
- trade union input is recognized early in the process,
- numbers and kind of PDNA processes/activities in which unions were involved,
- contextual issues necessitating TU involvement addressed,
- evidence of beneficial or nonbeneficial effects through trade unions’ involvement.

6. Indicator: Quality and relevance of National Disaster and Resilience Plans in addressing social and labour issues
Indicator examines for how relevant the structures and processes identified in disaster plans are in effectively addressing social and labour issues

Outcome indicators
- Respondents report satisfaction/dissatisfaction with social and labour issues in disaster management planning and recovery process.
- Plan shows that all voices are represented, including trade union organizations in disaster planning and recovery.
- Plan clearly identifies an institutional framework and strategies to integrate a just transition into national, local sustainable economic development.
- Plan incorporates just transition into more than one ministry’s agenda.
- Plan identifies clear metrics and mechanisms to measure and track progress.
- Plan highlights processes and criteria for identification and prioritization of key/critical recovery actions and projects.
- Clear identification of, and the number and roles and functions (pre and post) of pertinent decision-making institutions, organizations (including unions), individuals and communities and their interrelatedness (Stakeholder identification and functions).
- Clear coordination and functional mechanisms/structure in place at all levels of government and community to ensure effective communication channels to avoid overlaps, double counting, inconsistencies and for collaboration.
- Plan points to a well-structured management system for managing beneficiaries.
Plan identifies and addresses equity issues (gender, those with disabilities, national origin, poor, other vulnerable groups, rural versus urban area specificity).

Plan identifies and upholds (is compliant with) rights and protections regarding labour social and environmental laws and rights.

Scope of and kinds/numbers of social and labour issues addressed.

Workers’ and volunteers’ health and safety protection issues identified and addressed.

Infrastructure services provided for mass sheltering/quarantine are clearly identified as well as protocols for satisfaction of the same.

Plan clearly addresses pre-and post-disaster recovery planning pertaining to social and labour issues at the various phases (short-term (days); intermediate (weeks to months); and long-term (months - years)

Plan identifies relevant mitigation strategies for responses and recovery for educational, environmental sustainability, health, economic, labour and cultural issues.

Plan provides clear information on the systems, synergies and protocols for access and referrals to the kinds of essential health and social services available and for continuum of care.

Identifies adaptable and alternative plans and strategies to evaluate all options to manage unforeseen, unmet, risks and meet evolving recovery needs.

Plan points to training opportunities, recovery of economic activity, employment, livelihoods, and social protection.

**7. Indicator: Effectiveness and relevance of union’s quantitative database of disaster effects.**

**Outcome indicators**

existence of quantitative database,

databases contain numbers of members and other workers affected by Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 disasters,

databases contain pertinent data (for example, labour supply and demand in the various localities and businesses applicable to affected members employment) and quantify effects as necessary,

database contains numbers of and or estimation of number of workers to be trained, main skills to be included, priority locations, the number of job opportunities for both male and female workers, and for disabled people,

database used as aid in decision making for labour market related factors.

**8. Indicator: Relevance of social protections stipulated in national law and effectiveness of their implementation**

**Outcome indicators**

Social protections (standards, provisions; including insurance, measures to protect retirement/social security, guidelines) in national law are identified.
Organizational logistics (e.g., resources, frameworks, management process- consultative and advisory committees) are identified and in place to facilitate effective implementation.

Evidence of labour markets collaboration for workers and local population and investment employment opportunities and their implementation processes are identified.

Percentage of workers having access to pertinent social protection.

Respondents, including trade unions, workers’ perceptions/activities regarding the identified, and implemented social protections, the mechanisms of their implementation processes, issues.

9. Indicator: Economic impact on affected members/their households
Outcome indicators
- effect on personal and household income stream (example, is it reduced or increased, earning capacity affected, higher prices of energy, goods, and services),
- effect on value of physical assets (e.g., increase or decrease in assets such as house values),
- relevant national progress report and statistics,
- number of national, international, and other pertinent employers’ and employees’ relief and incentive plans created, their value allocations, and implemented,
- access and ease of access to national incentive, debt management schemes and programmes,
- number and kinds of financial and financial risk reduction incentive strategies like insurance which worker/household takes advantage of.

10. Indicator: Impact of identified specific challenges and/or opportunities workers/representatives experienced
Outcome indicators
- respondents’ reports of challenges and opportunities,
- pertinent social, environmental, economic and challenging issues and opportunities identified and how addressed,
- national public/private investment employment opportunities created,
- hands-on-training for upgrading and new skills development initiatives through opportunities created,
- opportunities identified that minimize the future risk to all hazards (environmental, safety and health, housing) and increase abilities to withstand and recover from future disasters (resilience).

11. Indicator: Relevance and impact of management recovery process through lessons learnt
Outcome indicators
- insights gained from positive and or negatives changes, intended and unintended results,
- alternatives and options provided in recommendations,
- impacts on operations, outcomes, and sustainability (quality of life, capacity etc.),
potential for relevance and applicability to ILO mandates and wider region,

- interviewees’ perceptions of lessons learnt,

- implications for accountability and transparency of the management system (What system in place, and how it assures accountability, relevance, and effectiveness).

Notably, the management process of disaster planning, response and recovery and COVID-19 will be assessed in terms of social dialogue and inclusiveness, meaningful participation, transparency, and accountability.

12. Indicator: Effectiveness and impact of disaster preparedness and response public education campaign process

Outcome indicators

- accessible public information campaign in place to inform and increase stakeholders and other publics' awareness of what they need to know about the response and recovery processes,

- presence of a unified communication strategy among pertinent sectors and coordinators to manage public expectations,

- process in place for continuous exchange of information between public and coordinators regarding referral help lines and websites for response and recovery,

- regular, continuous, timely messages conveyed to public through various channels, using culturally appropriate dialects and scenarios to educate and address public concerns,

- contents of messages clear, unambiguous, consistent and with critical information and minimal jargon,

- public kept abreast of the actual pace of recovery, requirements, and projected recovery time,

- public is advised as to their own roles and responsibilities,

- public is informed of and guided to opportunities to build back better and stronger,

- respondents’ perceptions of the contents, channels, and delivery,

- respondents’ reports of individual preparedness capabilities, responsiveness, and resilience to cope with disasters,

- percentage of sample population displaying heightened awareness of disaster response and recovery including sustainability, COVID-19 guidelines and principles (90 per cent and over).

13. Indicator: Degree of satisfaction with shelters

Outcome indicators

- (NB: In discussion, state implication for disease spread including COVID-19)

- quality of shelter management,

- consideration given to equity, vulnerable individuals, groups/ absence of disproportionate response,
Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

- evidence of justice (rights) in response actions including allocation in meeting basic needs,
- shelter capacity (international or local) standards adhered to,
- length of stay in shelter on par with individual need,
- shelter needs adequately met (services, food, water), acceptable infrastructure condition,
- access to quality care provided,
- satisfactory environmental/public health and safety measures in place.

14. Indicator: Extent of knowledge of regional disaster management activities

Outcome indicators

- Respondent is a recipient of/about information and other resources from regional collaborative activities.
- Access is had to readily available avenues of information (public and private) about regional activities.
- Respondents have enhanced awareness of the role of regional organizations in disaster management.
- Respondents can identify at least one regional activity in building individual, community capacity and community recovery planning.

Other Pertinent Indicator: Building of worker resilience:

Outcome indicators

- skill & education training programmes and events implemented by unions and employers as pertinent,
- access to employer’s, sectoral and or national decision-making to air challenges and assess opportunities,
- management had a clear COVID-19 guideline for return to work for worker,
- management uses appropriate health and safety measures to keep workplace safe and healthy,
- channels available in the workplace so workers can be advised about and access social protection services (e.g., occupational health & safety, employee assistance),
- workers are aware of these social services and use these services,
- worker awareness of disaster preparation, response and recovery heightened,
- process/actual plans were in place and resources allotted for business continuity,
- report of satisfaction with union intervention and representation as necessary.

Government Response and Response Management Structure

Other Pertinent Indicators: Effectiveness of CREAD and COVID-19 Committees management process

- Organizational structure and responsibilities are in place and clearly defined.
- Mechanism is in place to ensure transparency and accountability of response and recovery actions
- Clear monitoring framework in place and functional, to measure progress.
Monitoring framework is established and considerate of environmental sustainability, social protection and rights, equity.

Monitoring framework includes trade unions input.

Recovery policy plans, strategies, and activities, promote, incorporate meaningful access to stakeholders inclusive of trade unions and their representatives.

Mechanisms are in place for regular meaningful consultations, including feedback.

Organization allows for a smooth flow and exchange of information between public and coordinators.

Facilitates clearing house of information (one stop shop) for knowledge management.
Appendix III. Questionnaires

Trade Union Leaders Questionnaire

Position title in organization:

Study:


Study purpose:

To gather information for analysis, on how Hurricane Maria and the present COVID-19 pandemic have affected trade unions and their memberships with the objective of strengthening the capacity of Dominica to become more resilient in accordance with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Standard Recommendation No. 205 (ILO, 2020).

Operational definition:

Disaster management includes the organization and management of resources and responsibilities of disasters at all stages of the preparedness, response and recovery processes. Disaster management is inclusive of planning to monitoring for outcomes to minimize the disaster’s impact.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FORM:

Please respond to the statements and questions using the rating scales provided as applicable. Where multiple choice response items are used, please underline, and bold the statement of your choice. Please do your best to provide an honest answer.

Your consent for completing the questionnaire: By proceeding onwards to fill out the questionnaire, your consent to participate in the research is interpreted as granted.
QUESTIONS

Trade Unions meaningful involvement in disaster management, and their roles

1. How important is it for your organization to be involved in national disaster management including response and recovery processes?
   - not at all important
   - a little important
   - moderately important
   - important
   - extremely important

2. How important was it for your organization to have early and continued access to Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 national disaster management initiatives to share members’ and organizational concerns and offer solutions?
   - not at all important
   - a little important
   - moderately important
   - important
   - extremely important

3. My union and or shop stewards were invited to participate in Hurricane Maria’s and COVID-19 national disaster management decision-making initiatives since the beginning of the processes
   - strongly disagree
   - disagree
   - neither agree nor disagree
   - agree
   - strongly agree

4. Did your union engage in the following Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 disaster response and recovery related activities from 2017-2020?
   - Assisting in national disaster policy planning and programme development for worker protection in pertinent areas
   - Promoting trade union, workers and their employers’ involvement in national policies decision making and implementation for worker protection and rights
   - Agitating for the promotion of sound occupational health and safety best practices in workplaces in disaster planning, response and recovery
   - Assist employers to determine the emergent skills need for workers to enable their recovery and or work transition as needed
   - Perform worker training related activities, including liaise for job training support
   - Collect and share best/acceptable workplace practices and experiences with other unions and others
   - Encourage the enablement of just transition in the creation of new jobs and income generating opportunities towards sustainable development
   - Promote livelihoods improvement through economic recovery and development initiatives
   - Advise on business continuity for job creation, income generation opportunities expansion and maintenance of employment
□ Seeking and maintaining linkages and communication between national and multinational entities for involvement and cooperation
□ Other (specify)

Trade union coordination of disaster response and recovery

5. The quality of my union organization's coordinating activities in Hurricane Maria's response and recovery initiatives were satisfactory in the following areas

(please select all answers for which you judge your union's action satisfactory)

□ Programme/project activities objectives clearly defined
□ Coordinators responsibilities and functions clearly defined
□ Monitoring of activities to achieve goals
□ Mechanisms in place to garner collaborative partnerships
□ Commitment of resources in pursuing coordination
□ Communication channels available for easy and ready access and feedback
□ Activities held as a forum for discussions, decision-making and solution
□ Maintaining relationships

6. The quality of my union's coordinating activities in COVID-19 response and recovery were satisfactory in the following area

(please select all answers for which you judge your union's action satisfactory)

□ Programme/project activities objectives clearly defined
□ Coordinators responsibilities and functions clearly defined
□ Monitoring of activities to achieve goals
□ Mechanisms in place to garner collaborative partnerships
□ Commitment of resources in pursuing coordination
□ Communication channels available for easy and ready access and feedback
□ Activities held as a forum for discussions, decision-making and solutions
□ Maintaining relationships

Assessing efficacy and relevance of National Disaster Plan in responding to social and labour issues

(Please select the answer corresponding with all the statements with which you agree.)

7. The National Disaster Plan effectively and relevantly address the following:

□ Identifies an institutional framework and strategies to integrate a just transition into national, local sustainable economic development
□ Has clear coordination and functional mechanisms/structure in place at all levels of government and community to ensure effective communication channels
Assessment of the effects of Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on trade unions in Dominica

- Addresses pre and post disaster recovery planning of social and labour issues at the various phases (short-term, intermediate, long-term)
- Identifies relevant mitigation strategies for responses and recovery for educational, environmental sustainability, health, economic, labour and cultural sector issues
- Identifies and upholds (is compliant with) rights and protection regarding labour social and environmental laws and rights
- Provides clear information on the systems, synergies and protocols for access and referrals to the kinds of essential health and social services available
- Identifies adaptable and alternative plans and strategies in considering options
- Identifies and addresses equity issues
- Other (specify)

Perception of social protections in national law and its implementation

8. How satisfied are you that workers can easily access national social protection services
   - not at all satisfied
   - slightly satisfied
   - moderately satisfied
   - very satisfied
   - completely satisfied

9. The national mechanisms in place to implement social protection is effective
   - strongly disagree
   - disagree
   - neither agree nor disagree
   - agree
   - strongly agree

Assessing trade union capacity

10. Does your union possess, or have ready access to staff and or partnerships with the following resource capabilities?
    (please select the statements that apply)
    - Occupational health and safety knowledge and or experience.
    - Disaster management experience and or training
    - Stakeholder outreach and engagement knowledge or experience
    - Legal background
    - Social services
    - Finance

11. What effect did Hurricane Maria and COVID-19 national response and recovery have on the services and interaction you provide for your members?
12. In your opinion, what were/are the major risks and vulnerabilities that challenged your response to enabling workers’ response/ recovery capacity.

13. What support did the union offer for affected workers and their families?

14. What strategies/ actions did your union implement to facilitate risk minimization of workplace exposures to COVID-19?

**Government responsiveness**

15. Please express your opinion of government’s stakeholder engagement initiatives about seeking the following in the disaster response and recovery initiatives:

(Please select the item response with which you are satisfied. Leave the boxes associated with the statements with which you disagree, unchecked.)

- Promotion of an all-inclusive agenda
- Representation of diverse affected individuals and groups perspectives
- Equity in considering the various perspectives
- Experts and non-experts’ access to decision-making including from planning to evaluation stages
- Opportunities provided for face-to-face deliberation and trust-building

16. How would you rate the national level of recovery accomplishment overall, after Hurricane Maria (2017 to April 2020)? (Please select the rating of your choice)

- very poor
- poor
- fair
- good
- excellent

17. During Hurricane Maria’s recovery, the government decision-making strategies took into consideration, the evaluation of all options and alternatives in these areas:

(Please select all that apply)

- Housing allocation for affected workers’ families and communities
- Housing
- Community relocation
- Community restoration of the built and natural environment
- Other (Specify)
18. Regarding COVID-19, the government response and recovery initiatives are adequate in these areas: (Please select all that apply)
- Facilitating job creation and protection
- Income protection
- Ensuring safety standards and provisions for safe workplaces and for their re-opening
- Social protection to enable resilience
- Government accountability and transparency with social dialogue
- Other (Specify)

19. The COVID-19 national public education messages were responsive to the publics’ needs and were effective. (Please select the rating of your choice)
- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neither agree nor disagree
- agree
- strongly agree

20. The messages are clear, unambiguous, consistent and with critical information and minimal jargon. (Please select the rating of your choice)
- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neither agree nor disagree
- agree
- strongly agree

21. Hurricane Maria’s national public education messages were responsive to the publics’ needs and were effective. (Please select the rating of your choice)
- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neither agree nor disagree
- agree
- strongly agree

22. The public was informed of and guided to opportunities to build back better and stronger (more sustainably). (Please underline and bold the rating of your choice)
- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neither agree nor disagree
- agree
- strongly agree

Assessing Employer Responsiveness
23. How would you rate the responses of private sector employers to the needs of workers affected by Hurricane Maria? (Please underline and bold the rating of your choice)
- far below expectations
- slightly above expectations
- met expectations
- moderately below expectations
- moderately above expectations
- slightly below expectations
- far above expectations
24. How would you rate the responses of private sector employers to the needs of workers affected by COVID-19? (Please underline and bold the rating of your choice)

☐ far below expectations
☐ slightly below expectations
☐ met expectations
☐ moderately below expectations
☐ moderately above expectations
☐ far above expectations

25. What insights, if any, have you gained from being an observer and or a participant in the management of the disasters recovery processes in question?

Any other remarks

ADMINISTRATION

Name of Union:

Job sector: ☐ Public ☐ Private

Occupational job sectors represented:

No. of staff members: Males: Females:

Thank you for your willing cooperation!!
Trade Union Members Questionnaire

Study:

Study purpose:
To gather information for analysis, on how Hurricane Maria and the present COVID-19 pandemic have affected trade unions and their memberships with the objective of strengthening the capacity of Dominica to become more resilient in accordance with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Recommendation No. 205 (ILO, 2020)

Operational definitions:
Disaster management includes the organization and management of resources and responsibilities of disasters at all stages of the preparedness, response and recovery processes. Disaster management is inclusive of planning to monitoring for outcomes to minimize the disaster’s impact.

"Green jobs are decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment." (ILO, 2016)

Environmental sustainability is wise use of natural resources to avoid exploitation of the same, so as to not to compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

INSTRUCTION FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Please respond to the statements and questions using the rating scales provided as applicable. Click inside the circle that is below the number associated with the rating that corresponds with your response. Please do your best to provide an honest answer. All answers must be supplied in consideration of the period from 2017 to April 2020.

Confidentiality:
Your confidentiality is assured. To assure anonymity, your name is not required on the questionnaire. The information will be used strictly for fact finding for the research, for ILO and interested others to take a more targeted and focused approach to the nation's resilience building.

Your consent for completing the questionnaire: By proceeding onwards to fill out the questionnaire, your consent to participate in the research is interpreted as granted.
QUESTIONs

Overall assessment of national responses and recovery in disaster management

1. Overall how would you rate the effects of the national response and recovery initiatives, on citizens’ livelihood and quality of life after Hurricane Maria from 2017-April 2020?

- [ ] very poor
- [ ] poor
- [ ] fair
- [ ] good
- [ ] very good

2. Overall, how would you rate the effects of the national response and recovery initiatives on workers during COVID-19 pandemic from January 2020 - April 2020?

- [ ] very poor
- [ ] poor
- [ ] fair
- [ ] good
- [ ] very good

3. How satisfied are you that government’s Hurricane Maria’s disaster management process had little to no concerns about unfair treatment of individuals and communities?

- [ ] not at all satisfied
- [ ] slightly satisfied
- [ ] moderately satisfied
- [ ] satisfied
- [ ] completely satisfied

- Government considered the needs of vulnerable individuals, and minority groups, in national response and recovery initiatives.

5. It is important that unions represent their workers in national public and private disaster management policy planning and decision-making forums

- [ ] strongly disagree
- [ ] disagree
- [ ] undecided
- [ ] agree
- [ ] strongly agree

6. I am satisfied with how my trade union represents workers that are affected, and non-affected by the disasters

- [ ] strongly disagree
- [ ] disagree
- [ ] undecided
- [ ] agree
- [ ] strongly agree

7. Because of trade union disaster related activities on workers’ behalf, I have an increased understanding of:

(Please check all that apply)

- workers’ rights in disaster related situations
- how to better utilize the available social services
- how relevant green jobs are in helping the nation build back better
the social protection national law provides for workers and their families (e.g. social security, insurance protection etc)
other (specify)
none of the above

8. My union provides regular, timely updates and feedback on workers’ concerns in the response and recovery phases of disasters

   - strongly disagree
   - disagree
   - neither agree nor disagree
   - agree
   - strongly agree

Assessment of disaster preparedness, and response public education

9. Were you given any national guidance on how to cope with COVID-19 in the workplace?
   (if yes, go to question 10)

   - yes
   - no
   - uncertain

10. I received national guidance in the following areas:
    (Please check all the response items that apply)

    - cleaning and disinfecting of workspace and equipment
    - when to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
    - types of PPE to be used
    - what PPE is necessary and applicable for me
    - personal hygiene in the use of PPE
    - proper waste management for PPE and other waste

11. How satisfied are you with your employer’s response in keeping the workplace safe during COVID-19?

    - not at all satisfied
    - slightly satisfied
    - moderately satisfied
    - very satisfied
    - completely satisfied

12. Since Hurricane Maria, how confident are you that the public education you received about disaster preparedness has helped you to better prepare for and recover from disasters?

    - not at all confident
    - slightly confident
    - moderately confident
    - confident
    - extremely confident
13. How effective was the national public education disaster recovery messages in raising public awareness that daily and job activities can play a part in triggering environmental disasters?

☐ ineffective    ☐ somewhat effective    ☐ moderately effective
☐ effective      ☐ very effective

14. The source that makes me more knowledgeable about the connection between my job and the wise use of environmental resources is:

☐ self
☐ colleagues in my workplace
☐ employer
☐ trade union and or shop steward
☐ media
☐ government public campaign
☐ other (specify)
☐ none of the above

15. The public education I received about disaster management increased my knowledge about how regional organizations assist my country before and after the disasters

☐ strongly disagree    ☐ disagree    ☐ neither agree nor disagree
☐ agree    ☐ strongly agree

16. I can identify at least one regional activity that helped Dominican communities to recover and build back stronger (Please circle the answer that apply)

☐ agree    ☐ disagree    ☐ uncertain

Assessing Economic Impact on Workers

17. How has the income you receive from your present job been affected by COVID-19?

(Please check all that apply)

☐ It was reduced
☐ Job was eliminated
☐ I temporarily had no job income
☐ I supplemented my income by learning a new income generating skill
☐ It was not affected
☐ I was furloughed
☐ Other (specify)
18. **COVID-19 affected the amount of money I can spend on the following items:**

(Please check all items that apply)

- [ ] rent
- [ ] mortgage payments
- [ ] food
- [ ] medicine
- [ ] clothes
- [ ] vehicle expenses
- [ ] charitable donations
- [ ] other (please specify)
- [ ] none of the above

19. **Hurricane Maria affected my family and I financially in these areas:**

(Please check all items that apply)

- [ ] damage to property (land, housing)
- [ ] loss of personal possessions (example clothes, vehicles)
- [ ] expenditure on health matters related to Maria’s event
- [ ] loss of job and or other source of income
- [ ] other (please specify)

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**Perception of Shelter**

20. **Did you have to stay in a shelter owing to Hurricane Maria’s impact?**

(Please check all items that apply)

- [ ] yes
- [ ] no

21. **Which of the following were you satisfied with at the shelter?**

(Please check only the item responses with which you were satisfied)

- [ ] management of the shelter
- [ ] people were not treated differently
- [ ] how safety and health issues were addressed
- [ ] environmental conditions
- [ ] access to social services
- [ ] other (please specify)
Appendix III. Questionnaires

22. What are some specific challenges you experienced, and opportunities you gained during Hurricane Maria’s and COVID-19’s response and recovery?

23. What are some lessons that you have learnt from how Hurricane Maria’s and COVID-19 recovery processes were managed?

Any other remarks

Demographics

Name of trade union of which you are a member:

Role in trade union:  
☐ Shop Steward  ☐ delegate  ☐ member without a role
(please check the appropriate box)

Job sector:  
☐ Public  ☐ Private
(please check the appropriate box)

Workplace:

Occupation:

Position in company or organization:

Number of years employed in company/organization:

Annual income:

Gender:

Thank you for your willing cooperation!!
Cread Committee Member Questionnaire

Position title on Committee:

Role:


Study purpose:

To gather information for analysis, on how Hurricane Maria and the present COVID-19 pandemic have affected trade unions and their memberships with the objective of strengthening the capacity of Dominica to become more resilient in accordance with the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Standard Recommendation No. 205 (ILO, 2020)

Operational definition:

Disaster management includes the organization and management of resources and responsibilities of disasters at all stages of the preparedness, response and recovery processes. Disaster management is inclusive of planning to monitoring for outcomes to minimize the disaster’s impact

INSTRUCTION FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please respond to the statements and questions using the rating scales provided as applicable. Where applicable, click the radio button corresponding to the rating associated with your response. Please do your best to provide an honest answer.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality is assured. To assure anonymity, your name is not required on the questionnaire. The information will be used strictly for fact finding for the research, for ILO and interested others to better take a more targeted and focused approach to the nation’s resilience building.

Your consent for completing the questionnaire: By proceeding onwards to fill out the questionnaire, your consent to participate in the research is interpreted as granted.
QUESTIONs

1. How would you rate the impact of the nation's overall performance of Hurricane Maria's response and recovery initiatives?

☐ far above expectations  ☐ slightly below expectations
☐ moderately above expectations  ☐ moderately below expectations
☐ slightly above expectations  ☐ far below expectations
☐ met expectations

2. How would you rate your committee's management of Hurricane Maria's recovery initiatives?

☐ excellent  ☐ above average  ☐ average
☐ below average  ☐ very poor

3. What were the challenges and opportunities you experienced during the response and recovery phases?

4. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of recovery initiatives/activities?

5. How did your committee ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of information obtained about applicants and beneficiaries in crisis response and recovery?

6. How did you assure transparency and accountability in your management processes and actions?

Trade union involvement in disaster management

7. Do you believe trade unions have a role in disaster response and recovery? If yes, what do believe this role should be?

☐ definitely  ☐ very probably  ☐ probably
☐ possibly  ☐ probably not  ☐ definitely not
8.  Was there any form of trade union involvement in Hurricane Maria’s policy programme planning, implementation, and monitoring activities?
   - yes
   - no
   - do not know

9.  Were unions invited at any time, to give their input in any of these activities?
   - yes
   - no
   - do not know
   
   If your answer is no, or do know, please go to question 10

9.  At what stage of the process were they invited to participate?
   - early
   - neither early nor late
   - late

   Scoping and planning stage
   Decisions options iteration
   Decision-making stage almost completed
   Implementation and monitoring stage

10.  How would you rate trade union’s involvement in Hurricane Maria’s response and recovery?
   - definitely
   - very probably
   - probably
   - possibly
   - probably not

Evaluation of change

11.  What are the most notable change/s you have seen nationally from the policies and programmes interventions?

12.  What do you view as the least desirable of these changes and why?

13.  Please highlight any lessons you have learnt from management of the recovery process

14.  In your opinion, how much better were citizens’ livelihood and therefore, quality of life after recovery from Hurricane Maria?
   - much better
   - somewhat better
   - stayed the same
   - somewhat worse
   - much worse
15. **Adherence to principles and guidelines of sustainable development has been impactful in the nation’s and its citizens’ recovery**

☐ strongly agree  ☐ agree  ☐ neither agree nor disagree  
☐ disagree  ☐ strongly disagree

16. **Please highlight any lessons you have learnt from management of the recovery process**

____________________________________________________________________

Any Additional Remarks

____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your willing cooperation!!!
Appendix IV. National disaster response strategies/actions and their status

To fully operationalize its vision of being the first climate resilient nation in the world after its devastating encounter with Hurricane Maria in 2017, and to realize the goals of the Growth and Social protection Strategy (GSPS, 2014-2018) and National Resilience Development Strategy (2030), Dominica has engaged in a series of strategic actions. Many of these activities are/were being carried out in tandem with regional, and international organizations. Some activities are listed as follow.


The Act aims (a) to enable Dominica to bounce back quickly and cost-effectively from disasters that are climate related, (b) to restore/rehabilitate infrastructure to a state better than its state before the disaster, (c) to build Dominica’s resilience to natural hazards and increase its ability to respond to climate related disasters, and (d) to better equip the public and private sectors, and civil society to manage and recover from disasters. (Government of Dominica, Climate Resilience Act, 2018)

Among the key provision of the Act is the establishment of the Dominica Climate Resilience Policy Board and the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD). The Policy Board in collaboration with experts, and CREAD was charged with developing a Climate Recovery, Resilience Plan (CRRP) as well as its approval. The Board also determines what measures must be in place to facilitate Dominica’s resilience. Furthermore, it reviews annual plans including business plans and annual operational plans. Whenever a project or action is to be implemented, it must be done under the directives of the Board. The Board also advises Government. CREAD is the coordinating agency for operationalizing the CRRP. It is a statutory government entity given the mandate to execute its mission within a four-year period. Part of its responsibilities was the task to help to develop and grow the entrepreneurial businesses in the country.

2. Development of the CRRP. It is the roadmap to Dominica becoming the first climate resilient country in the world. As such, it sets out the initiatives, targets, and goals.

3. In early 2020, Dominica, in partnership with international agencies, developed an Education in Emergencies Plan to ensure that the education system was prepared in case of disasters/emergencies, to continue the delivery of educational services to children and adolescents. It originated as a strategic response to Hurricane Maria’s recovery initiatives, to strengthen the nation’s capacity (EMO News, January 6, 2020). Therefore, it builds upon the nation’s disaster plan. Furthermore, its advent bears relevance to the COVID-19 pandemic situation when school sessions have been interrupted with the resulting implications for the workforce and families.

4. In keeping with the resilience ‘build back better’ theme, building codes have been updated and submitted for approval. Proposals for amendment to the Physical Planning Act (2002) has been proffered also. This is to strengthen the housing sector by building climate resilient homes; this sector suffered over 90 per cent loss. After Hurricane Maria, the post-disaster needs assessment estimated the damage to this sector to be EC$956 million (US$354 million). The building code exercise was carried out in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Engineers without Borders, World Bank, and pertinent national ministries. This outcome is in keeping with Pillar 2 of the CRRP which is Prudent Risk Management.

5. Completion of the National Land Use Policy and Physical Development Plan in November 2017. The plan guides Dominica development and will regulate the use of the land to avoid land pressure from competing development initiatives to avoid negative environmental impacts and promote efficient resource use. (Pillars 1, 2 & 3)
6. Implementation of a Housing Recovery Project

Funded by the World Bank in the amount of US$40 million, this project was approved in April 2018 and will terminate December 2023. It targets two broad objectives; firstly, to ensure that households whose houses were impacted by Hurricane Maria recover their houses and secondly, that houses are built with resilient building practices in mind. This venture comprises a management system to monitor and expedite the processes and is expected to be executed within a sustainable framework for development planning in the housing sector. For homeowners undertaking their own reconstruction or replacement, small grants are available to be sourced. (World Bank, 2020). Houses are built with resilience in mind. Therefore, they are constructed with high grade materials, using the appropriate technologies and located in low-risk areas. The Government has also funded a housing project. Government’s goal is that 5,000 climate resilient homes will be built. Within approximately two years after Hurricane Maria, 511 of these houses were constructed and 1,068 are currently under construction (Government of Dominica, Budget address, 2019). The country is well on its way to realizing the resilience target objective of having 90 per cent of its houses built to resilient standards. It is also driving towards its goal of having 100 per cent of its population who reside in hazardous locations resettled in safe areas. Advances in this goal outcome rests on Pillar 3 - Effective Response and Recovery.

7. Funds have been leveraged from the World Bank under the Emergency Agricultural Livelihoods and Climate Resilience Project, and Dominica received US$25 million for restoration of agricultural livelihoods and enhance the resilience of farmers and fisher folk. To encourage infrastructural resilience and the improvement of data collection in hazard analysis, the nation also received US$31 million. (Source; World Bank Group, February 2019).

In his budget address (2019), the Prime Minister reported that post Hurricane Maria, short- and medium-term crop production revived within 9 to 20 months because of strategic investments in agriculture. Farmers were also able to find markets once more for their produce in the restored hotel sector and in the open markets.

8. SMART schools and Health Centres are being designed, renovated, and reconstructed, and built with resilience in mind (CRRP, 2019).

Over $10.8 million dollars was spent on the renovation of schools. Projects for new and rehabilitated schools are underway (Govt. of Dominica, budget address 2019). The CRRP declares a resilience goal of having less than five per cent of schools and health centres damaged. The country is aggressively moving towards this goal. This relates to Pillar 2 of the CRRP resilience framework.

9. Transitioning to domestic renewable energy sources by constructing a geothermal domestic plant to generate 7MW of clean energy to supply 23,000 homes across the island. This plant will therefore supply almost the entire Dominican population. According to the Government of Dominica, this will enable Dominica to source 51 per cent of its energy from renewables. The plant is funded by the Dominica Citizenship by Investment Programme (CBI) and the World Bank indicated a commitment of over USD$17 million in funding.

Currently, wind turbines are being installed island wide as Dominica pursues another source of renewable energy. Additionally, in an effort to curb carbon emissions as the country moves to a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way of life, effective 1 October 2019. Government was expected to eliminate import duty and value added tax on electric buses, cars and motorcycles (Government of Dominica, Budget Address, 2019). Pillar 3 – Climate Resilient Systems is evidenced here.

10. Rehabilitation of seven emergency shelters across the island to commence November 2020 (Dominica Vibes, September 24, 2020). These are expected to be built to resilience standards, which answers to Pillar 2 of the CRRP, that is – Well Planned and Durable Infrastructure - Prudent Disaster Management
Regarding overall economic growth, in his 2019 budget address, the Prime Minister reported national economic growth at 9 per cent for that year.

**Summary of overall progress observed nationally over the last two (2) years**

In a speech at the National Consultation on Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan, held in January 2020, Acting Prime Minister Reginald Austrie pointed out the following as progress made over the last two years:

- development in economic tourism, fisheries & agriculture, community development, infrastructure and reducing disaster vulnerability,
- national rebuilding Partnership to build climate resilience as a mid-pillar in social, economic, and financial policy,
- insurance sector factored climate change into policies to enable customers to become more climate resilient,
- development and implementation of CRRP and its chief executing body CREAD

**Way Forward**

Actions are being taken to encourage private sector and civil society to adopt a climate smart approach in decision-making and streamline their plans and activities with that of the CRRP and thus the goals at the national level.

**Economic cost:** Over the past two (2) years the cost for recovery spent on the sectors has been substantial.

**Future economic cost:** It is estimated that CRRP activities implemented up to 2030 will cost EC$5.4 billion. (YouTube speech given by then Acting Prime Minister, Reginald Austrie. Accessed May 23, 2020.)

**Some COVID-19 Initiatives**

From a YouTube video on a COVID-19 update (accessed May 2020), which was presented to the public by a cross-sectoral team of government officials, the research highlights some encouraging advice given to the public whereby COVID-19 could be viewed in an opportunistically manner. COVID-19 itself is a stressor so advice of this nature that encompasses a wide variety of thematic implication (as identified by the research) can encourage mental health which is critical at this point in time and build individual and community resilience.

**Some possible social benefits of the COVID-19 measures presented to the public**

- time for family bonding during the time spent at home (psychosocial implication),
- opportunity to prioritize how much we spend, what we purchase because of job losses, cutbacks etc (economic implication),
- opportunity for eating what we grow and having backyard gardening (public health and environmental sustainability implications),
- preventing future infections (national economic, health and educational implications),
- the information learnt on how to prevent infections can be applied in the future (implications for capacity built through learnt behaviour and sustainable behaviour),
- opportunity for learning and continuing helping those who are more vulnerable such as the elderly, (National implications for care of vulnerable population through the spirit of community which brings
social benefits - building and capitalizing on social capital through collective consciousness.) This speaks to the hardwiring of values which is an outcome of Dominica’s resilience agenda.

opportunity for innovation. Making of cloth masks was highlighted as an income generating opportunity. Notably, natives have been capitalizing on this new opportunity to generate income. (Economic and capacity building by individual’s development and the acquiring of new job skills.)

Way Forward
Based on Dominica’s attraction as a Caribbean destination, the Ministry of Health expects the possibility of new disease transmission by visitors. Therefore, the Ministry’s disaster preparedness and response plan is to:

- develop a national surveillance system for early disease capture. It will be integral to their public health system, and
- stakeholder collaboration of internal and external actors is critical to the plan.

Here there is acknowledgement of the critical need for social dialogue. Whether or not trade unions will be regarded as a vital stakeholder remains to be seen.

Present and future national economic COVID-19 recovery initiatives include:

Dominica has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by introducing social protection fiscal measures to stimulate the economy, to support business enterprises, and incomes. These answer to Pillar 2 of ILO’s framework for responding to the COVID-19 crisis based on international labour standards (ILO, June 30, 2020, p.14) and Pillar 1 of Dominica’s CRRP. They are as follow:

1. The World Bank has provided funding in the amount of US$5.2 million. Funds will be disbursed to over 7,000 Dominicans meeting the criteria of being poor, elderly, and persons who lost incomes, jobs, and had their pay reduced owing to COVID-19. Owners who own their own businesses and who were affected, also qualify for receipt of these funds. The grants are administered through the Government of Dominica’s Livelihood Support and Social Protection Programme (EMO, News, September 1, 2020)

The Dominica Social Security will be the executing body for an unemployment grant for people meeting a set of criteria. In addition to meeting these criteria, it is for persons who, because of COVID-19 and its curfew, were terminated or laid off from their place of work. The amount offered is EC$600 and EC$400. There is also a Self-Employed Grant for self-employed persons whose business was suspended because of COVID-19. The amount of money is the same as for the preceding grant and the person also has to meet a set of criteria. (Government of Dominica, n.d.)

2. Under a Vulnerability Risk and Resilience Fund Programme, money amounting to EC$5 million will go towards the National Fund for emergency expenditure in the aftermath of disasters. It takes effect October 2020 and continues thereafter. (EMO News contributor, September 2, 2020).

3. After discussions with Government, financial institutions granted loan deferments to customers. Additionally, Government granted concessions for filing of income tax returns by extending deadlines and waiving penalties for businesses that enter payment plans within a certain time (Government of Dominica, June 8, 2020).