



GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



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Strengthening emergency preparedness and response systems and the climate and disaster resilience of critical infrastructure services in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Context and Objectives

On 9 April 2021, a series of explosive eruptions occurred at *La Soufriere* Volcano on the island of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), causing damages worth up to \$210 million, which represents 26.6 percent of the country's GDP, and causing the displacement of over 16,000 people. The health impacts of the eruption are also likely to be wide-ranging, especially on the most vulnerable communities due to prolonged exposure to ash and volcanic gases, as well as evacuees congregating in evacuation shelters in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Immediately following *La Soufriere's* eruption, the SVG government took measures to secure emergency funding and increase its financial liquidity by triggering and drawing down \$20 million through the World Bank's Development Policy Loan with a Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option, as well as US\$50 million through the World Bank's Supplemental Financing to the Fiscal Reform and Resilience DPC Series project. The government also mobilized critical goods such as cots and vehicles to outfit emergency shelters and facilitate the rapid movement of supplies.

Despite these rapid response measures, SVG's needs for a resilient recovery remain significant. The World Bank is therefore committed to supporting the SVG through the Volcanic Eruption Emergency Project (VEEP – US\$40 million, approved by the World Bank Board in December 2021), which is aimed at restoring critical services, including debris management, and support to emergency social protection programs, and at the resilient reconstruction of key sectors and strengthening of the Government's capacity to deliver infrastructure services. This project provides technical assistance for some of the work included under the VEEP, especially on areas such as regulatory frameworks, institutional capacities, policies, and legal frameworks.

Main Activities

- **Strengthening the resilience of critical sectors and infrastructure services impacted by the volcanic eruption**
 - Resilience design and implementation: technical assistance is being provided to ensure water, transport and agriculture infrastructure investments are informed by climate and disaster risk information and are designed to resilient standards. Activities also investigate how resilience can be built through flood mitigation measures, integrated watershed management, and slope stabilization.
 - Prioritization of investment activities: The project identifies and prioritizes investment opportunities for infrastructure by conducting criticality and technical studies. These activities support the application of disaster and climate resilience measures in the retrofitting of key infrastructural assets, including public buildings, water supply, agriculture production and transport infrastructure.

CARIBBEAN REGIONAL RESILIENCE BUILDING FACILITY



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- **Enhancing emergency preparedness and response systems**

- Reviewing national disaster preparedness plans and institutional arrangements across various line ministries.
- Updating Emergency Operation Center standard operating procedures, contingency plans, and coordination and response protocols.
- Supporting the assessment and diagnostic of legal and institutional frameworks, human resources capacities, emergency communications and multi-agency coordination capabilities, and operational readiness of facilities and equipment.
- Supporting the development of guidance and recommendations to improve emergency shelters, Emergency Operation Centers, monitoring and data collection systems such as Decision Support Systems and an Information Management System.

- **Communications and knowledge management**

- Activities aim to improve knowledge sharing and communication activities among relevant stakeholders to support inclusive decision-making processes.

Results

This project is in its inception phase.

Partnerships and Coordination

This project is implemented by the World Bank's Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land Global Practice (GPURL) in collaboration with the following SVG government institutions: the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, and Information Technology; the Ministry of Transport, Works, Lands, and Physical Planning; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Security, Legal Affairs, and Information; the Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing, and Informal Human Settlement; and the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). The team also coordinates with regional donors and entities such as the Caribbean Development Bank and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, and others where appropriate, to ensure that activities align with and support the country's overall reconstruction efforts.

Country

- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Caribbean Regional Resilience Building Facility Component

- Regional Technical Assistance Facility to Mainstream Resilience

Amount approved

- EUR 165,000 / \$200,000

Duration

- 10/2021 – 01/2023