



Meddesha Johnson and her one-month old daughter Emily in a shelter in Kingston, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, on 9 April 2021.

Reporting Period: 9 – 10 April 2021

La Soufrière Volcano eruption St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1



Situation in Numbers

16,000 - 20,000
people affected/evacuated from the danger zone

4,800
children in need of humanitarian assistance

2,300
people in shelters

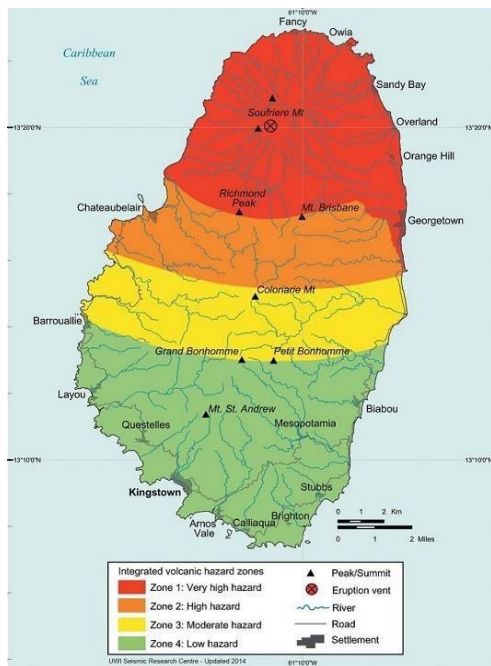
111,000
people potentially affected due to island-wide shut off water

Source: CDEMA/OCHA (9 April 2021)

Highlights

- The La Soufrière Volcano, which was last active in 1979, erupted in the morning of 9 April 2021, sending ash plumes 18,000 feet into the air. Since then, three explosive events were reported within 24 hours.
- Populations from the designated red zone (16-20,000 people estimated), which accounts for almost one-third of the Saint Vincent land mass, have been issued with a mandatory evacuation order.
- By the evening of 9 April, a total of 2,318 evacuees were registered in 62 of the 70 shelters which had been activated. The number of evacuees rose to 3,200 by early 10 April. Plans are being made for some evacuees to be hosted in neighbouring countries – Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Lucia.
- UNICEF coordinated with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) the shipment of seven tonnes of prepositioned WASH supplies (collapsible water tanks, dignity kits, chlorine water treatment), to Saint Vincent in support of the affected population. These supplies will benefit 9,000 persons with access to safe water and hygiene services.

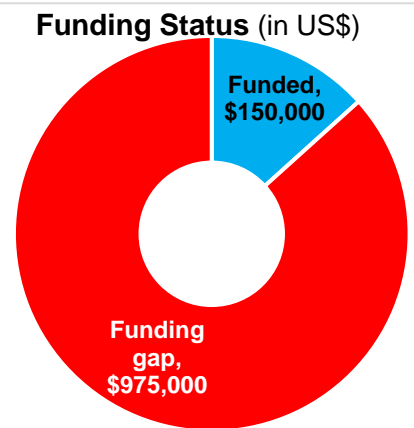
Map: Integrated Volcanic Hazard Zones.
La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent & the Grenadines



Source: NEMO.

This map does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.

UNICEF urgent needs* US\$ 1,125,000



*Preliminary funding requirement, based on initial estimations. To be revised upon availability of needs assessments.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

A national red hazard alert – the highest level – was set on 8 April in St. Vincent, after La Soufriere Volcano showed signs of an imminent eruption. Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves issued a mandatory evacuation order for all persons living in the red zone (between 16,000 and 20,000 people) and evacuations began on the evening of 8 April 2021. A total of 62 shelters were opened on island, hosting at least 3,200 people, and two cruise ships sailed to Saint Vincent to accommodate displaced residents. Needs assessment are still being conducted to determine the immediate needs but the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) has already identified water and sanitation as immediate needs.

According to preliminary figures, between 16,000 and 20,000 have been evacuated. For the current limited information available, UNICEF, in coordination with its partners, estimated that approximately 4,800 children require assistance, a portion of them being in shelters. For these children, critical needs are expected to be water sanitation and hygiene, protection services as well as shelter, food and non-food items. Moreover, above 1,000 displaced families are expected to require immediate economic assistance due to the disruption of their vulnerable livelihoods.

UNICEF will support the specific sectors of its responsibilities, pursuing the fulfilment of children rights during emergencies. Water supply and sanitation services are identified as priority especially in shelters (formal and informal). Water systems, are expected to be disrupted due to ash dispersion and contamination of main water sources, thus emergency water supply as well as sanitation services will be required. Within the child protection area of responsibility, UNICEF will provide direct support and technical assistance to local authorities to ensure the reunification of separated families, protection of unaccompanied children and those exposed to violence and sexual abuse, including appropriate case management as needed. Similarly, building on the ongoing work with the national social protection systems, coordination with partners and direct support to local authorities will be granted to enable their support to benefit of the most vulnerable families whose livelihoods have been disrupted.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

While the magnitude of affectation to people and goods is still to be determined, UNICEF identified, based on to the existing available information and local rapid response capacity, humanitarian needs for priority sectors and a target population for the coming weeks. What follows, is therefore not an exhaustive description of the humanitarian gaps, and will be revised upon availability of further assessments.

WASH

As a part of its contingency planning, UNICEF had prepositioned items in Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, and Trinidad and Tobago, through CDEMA. These WASH supplies included collapsible water bladders (9 x 5,000 litres; 1,500 x 10 litres collapsible water containers (for household use); purification tablets; and 480 dignity kits. Following the immediate request from the Government of SVG, the those supplies were transported within 24-hours, providing an estimated 9,000 persons with access to safe water and hygiene services in the evacuation shelters. UNICEF and its partners, will ensure proper distribution, use and monitoring of the delivered WASH supplies, as well as the adequate provisioning of safe water, basic sanitation and critical hygiene items. Specific attention will be given to ensuring safe and adequate menstrual hygiene management solutions for girls outside their houses.

Child Protection

UNICEF supports the Ministry of National Mobilization and Social Development to conduct Return to Happiness (RTH) to affected children during the emergency. Training for educators and community members, as well as the replenishment of RTH kits is anticipated, as well as the immediate procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) for an estimated 1,000 people in shelters. To ensure safe spaces in shelters, UNICEF also provided Child Protection in Emergency training materials to the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) Shelter Management Cluster, and is in current collaboration with the International Federation of the Red Cross for the provision of technical assistance.

Social Protection

UNICEF is ready to provide cash-based and shock-responsive social protection support to cover short-to-medium term needs of children and families most severely affected during this crisis. UNICEF is coordinating with the SVG Ministry of National Mobilisation and Social Development and Ministries in charge of social protection in potential host countries receiving evacuees, as well as regional and national partners, to support the design and implementation of social

protection responses. This includes promoting linkages between the national social protection system and relevant services (e.g. psychosocial support). The team is also closely working with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission to coordinate social protection responses among Member States, including the development of tools and checklists for countries welcoming evacuees. In addition, UNICEF is liaising with other partners, such as IFRC and WFP, to implement and coordinate immediate cash/in-kind assistance and align with the national social protection system and programming. Three UNICEF shock-responsive social protection/cash specialists are currently working in the Caribbean and available for deployment to SVG as required.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy •

The National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) is responsible for coordinating the emergency response on behalf of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) who has activated a regional support operation and is providing technical assistance to NEMO with Evacuation and Logistics Planning. The United Nations Senior Team (UNST), headed by the UN Resident Coordinator, leads the UN's emergency response, as co-chair of the Eastern Caribbean Development Partner's Group (ECDPG) for Disaster Management. UNICEF leads Education and WASH sector responses, co-leads the Protection cluster, and is actively coordinating with the World Bank and the World Food Programme in the possible implementation of cash-based interventions, under social protection.

In support to government-led national priorities the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Volcano Contingency Plan will be a reference for UNICEF's support in WASH, health, child protection, as well as education information and services, in a situation compounded by COVID-19 complexities.

Funding Overview & Partnerships

Based on initial estimations, UNICEF requires US\$1,125,000 to address immediate needs during the next 4-6 weeks. UNICEF has made available US\$150,000 from existing flexible humanitarian funding, but additional contributions will allow critical support, including life-saving WASH and Child Protection services, to reach the most vulnerable among the affected children and families. Funding needs will be revised upon availability of needs assessments.

SECTOR	Requirement (US\$)
Child Protection	150,000
Social Protection	325,000
WASH	625,000
Monitoring and Evaluation	25,000
TOTAL	1,125,000

Human Interest Stories and External Media

There was media coverage of a short ceremony at the Bridgetown Port where the first shipment of emergency supplies, which comprised seven tonnes of UNICEF WASH supplies, was dispatched to Saint Vincent on the evening of 9 March 2021. A Human Interest Story was also prepared for dissemination.

<https://www.facebook.com/NationBarbados/videos/766786664204023>

<https://epaper.barbadostoday.bb/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&pubid=87ad6005-1972-4d63-92b0-8927eda53c7a>

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