



Reporting Period: 11 – 22 April 2021

La Soufrière Volcano eruption St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2



Highlights

- The La Soufrière Volcano continued to erupt explosively and has now begun to generate pyroclastic density currents - hot (200°C-700°C), ground-hugging flows of ash and debris. The volcano alert level continues to be at the highest level.
- A total of 12,775 people have been displaced. Eighty-eight shelters with more than 6,208 occupants are now activated; of this total approximately 1,052 children have been identified as of 22 April 2021. Registration of persons who have sought shelter with family and friends is ongoing, with 6,567 persons registered by 19 April 2021.
- UNICEF is part of the Detailed Damage Sector Assessment (DDSA) team, led by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), to support the Water, Health, and Agriculture damage assessment together with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assessment was conducted from 16-20 April 2021. The Assessment Report will inform the immediate and medium-term response plan.
- Despite the complex operational environment, particularly due to logistical challenges, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office (ECA) has activated prompt response and technical support to government and partners. Critical WASH supplies have been distributed to reach over 9,000 people and 680 displaced families; life-saving messages are being disseminated via radio to over 30,000 people; and 50,000 face masks, 200 hygiene kits and 30 recreational kits have been delivered to support continuation of child protection services.
- The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has approved 100 per cent waiver of all import taxes and fees for relief supplies, water and barrels from 12 April to 30 June 2021. See details on www.cdema.org.

Situation in Numbers

 **1,052**
children in shelters in need of humanitarian assistance

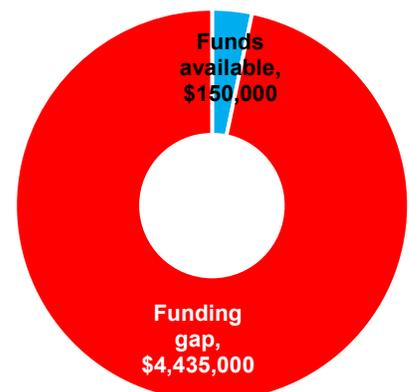
 **6,208**
people in shelters

 **16,000 - 20,000 people**
evacuated from the danger zone

 **30-35 per cent**
of country without piped water

Source – CDEMA/OCHA, Government of SVG (22 April 2021).

UNICEF urgent needs*
US\$ 4,585,000



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

Funding Overview & Partnerships

Based on the contingency plan, initial results of assessments, and in line with the UN funding appeal for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, UNICEF requires US\$4,585,000 to address critical needs, in support to government-led national priorities, in WASH, social protection, education, child protection and information services, in a situation compounded by COVID-19 complexities.

SECTOR	Requirement (US\$)*	Funds available (US\$)	Funding gap	
			US\$	%
Child Protection	410,000	-	410,000	100
Social Protection	1,200,000	50,000	1,150,000	96
WASH	2,000,000	100,000	1,900,000	95
Education	975,000	-	975,000	100
TOTAL	4,585,000	150,000	4,435,000	97

** For a period of six months.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is still on red alert as the La Soufrière Volcano continues a series of explosive eruptions and tremors. Needs assessment are still being conducted to determine the immediate needs, but CDEMA has already identified water and sanitation as immediate needs.

According to updated figures, a total of 88 shelters with 6,208 occupants are now activated. Additionally, 6,567 people are being housed in private shelters. A total of 1,052 children are included in the numbers in shelters as of 22 April 2021, but it is estimated that approximately 4,800 children require assistance. For these children, critical needs are expected to be WASH services and supplies, protection services as well as shelter, food, and non-food items. Moreover, above 1,400 displaced families are expected to require immediate economic assistance due to the disruption of their vulnerable livelihoods. Through its partnership with PAHO, UNICEF supported with the provision of 50,000 masks for use in the shelters.

UNICEF is supporting the specific sectors of its responsibilities, pursuing the fulfillment of children rights during emergencies. Water supply and sanitation services are identified as priority, especially in shelters (formal and informal). A UNICEF WASH specialist is on the ground as part of the Detailed Damage Sector Assessment (DDSA) team, led by CDEMA and in collaboration with PAHO. The DDSA focused on water sampling and shelter assessments in the Northwest region, covering a total of 15 shelters.

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

Child Protection

UNICEF continues to support the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Local Government, Gender Affairs, Family Affairs, Housing, and Informal Settlement to conduct a detailed Child Protection Needs Assessment among evacuated families. Of the 58 shelters and 140 private homes assessed (at 22 April 2021), there are a total of 1,052 children under 18 years. One male and three females have been assessed as unaccompanied and separated and contact tracing is underway by the national authorities. Meanwhile, in support of children's mental health and psychosocial support, with UNICEF's technical and financial support, the Ministries of National Mobilisation and Education are in the final phases of planning the rollout of the *Return to Happiness* programme across the shelters and start-up of child friendly spaces, and are actively promoting the UNICEF-contracted e-counselling service. The COVID-19 compliant mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programme is being supported by UNICEF's dispatch of 50,000 face masks (in collaboration with PAHO), 200 hygiene kits and 30 recreational kits. The child protection referral pathways are being refined for use in shelters, while UNICEF works with Caribbean countries to track as far as possible, the cross-border movement of children from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. At present, while countries have offered such accommodation, the uptake has been extremely limited, with only seven children with their biological families, reported as relocating to Barbados and Saint Lucia to date.

Social Protection

UNICEF continues to support the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Local Government, Gender Affairs, Family Affairs, Housing, and Informal Settlement, in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP), in the design and implementation of the cash/ social protection response. Two emergency social protection and cash specialists are being deployed to support the assessment of vulnerability and needs for short- and medium-term income support; to support the establishment of linkages between the different sectoral responses, such as linking cash and social protection to child protection, nutrition or other services in the short and longer term and to provide technical support to design and implement child and nutrition sensitive cash support through the national social protection system. UNICEF is available to support the key delivery mechanisms of the response (including targeting, grievance/ feedback, monitoring and evaluation) and to support the establishment of linkages with the provision of other required essential services to respond to the various interconnected needs of the affected population.

In parallel, UNICEF continues to support the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) with the coordination of joint discussions between Member States receiving evacuees through the OECS Social Protection Technical Committee. The OECS together with UNICEF aim to promote a coordinated and harmonized social protection response in Member States taking in evacuees. Following requests by several OECS Member States, UNICEF is developing tools/guidance with the OECS with inputs from the member states and other key partners to support governments in their response to the needs of the evacuees through the social protection system.

Education

The Ministry of Education in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has the responsibility for the coordination of 89 public shelters which are currently being housed in schools. As a result, the children's return to face-to-face education has been severely impacted. In collaboration with CDEMA and the National Emergency Organization (NEMO), and with remote technical inputs from UNICEF and UN agencies, officials from the Ministry of Education are assessing the impact of the eruption of the volcano on the lives of children and their families. Recognizing that children and families are sheltering with family members and friends, staying in other private homes and being accommodated in the public shelters, the assessments to map displacements of children and families are ongoing. The assessments will also aim to identify the most pressing needs for the early childhood and education sector.

WASH

UNICEF has provided several tons of WASH supplies, including: water tanks (5,000L) for a total of 9,000 persons, 1,600 water containers, chlorine/water treatment and 680 hygiene and dignity kits (for families of 5 over 1 month including menstrual hygiene products). Rapid needs and damage assessments in WASH, shelters, communities and health care facilities commenced on 16 April, led by CDEMA, with WASH specialists from UNICEF and PAHO. As of 19 April, 15 sites were assessed. Data is available from the assessments on the WASH Regional Group website (<https://www.washlac.com/eng/la-soufriere>). To improve knowledge management and provision of key real time information, UNICEF is supporting the WASH sector coordination with two WASH Information Management Specialists, and supported the development of a draft monitoring tool for the WASH sector partners which will provide overview of supplies in shelters and communities. In a joint effort, PAHO and UNICEF facilitated the water quality testing sampling, and the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) are supporting water quality testing samples for processing of chemical and biological parameters.

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF Eastern Caribbean, in collaboration with UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and PAHO, continues to support the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment to design an emergency response to the nutritional needs of the children and families who have been displaced. The planned response includes the development of a joint statement providing guidance to the public on the management of healthy nutrition in an emergency situation. The distribution of key messages promoting breast feeding and other complementary feeding practices is part of UNICEF's response, as well as the development of cash-based assistance in support of child sensitive nutrition.

Communications for Development (C4D), Accountability to Affected Population, Localization

UNICEF has collaborated with CDEMA and NEMO to produce radio advertisements that focus on child protection, COVID-19 prevention, mental health, and ash safety. While targeting all persons in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the primary target groups are those who have had to relocate due to the volcanic eruption. The six radio ads are currently

being aired on three radio stations including NBC, the most popular radio station in St. Vincent and the Grenadines with an estimated reach of 30,000 persons. In addition, UNICEF has also collaborated with CDEMA and produced and disseminated six [social media messages](#). To date, each message has reached approximately 5,000 persons across Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. In collaboration with the Ministry of National Mobilisation and the Ministry of Education posters on child safety, COVID-19 prevention, mental health and protecting children from ash, are in the process of being printed for 88 shelters. UNICEF has also advocated with the Ministry of Education – which has responsibility for shelter management – for the establishing of feedback mechanisms to ensure the concerns of affected populations are heard.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

NEMO is responsible for coordinating the emergency response on behalf of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in collaboration with 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 WFP in the possible implementation of cash-based interventions, under social protection.

On 20 April, the United Nations launched a US\$29.2 million global funding appeal, for a six-months period,¹ to help those affected by the eruptions of the La Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and other impacted countries. The appeal focuses on two main pillars: Humanitarian response, prioritising provision of time-sensitive and lifesaving humanitarian interventions; and recovery and rehabilitation. Interventions are planned in key sectors: Protection; Health; Education; WASH; Shelter and Housing; Clean-up of ashes, equipment, and environmental health; Food Security and Livelihoods; Agriculture; and Logistics.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

UNICEF continues to pursue a mix of interviews with key media stakeholders, press releases, and social media posts to draw attention to the humanitarian situation in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

<https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/stories/education-hold-in-saint-vincent-as-fallout-from-volcano-continues>

<https://dominicanewsonline.com/news/homepage/news/la-soufriere-volcano-update-new-explosion-sunday-assistance-continues-to-come-in/>

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

Who to contact for further information:	Aloys Kamuragiye Representative UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area Tel: +1246 836-9972 Email: akamuragive@unicef.org	Tanya Radosavljevic Deputy Representative UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area Tel: +1246 836-9952 Email: tradosavljevic@unicef.org	Patrick Knight Communication Specialist UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area Tel: +1 246 836-9961 Email: pknight@unicef.org
---	--	---	---

¹ United Nations - Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, 'UN Global Funding Appeal, Explosive eruption of La Soufrière Volcano, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, April – September 2021', 20 April 2021, <<https://easterncaribbean.un.org/en/125342-un-global-funding-appeal-explosive-eruption-la-soufriere-volcano-saint-vincent-and>>