



Initial Assessment Report

Hurricane Beryl:

St. Vincent and Grenadines

[8 August 2024]

OVERVIEW

Hurricane Beryl, the earliest Category 4 hurricane on record and later intensifying to a Category 5, struck Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on July 1, 2024. This powerful storm caused widespread devastation across the islands, particularly impacting the Grenadine islands. The hurricane's catastrophic winds, reaching up to 195 km/h (120 mph), left over 40,000 people estimated to be affected, with significant infrastructure damage and the loss of essential services such as water and electricity. Health facilities in Canouan, Mayreau, Ashton, and Clifton were forced to close due to the extensive damage, exacerbating the challenges faced by the affected populations. As a result, thousands of people were displaced and required urgent emergency shelter and assistance. The severe impact on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines underscored the critical need for immediate humanitarian aid and long-term recovery efforts to rebuild infrastructure and support the affected communities.

CRISIS SEVERITY AND PRIORITIES

1. Humanitarian conditions & People in Need

Hurricane Beryl made landfall in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on July 1 as a Category 4 hurricane, subsequently intensifying to a Category 5. It had sustained winds exceeding 150 mph (240 km/h), making it one of the most powerful storms to hit the region in recent history (OCHA 09/07/2024). The storm's catastrophic winds destroyed infrastructure, leaving thousands homeless and disrupting essential services such as water, power, and healthcare (OCHA 11/07/2024). St. Vincent and the Grenadines, already burdened by poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to education and healthcare, faced exacerbated vulnerabilities due to Hurricane Beryl, which severely impacted the population's ability to recover.

As of July 9, OCHA estimated that 25,000 people are in need in St. Vincent and Grenadines (OCHA 09/07/2024). In the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl, the immediate needs of the affected populations in St. Vincent and the Grenadines include access to safe shelter, clean water, food, and medical care. Over 90% of homes on Canouan, Mayreau, and Union Islands were damaged or destroyed, necessitating urgent provision of temporary shelters and materials for rebuilding (PAHO 12/07/2024). The destruction of WASH facilities has heightened the risk of waterborne diseases, underscoring the need for clean water supplies and proper sanitation facilities. Immediate medical care is essential for the injured and those at risk of diseases due to overcrowded shelters and compromised living conditions (ACAPS 18/07/2024).

Looking forward, there will be a need for long-term rehabilitation of infrastructure, including homes, schools, and healthcare facilities. The agricultural sector, which is crucial for food security and livelihoods, requires support for recovery and replanting efforts. Mental health services will be necessary to address the trauma experienced by the affected populations. Additionally, sustained efforts to rebuild resilient infrastructure and enhance disaster preparedness are crucial to mitigate future risks. Restoring electricity is crucial for powering homes, healthcare

facilities, and emergency response operations, while telecommunications are vital for coordinating relief efforts and enabling affected individuals to communicate with their families and access emergency services (PAHO 12/07/2024).

The hurricane has disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, and low-income families. Women and children, often more dependent on communal services and social support networks, face heightened risks in disrupted environments. Low-income families, already struggling with poverty, face severe financial instability due to the loss of homes and livelihoods from COVID-19 and other hazards such as storms, flood and drought (CARICOM/WFP 01/08/2023).

The disruption caused by Hurricane Beryl has increased protection risks, including threats of violence, abuse, and violations of rights. Displacement and overcrowded shelters can lead to increased vulnerability to gender-based violence and exploitation. Children are at risk of abuse and neglect, especially when separated from their families or in unstable environments. Ensuring the safety and protection of these vulnerable groups is paramount, requiring targeted interventions and monitoring (IOM 17/07/2024).

The capacity of the local government and humanitarian organizations to mitigate risks involves strengthening protection mechanisms, ensuring the presence of social workers and security personnel in shelters, and providing clear communication to empower affected communities. Significant efforts by the Saint Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross (SVGRC) and international actors, such as the UN and WFP, have included distributing essential supplies and providing emergency assistance. Government initiatives have allocated substantial funds for cleanup, reconstruction, and support for farmers, fishers, and displaced populations, showcasing a coordinated effort for immediate relief and long-term recovery.

2. Identified priority Needs

Priority needs #1 Shelter	Priority needs #2 Health	Priority needs #3 Livelihood
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2.1. Shelter

Hurricane Beryl has caused catastrophic damage to Union Island in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, leading to a severe shelter crisis. According to the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), as of July 29, 5,228 buildings were affected, with 1,685 destroyed, 2,032 damaged, and 1,511 possibly damaged (ERCC 29/07/2024). According to a recent shelter needs assessment study by IOM interviewing 60 displaced households sheltered in three different parts of the country at five different schools, even though two thirds of all these households were home owners before the crisis, the crisis destroyed 67% of their previous accommodation while 22% were moderately or mildly damaged, with only 3% receiving no damage. (IOM, 31/07/2024). 81% of the households said that under the current conditions they cannot return to their houses, indicating the ongoing nature of the shelter needs. The destruction of critical infrastructure, including the main school in Clifton, forced residents to seek refuge in an infant school and makeshift shelters in churches, highlighting the urgency of addressing shelter needs (IOM 17/07/2024; OCHA 12/07/2024). The island's infrastructure, including schools and public utilities, was heavily damaged, compounding the difficulties faced by residents (CDB 09/07/2024). With 90% of housing damaged or destroyed, across Union Island, Canouan Island, and Mayrea Island near-total infrastructure collapse underscores the critical need for immediate humanitarian aid and robust disaster response (PAHO 12/07/2024).

Priority needs include immediate housing and shelter are critical, with a pressing need for temporary shelters and community centers in safe locations (OCHA 01/07/2024). These shelters must be adapted to meet minimum

humanitarian standards, ensuring the inclusion of child-safe spaces, private changing and breastfeeding facilities, indoor and outdoor lighting, and safe WASH facilities to enhance protection and comfort (OCHA 19/07/2024; IFRC 20/07/2024). IOM's primary data study results also confirm that 77% of those who cannot return to their previous accommodation because it was damaged have the intention of staying in shelters while only 13% intend to relocate and 10% plan to move with family (IOM, 31/07/2024). When asked about their level of satisfaction with different services provided to them in their temporary shelters, 21% indicated that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied overall because of the shelters being too hot, uncomfortable and due to lack of safety/privacy issues. 17% were also dissatisfied with the food and nutrition services provided at the shelters and the dissatisfaction level is even higher with the NFIs provided at the shelters (IOM, 31/07/2024). The distribution of essential non-food items (NFIs) such as mattresses, kitchen sets, bedding, solar lights, and tarpaulins is crucial to support the displaced families with each household should be receiving solar light for security (IOM 10/07/2024). Weatherproofing materials like tarpaulins and partitioning materials such as plywood and indoor tents should be provided to improve durability and privacy, especially in multi-family situations (ACAPS 18/07/2024; IOM 10/07/2024). Vulnerable populations, including those immobile, suffering from dementia, and pregnant women, need immediate housing and support (OCHA 19/07/2024).

2.2 Health

The impact of Hurricane Beryl on health services in St. Vincent and the Grenadines has been extensive, significantly disrupting healthcare delivery and infrastructure. The hurricane caused widespread damage to health facilities, leaving many either partially or completely inoperable (PAHO 10/07/2024). Notably, 15 health facilities across the affected regions were rendered non-operational due to structural damage, which severely limits the types of health services available to the population (PAHO 22/07/2024, OCHA, 16/07/2024). The closure of these facilities, including key clinics and hospitals, has interrupted critical health services, including immunization programs, as the vaccine cold chain has been compromised (PAHO 08/07/2024). The affected islands pose a significant risks to public health, as seen in the rise of respiratory infections, dengue cases, and gastroenteritis (IFRC 20/07/2024). Additionally, the mental health of the population has been severely impacted due to the trauma of the hurricane, loss of homes and livelihoods, and ongoing uncertainty. This has led to increases in anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), compounded by the lack of access to mental health services (EC 09/07/2024). The compromised healthcare infrastructure and the spread of communicable diseases pose significant threats to the overall health and well-being of the affected populations.

Efforts to address these challenges include the urgent need for repairs to damaged health facilities, rehabilitation of water storage systems, and replacement of critical health supplies such as medicines and vaccines (PAHO 10/07/2024; OCHA 09/07/2024). Safe shelter and accommodation for healthcare staff on affected islands are essential to relieve overworked colleagues working in harsh conditions (PAHO 10/07/2024). Increasing disease surveillance, particularly in shelters, is necessary to prevent potential outbreaks of diseases such as dengue, gastroenteritis, and respiratory infections (IFRC 20/07/2024; OCHA 09/07/2024). Fumigation against mosquitoes, provision of food and water for health workers, and establishing psychosocial support programs and child-friendly spaces are essential to aid emotional recovery and resilience among affected populations (IFRC 20/07/2024; OCHA 16/07/2024). Ensuring access to essential health services, including sexual and reproductive health and the provision of necessary supplies like maternity kits, is imperative (OCHA 09/07/2024).

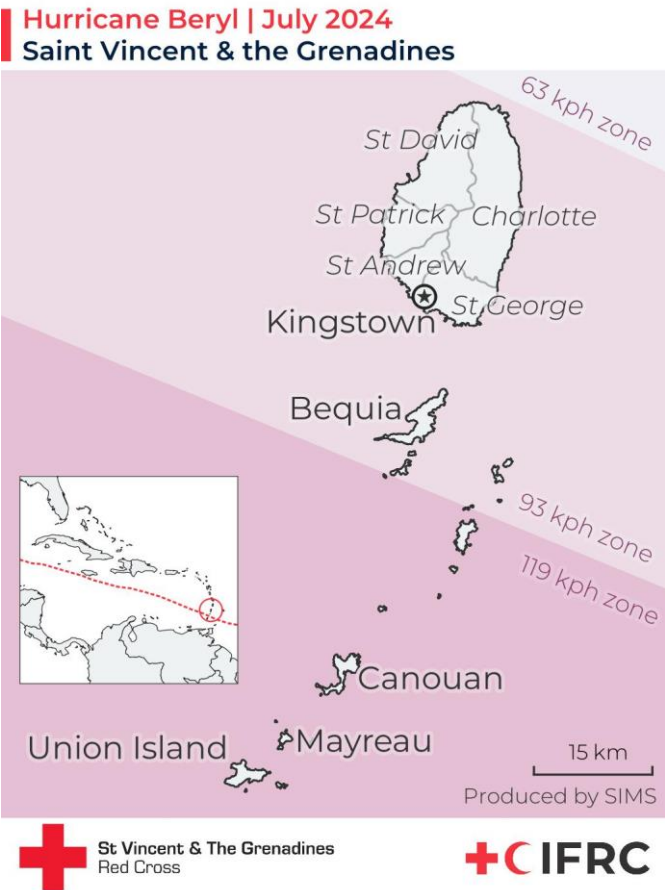
2.3. Livelihood

In the wake of Hurricane Beryl, restoring livelihoods, particularly in agriculture, has become a priority need in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The livelihoods of people in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been already severely impacted by a combination of an economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and a natural disaster. The recent weather phenomenon has caused severe damage to agriculture in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, threatening food security and the livelihoods of small producers. This crisis is compounded by the economic hardships already faced by thousands due to the pandemic. During the pandemic, lockdowns and restrictions disrupted supply chains, making it difficult for farmers to access necessary inputs like seeds and fertilizers, which hindered agricultural productivity

and affected crop yields (UN 29/06/2020). As a result, many farmers have seen their crops and harvests destroyed, exacerbating their economic struggles (Now Grenada 11/07/2024; UNDRR, OCHA 01/06/2023). Between 80% and 100% of crops such as bananas, plantains, coconuts, avocados, and various vegetables were destroyed from the hurricane, leaving the livelihoods of farmers in jeopardy (St. Vincent Times 07/07/2024). Additionally, significant damage to agriculture and fisheries has compounded existing economic challenges, particularly affecting small producers and those already facing economic hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. (WFP 11/07/2024).

The livelihood needs primarily focus on restoring fishing capacities and agricultural production, providing cash transfers to the most vulnerable, and repairing livestock housing to prevent disease outbreaks. Key interventions include repairing and replacing fishing boats and gear, providing planting materials and crop inputs, and implementing cash transfer mechanisms to enable affected fishermen and farmers to meet basic needs (IFRC 20/07/2024; OCHA 16/07/2024). Additionally, the distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and other agricultural inputs is essential to maintain food security and support farmers' livelihoods (OCHA 07/07/2024). Ensuring immediate food assistance and supporting mental health and psychosocial services for affected families is also essential for aiding recovery and building resilience (ACAPS 18/07/2024).

3. Priority Geographic Areas



Priority geographic area #1	Priority geographic area #2	Priority geographic area #3
Union Island	Canouan Island	Mayreau

1. Union Island

Approximately 2,560 people on Union Island were directly impacted, facing overcrowding and hazardous conditions in both damaged homes and temporary shelters (IOM 17/07/2024). Union Island has suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Beryl, with 1,422 buildings affected, including 869 destroyed and 553 damaged, leading to near-total devastation as 99% of buildings were either severely damaged or destroyed (ERCC 29/07/2024). Telecommunications remain severely limited, and electricity has been partially restored only to critical facilities like the Milton Cato Hospital and Central Medical Stores (PAHO 03/07/2024). The control tower at Union Island airport has been destroyed (OCHA 06/07/2024). The destruction of rainwater harvesting systems has left many residents without access to clean water, essential for drinking, cooking, and sanitation (OCHA 17/07/2024). Environmental damage is significant, with waste accumulation from household trash and debris from destroyed buildings leading to blocked storm drains and unsorted waste burning.(OCHA 19/07/2024).

2. Canouan Island

Canouan Island experienced damages due to Hurricane Beryl, with nearly all buildings on the island affected. Out of 722 buildings, 243 were destroyed and 229 were damaged. In addition to the structural damage, the island faces significant water and power shortages (OCHA 04/07/2024; ERCC 29/07/2024). Almost all buildings on the island sustained damage, with many roofs ripped off. Severe shortages of water were reported, and essential services like ATMs and supermarkets were closed. Residents were forced to seek shelter in compromised locations, such as leaking buildings, highlighting the urgent need for adequate shelter and improved access to essential services (DEEP 08/07/2024). Additionally, Canouan Island has faced severe food shortages as a result of Hurricane Beryl. The island's limited resources and logistical challenges have hindered the timely distribution of food supplies (OCHA 06/07/2024). The island's infrastructure, including electricity and communications, is gradually being restored, but challenges remain due to extensive damage and limited resources. Livelihoods have also been severely impacted, particularly in the tourism, fishery, and agriculture sectors, with many residents losing their primary sources of income (SVG Red Cross 31/07/2024).

3. Mayreau Island

Mayreau is one of the smallest inhabited islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Residents are displaced, and the island's small population of around 300 individuals is struggling to rebuild (9News 11/07/2024). The island reported significant damage from Hurricane Beryl, with 233 buildings affected, including 136 destroyed and 54 damaged as of 29 July (ERCC 29/07/2024). Approximately 90% of the housing stock was damaged, leading to significant challenges in housing and access to essential services (DEEP 08/07/2024). In the first week following the hurricane, accessing remote islands like Mayreau was particularly challenging due to unreliable electricity and blocked roads that prevented people from reaching the island. (OCHA 11/07/2024).

4. Priority affected groups

Priority affected group	Priority affected group	Priority affected group
#1	#2	#3
Women/Children	Elderly People	Low-income Families

Hurricane Beryl has severely impacted Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities among various groups. Women and children are among the most affected, facing increased risks of gender-based violence and malnutrition due to overcrowded shelters and shortages of clean water and food. Unaccompanied children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and neglect due to increased family separations during evacuations (IOM 17/07/2024). The destruction of homes and schools has displaced many families, and the

lack of adequate sanitation facilities heightens the risk of waterborne diseases, especially for children under five. (ACAPS 18/07/2024).

The elderly are another priority group significantly impacted by the hurricane. The elderly populations are particularly vulnerable to the physical impacts of hurricanes due to pre-existing health conditions and reduced mobility. Hurricanes often disrupt access to medical care and essential medications, which can be life-threatening for elders. The aftermath of Hurricane Beryl highlighted these challenges as medical services were interrupted, making it difficult for the elderly to receive the care they needed.

Prior to the hurricane, 30% of SVG's population lived in poverty, and the unemployment rate exceeded 20%, further complicating recovery efforts. Low-income families have been disproportionately affected, with their fragile housing structures severely damaged or destroyed by the storm (St. Vincent Times 26/08/2022). The loss of homes and livelihoods has plunged many into deeper financial instability. Natural disasters decrease household incomes and increase poverty, with low-income families requiring two to three times longer to recover. Recovery for these groups is slower and more resource-intensive, requiring targeted interventions

CRISIS SCOPE AND SCALE

1. Humanitarian Profile

As of the OCHA assessments, Hurricane Beryl has significantly impacted Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with an estimated 40,000 people potentially affected by the disaster. Out of this affected population, about 25,000 individuals need humanitarian assistance (OCHA 09/07/2024). Nationally, the hurricane caused 8 deaths and 28 injuries. While Canouan Island and Mayreau Island experienced impact, Union Island faced the highest casualties, with 4 deaths and 21 injuries. As of July 11, an estimated 1,021 people were residing in emergency shelters, with 733 of these individuals in Saint Vincent and 288 in the Grenadines. The response efforts and data collection have been supported by various organizations including Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), MapAction, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Saint Vincent and Grenadines Red Cross (SVG Red Cross) and National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) highlighting the widespread and collaborative nature of the relief operations (ACAPS 18/07/2024).

40,000 Estimated nr. of people affected by the disaster (OCHA 09/07/2024).	25,000 Estimated nr. of people in need (OCHA 09/07/2024).
1,021 Internally Displaced population (ACAPS 18/07/2024)	8 Dead (ACAPS 18/07/2024)
N/A People missing	28 Injured (ACAPS 18/07/2024)

2. Underlying factors (Drivers/aggravating factors)

Underlying factor #1 Geographical and climate change vulnerabilities	Underlying factor #2 Lack of sustainable infrastructure and management	Underlying factor #3 Poverty and Socioeconomic vulnerabilities
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2.1. Geographical and climate change vulnerabilities

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is highly vulnerable to disasters such as hurricanes, floods, droughts and landslides which are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change. The island nation is situated in the hurricane belt of the Caribbean, making it highly susceptible to severe storms and hurricanes as well as to rising sea levels. This geographical positioning means that the island is frequently in the path of tropical cyclones, which can bring devastating winds, heavy rains, and storm surges (World Bank 2016) exacerbates the impact of heavy rains and high winds. The coastal areas are prone to flooding and storm surges, while the hilly regions are susceptible to landslides during heavy rainfall (World Bank 10/05/2017). Events such as hurricane Beryl disrupt essential services including water, sanitation and food security leading to increased poverty and food insecurity. The combination of these factors creates a complex and challenging environment for humanitarian response and long-term development.

2.2. Poverty and socioeconomic inequalities

Emergency response assessments in countries such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines have also demonstrated worsening inequalities, with an increase in incidents of sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children during and after emergencies (IFRC 01/07/2023).

The aftermath of Cyclone Beryl is expected to further weaken the region's socio-economic situation, already severely impacted by the pandemic and the volcanic eruption of 2021, by affecting the country's major sources of economic income (tourism, agriculture) and reinforcing the recently rising rates of poverty and inequality (World Bank 10/2022).

2.3. Lack of sustainable infrastructure and management

Before the pandemic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was enhancing its essential infrastructure to foster stronger growth and economic diversification. This included completing a new international airport, modernizing the seaport (a public investment amounting to 27% of GDP), and constructing a new hospital. To ensure these crucial investments were sustainable, fiscal consolidation began, resulting in primary fiscal surpluses from 2016 to 2019. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the eruption of the La Soufrière volcano in 2021 disrupted this fiscal reform agenda, leading to increased deficits and public debt (World Bank 10/2022).

The impact of Hurricane Beryl on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines highlighted the existent significant gaps that existed in infrastructure resilience and management due to this ongoing situation. Beryl Tropical cyclone caused severe damage to critical infrastructure, including homes, roads, and communication networks. The lack of robust infrastructure planning and maintenance has exacerbated the situation, leaving many areas without essential services and making recovery efforts more challenging. Limited access to information and public transportation further hindered evacuation and relief operations. This event, added to the pandemic and the 2021 eruption underscores the urgent need for comprehensive disaster resilience strategies and improved infrastructure management to better prepare for and mitigate the effects of future natural disasters.

RESPONSE CAPACITY

1. National Society Capacity and Responses

The Saint Vincent and The Grenadines Red Cross (SVGRC) has demonstrated significant capacity in responding to Hurricane Beryl, leveraging its robust network of volunteers and effective governance to deliver essential aid. By July 11, 2024, the SVGRC had distributed 625 hygiene kits, 600 kitchen sets, 200 cleaning kits, 500 buckets, 870 blankets, 90 jerry cans, 140 tarpaulins, 100 shelter tool kits, 20 wheelbarrows, 50 shovels, and 24 tents to affected communities (IFRC 20/07/2024). The French Red Cross supported these efforts, sending additional supplies via the French Navy to Union Island, including buckets, jerrycans, cleaning kits, mosquito nets, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, and shelter tool kits (IFRC 05/07/2024). Despite challenges in accessing isolated areas, the coordinated response underscores the SVGRC's ability to integrate multilateral and bilateral support, volunteers, emphasizing health promotion, mental health, and psychosocial services alongside immediate relief efforts (IFRC 20/07/2024; St. Vincent Times 09/07/2024).

2. National Actor Capacity and Responses

The national response to Hurricane Beryl in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has involved substantial efforts from various government and local actors. The government deployed multiple teams and resources, including fast ferries for evacuations, environmental health officers for facility assessments, and a slow boat for transporting food, water, and heavy equipment to Union Island (PAHO 03/07/2024). Additionally, medical supplies were airlifted from Antigua (PAHO 03/07/2024). To support food security and livelihoods, the government allocated \$12 million for income support to 10,000 farmers and 3,000 fishers, and \$2 million for social assistance (St. Vincent Times 22/07/2024). Furthermore, \$5.5 million was dedicated to direct production support for farmers and fishers (St. Vincent Times 20/07/2024).

The government allocated significant funds for the cleanup and reconstruction efforts, including \$40 million for overall cleanup, \$13.5 million for public building reconstruction, and additional millions for road cleaning, jetties, and wharves (St. Vincent Times 20/07/2024). Moreover, initiatives to address the needs of the displaced population were highlighted, with \$3 million set aside for accommodation for displaced children and their parents, and \$2.5 million for retrofitting a former teachers' college for student housing (St. Vincent Times 22/07/2024).

Community-level responses included relief drives organized by private entities like SELBY INC., which collected essential items such as water, food, and hygiene kits (Searchlight 16/07/2024). Additionally, local restaurants and businesses stepped up to support the affected population, with initiatives like providing daily meals to those in need (Searchlight 12/07/2024). The combined efforts of government, local organizations, and community groups have been crucial in addressing both immediate and long-term recovery needs in the wake of Hurricane Beryl.

3. International and other humanitarian partners' capacity and response

International actors have mobilized significant resources and support in response to Hurricane Beryl's impact on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has been active in distributing emergency food assistance, including 2,500 food kits for 7,500 people and 239 food kits on Union Island (OCHA 16/07/2024). Additionally, UNICEF has delivered over 900 dignity kits to affected families, particularly on Union Island and Mayreau, and shipped essential hygiene supplies for 200 people (St. Vincent Times 12/07/2024; OCHA 19/07/2024).

By 10 July, 25 organizations, including UN agencies, INGOs, and national NGOs, were present on Saint Vincent Island, while 15 organizations operated on Union Island. However, no organizations maintained a presence on Canouan and Mayreau Islands. On the same day, a Samaritan's Purse emergency medical team was established on Union Island, where no healthcare facilities were operational (ACAPS 18/07/2024). Coordination efforts have been robust, with multiple UN agencies, including UNICEF, UN Women, and PAHO, working together to provide mental health and psychosocial support, establish child-friendly spaces, and distribute essential supplies. The United Nations has allocated significant funds to aid Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

Specifically, the UN Secretary-General released \$4 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support humanitarian operations in Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with \$1.5 million specifically designated for Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (IFRC 30/07/2024; OCHA 19/07/2024). Additionally, over the next six months, five UN agencies and their implementing partners will utilize CERF funds to address the needs of 12,000 to 15,000 people in logistics, food security, shelter, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), and early recovery efforts, including agriculture, coastal management, and fisheries (OCHA 19/07/2024).

These international efforts, alongside local and regional partnerships, highlight the comprehensive and collaborative response to address both immediate and long-term recovery needs in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Operational constraints #1 Limited Access to Remote Areas and Islands	Operational constraints #2 Communication and Coordination Disruptions	Operational constraints #3 Logistical Challenges in Aid Delivery
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1. Limited Access to Remote Areas and Islands

Humanitarian access to remote islands and communities is significantly constrained by geographical challenges and limited infrastructure. In the Union Island airport control tower is destroyed, and Mayreau Island is only accessible by a four-hour boat trip from St. Vincent (DEEP 08/07/2024). Additionally, many roads in rural and remote areas are blocked by fallen trees, utility poles, and debris, further hampering the physical access of assessment teams and delaying their ability to reach affected areas (OCHA 06/07/2024).

2. Communication and Coordination Disruptions

Extensive communication disruptions have been reported in many rural and heavily affected areas, with downed communication lines hindering the gathering and relay of information. This severely affects coordination efforts and the ability to provide timely updates (DEEP 08/07/2024). Additionally, power outages and the lack of electricity and water, along with roads blocked by fallen trees, utility poles, and debris, hinder the movement of assessment teams, rendering many electronic devices and systems non-functional and complicating the overall response operations (DEEP 12/07/2024; OCHA 07/07/2024)

3. Logistical Challenges in Aid Delivery

The logistical challenges in delivering aid are exacerbated by the limited warehouse space and transportation options, as well as the scattered distribution and small size of the affected islands. This hinders the efficient delivery of goods and services to those in need (ACAPS 05/07/2024). Due to transportation damage, Mayreau Island has no vehicles for transporting relief goods (OCHA 06/07/2024). The chartered fast ferry, which was essential for moving residents, disaster response personnel, and relief supplies, had to halt its service temporarily due to technical difficulties, illustrating the fragile state of transportation infrastructure. The conditions in the Southern Grenadines are limiting the movement of the assessment teams (Search light 13/07/2024).

PRE-CRISIS OVERVIEW in Affected areas

1. Socio-economic Vulnerability

Latin America and the Caribbean exhibit the highest income inequality globally. From 2009 to 2020, 40.8% of the population lived below the national poverty line. In 2021, around 36 million people faced multidimensional poverty. With the rise of climate shocks and inflation, poverty and inequality are expected to increase, heightening the region's vulnerability (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023).

St. Vincent and the Grenadines faced significant societal challenges prior to Hurricane Beryl, which exacerbated these vulnerabilities. The country has long struggled with high levels of poverty and inequality, which disproportionately affect women, children, and the elderly. According to a 2021 UNICEF report, 30% of the population in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were living in poverty in 2016 (St. Vincent Times 26/08/2022). Inadequate infrastructure, including fragile housing and insufficient healthcare facilities, further compounded these issues. Many families lived in substandard conditions, making them particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. Additionally, limited access to education and employment opportunities perpetuated a cycle of poverty and hindered socio-economic development (PAHO 01/08/2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had negative economic impacts across the Caribbean and especially in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, causing damage to key sectors including tourism and resource exports. This has resulted in some of the largest single-year declines in growth ever recorded for the region, and it has forced governments to think seriously about economic structures, diversification and vulnerabilities the pandemic highlighted some of the unique challenges that these countries face in dealing with new and unprecedented crises (IFRC 07/01/2023). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and due to the health systems' weaknesses, the severe isolation measures taken in the island nation have had a severe impact on economic growth, on violence and people's rights, access to education, and household food security for several vulnerable populations, including Indigenous, afro-descendants and elderly people, women heads of household, children and adolescents, people with disabilities, migrants and refugees (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023).

The fallout from the 2021 volcanic eruption La Soufrière compounded the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic crises, growing inequality and exclusion, increasing numbers of people falling into poverty each year, chaotic urbanization patterns and the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation have worsened these past few years in the country, creating a vicious circle with human and economic losses associated with disasters continue to escalate (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023). These pre-existing conditions created a fragile environment that was severely impacted by the hurricane, leaving the affected populations with limited resources to cope and recover.

2. Health Risk Profile

The COVID-19 pandemic has had negative economic impacts across the Caribbean, causing damage to key sectors including tourism and resource exports. This has resulted in some of the largest single-year declines in growth ever recorded for the region, and it has forced governments to think seriously about economic structures, diversification and vulnerabilities the pandemic highlighted some of the unique challenges that these countries face in dealing with new and unprecedented crises (IFRC 07/01/2023). The impact of the pandemic continues to overlap with existing vulnerabilities – lives and livelihoods are at risk and many people will remain vulnerable for the foreseeable future. Due to the multi-dimensional vulnerabilities of Caribbean small island developing states, exacerbated by economic, social and environmental factors, as well as the frequency of disasters in this region, recovery from crises will take years.

The Caribbean region already has a heavy burden of non-communicable chronic diseases. Now, the prevalence of chronic diseases is on the increase too, and this creates a greater burden on vulnerable communities than communicable diseases or injuries. The risks of infectious diseases, triggered by emergency events, also stretches the limited capacities of Caribbean health systems. For example, in 2021, 1760 people in Saint Vincent and Grenadines were infected by a Dengue Outbreak leading to the death of 8 persons (OCHA 01/06/2022).

3. Infrastructure Vulnerabilities

The 2021 eruption affected food security and the affordability, accessibility and availability of food due to the destruction of 100% of vegetable crops, 90% of tree crops and 75% of agricultural production (OCHA 31/05/2022). It also affected manufacturing production and construction projects which were disrupted temporarily by the ash, as well as energy and water supplies (OCHA 31/05/2022). Frequent climate related events such as tropical cyclones, floods or droughts also affect infrastructures in the country. Between 2008 and 2018, \$13 billion was lost in Latin America and the Caribbean because of drought-induced declines in crop and livestock production (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023). Drought is a major factor of agricultural production loss; 82 per cent of all drought impact is agricultural (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023).

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines also lacks the fiscal and environmental resilience needed to withstand frequent and increasingly severe climatic shocks. The country relies heavily on tourism for economic growth and employment, especially high-end and luxury tourism in the Grenadines. This sector’s focus on natural, blue, and ocean environments makes SVG highly competitive but also leaves its economy particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters (World Bank 26/10/2020).

In addition to that the country faces agricultural technical limits combined with global warming, growing population and environmental degradation (UNDRR,OCHA 01/06/2023).

103,948 Total Population (2022) (HDX 27/06/2024)	50.92% Male Population (2022) (HDX 26/07/2024)	49.08% Female Population (2022) (HDX 26/07/2024)
77.6 Life Expectancy at Birth (2021), in years (HDX 26/07/2024)	1.37% Under-five mortality rate (2021) (HDX 26/07/2024)	53.87% Population living in urban areas (2022) (HDX 26/07/2024)

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