



CANADA CARIBBEAN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FUND

Island Snapshot

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



About the CCDRMF

The Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund (CCDRMF) is one component of Global Affairs Canada's¹ (GAC) larger regional Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Program. The CCDRMF is a competitive fund which is designed to support community-driven projects that seek to enhance the resilience of communities and reduce risks from natural hazards (e.g. floods, droughts, tropical storms, hurricanes) and climate change.

Established in 2008 as a CAD \$3.0 M small grant facility, the CCDRMF finances projects ranging from CAD \$25,000 to CAD \$75,000, and up to CAD \$100,000 in exceptional cases. The targeted audience is community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil-society organisations, and government agencies wishing to undertake community projects in the following beneficiary countries²: *Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.*

For the purposes of the CCDRMF, a 'community' is defined as '*a group of people living in the same geographical area (such as a neighbourhood, district, city or town)*' or '*a group of people with similar interests (such as youth and women) or livelihoods (such as farmers or fishers)*'.

To date, the Fund has supported twenty-nine (29) community sub-projects totalling CAD \$1,770,517.11, of which twenty-three (23) are completed and six (6) are on-going. The Fund has also provisionally allocated CAD \$1,017,338.66³ to eleven (11) projects that are under consideration for execution during the period 2017 to 2019.

Island Overview

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is an archipelagic state in the southern Lesser Antilles. It is comprised of the main island, Saint Vincent, and a chain of over 30 islands and cays. Saint Vincent is the largest with

¹ Previously the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD)

² In addition, one small community project was approved for the British Virgin Islands

³ Subject to amendment



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an area of approximately 344 km², while the Grenadines cover a total land area of about 45 km². Only seven of the Grenadine Islands are inhabited: Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, Union Island, Mayreau, Palm Island and Petit St. Vincent. Mustique, Palm Island and Petit St. Vincent are either privately owned or are leased by the State to private companies.

All the major islands are of volcanic origin. The rugged, mountainous main island rises 1,234 m to the volcanic cone of La Soufrière. Structurally, Saint Vincent has a central north-south mountain range with numerous valleys and over 40 rivers and tributaries that drain to the narrow coastal belt. Although several of the Grenadines are also mountainous, they are less rugged and are lower-lying (some of the cays appear as reefs cresting at low tide), with the highest point being Mount Taboi on Union Island which rises to 304 m.

The country experiences a humid tropical climate, characterised by an average annual temperature of 27 °C. There is a marked dry season (January to May) and rainy season (June to December). The rainfall distribution is quite reliable on the mainland; it is highest in the north central portion of the island (about 3,810 mm) and decreases on the coast (about 1,524 mm). In contrast, rainfall is significantly lower in the Grenadines. The wettest months are June to November when the monthly average is 152 mm. The driest period is from February to April during which the average monthly rainfall is about 25 mm.

In 2012, the total population stood at 109,991 (51% male and 49% female). About 91% of the household population reside on the mainland, with majority of the settlements and agricultural activity concentrated in coastal areas. The economy of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is open and dominated by services. Based on 2013 figures, key sectoral contributions to gross domestic product (GDP) were as follows: Real estate, Renting and business activities (16%); Wholesale and retail trade (16%); Transport and storage (11%); Financial intermediation (7%); Construction (9%); Agriculture (6%); and Hotels and restaurants (2%).

The main natural hazards to impact Saint Vincent and the Grenadines include hurricanes and tropical storms, floods, landslides, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and drought. The island group is situated in the southern portion of the Atlantic Hurricane belt. Hurricane Janet in 1955 is responsible for the single largest number of people killed in such events, 122 persons. Hurricane Tomas in 2010 was recorded as the country's most costly hazard event with damages of EC \$130 million, 2 persons injured and about 6,100 affected. The low-lying Grenadines are especially exposed to associated storm surge and wave hazards. With that said, while hurricanes are most likely to result in wide-spread devastation, floods are considered the most frequent hydro-meteorological hazard occurring both during and outside the rainy season, especially on the mainland. For instance, the flood of December 24, 2013 affected over 50% of the population and resulted in 9 deaths and damages of EC \$291.4 million (15% of GDP). Flash flooding from mountain streams coupled with storm surge events present the greatest risk from flooding, particularly to coastal villages.

Due to a combination of its volcanic geomorphology and steep terrain, as well as road cuts and building constructions on steep slopes, landslides, particularly on the larger islands, are a significant hazard – the



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risk of which is increased during the seasonal rains. In 2008, heavy rains provoked over 25 landslides and resulted in 1 death.

The country is also exposed to low-to-moderate seismic risk due to its location along the eastern margin of the Caribbean plate. The active volcano, La Soufrière, which last erupted in 1979 causing tremendous damage to the agricultural sector and disrupting life, is another risk factor posing threats from shallow earthquake and eruption events. In addition, the active underwater volcano Kick ‘em Jenny in the southern Grenadines poses a significant tsunami risk.

Of course, like other small island developing states (SIDS), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including changes in temperature and precipitation, intensified hydro-meteorological events and associated hazards, and sea level rise. Note, the Grenadines are more susceptible to drought, as there are no rivers and rain water harvesting is their main source of fresh water.

CCDRMF Projects in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

The CCDRMF is a competitive small grant facility and between 2008 and 2015, there have been nine (9) Calls for Proposals. In total, the Fund received 212 project applications but only forty-three (43) projects, 20%, from thirteen (13) countries met the criteria and were deemed eligible for consideration.

From St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the CCDRMF has received thirteen (13) project applications. Of these, only two (2) community-based projects were approved. These projects support disaster risk management through improved emergency communication and drought adaptation. A brief overview of the completed projects can be found in the table below.



Figure 1: Training and operation of new VHF/UHF handheld transceivers under RRL project

Project	Organisation	Objective(s)	Project Period	GAC Contribution (CAD\$)	Total Project Cost (CAD\$)
Green Energy Retrofit Project	Rainbow Radio League Inc. (RRL)	To provide wider VHF radio coverage to other parts of our multi-island	2010	\$67,475.00	\$73,732.00



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Project	Organisation	Objective(s)	Project Period	GAC Contribution (CAD\$)	Total Project Cost (CAD\$)
		state ⁴ ; and to make that service more reliable by using 'green energy' (renewable energy) sources to power this radio network.			
Increasing Water Storage Capacity on Union Island: Adapting to the Effects of Drought	Union Island Environmental Attackers	To increase people's water storage capacity by using the method of rain water harvesting.	2012-2013	\$76,786.00	\$121,356.67
				\$144,261.00	\$195,088.67

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⁴ Union Island, Mayreau, Canouan, Bequia, Fancy, Rose Hall, Belmont, Arnos Vale and Campden Park.



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