



World Pediatric Project®

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Brian Clare
Chairman of the Executive Board of Directors
World Pediatric Project

DATE: 4/12/21

RE: An Update on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

As of this morning, things remain grim and challenging in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines since Friday's eruption of La Soufrière for the first time in 42 years.

Vincentians have faced the fallout of multiple eruptions from La Soufrière throughout the weekend. Since the first eruption, we have been in constant contact with Lauren McIntosh, the executive director of our Eastern Caribbean operation, and with all of our staff in St. Vincent to monitor the situation on the ground and to provide support where we can. While our staff in St. Vincent are currently safe, many WPP families who live closer to La Soufrière have had to flee their homes for safety.

Just this morning, another eruption larger than Friday's destroyed the old and new domes within the volcano and created conditions for pyroclastic flow, which seismologists characterize as "an avalanche of superheated gas and debris traveling as fast as 120 mph around the volcano" that destroys everything in its path.

One seismologist said the "worst-case scenario is that this could go on for weeks" and that things could get worse before they get better. The current eruption is being compared to the 1902 eruption that left 1,600 people dead on St. Vincent.

As a result of the eruptions, the entire island is covered in ash, forcing the closing of the airports both in St. Vincent and Barbados, which has also been impacted by the ash nearly 120 miles away. Two WPP patients and their families were scheduled to come to the U.S. in the coming weeks for surgical care, but now their visits have been postponed.

The water supplies on the island have been disrupted, and there have been rolling power outages. Lauren reports the air is filled with acrid Sulphur smoke. St. Vincent Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves estimates it will be four months before things are "back to normal."

Neighboring countries are sending water and other supplies via ship, but more help will be needed as this natural disaster develops. World Pediatric Project remains committed to supporting the children and families of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and we have set up a donation page to funnel gifts where they can help the most. We are working with other relief groups in St. Vincent to ensure that all funds will be used appropriately.

Donations can be made through <https://wpp.to/helpsvg>.

We will provide periodic updates as new developments occur.