

UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund response report – supporting SVG Post following Hurricane Beryl in 2024

On 1 July 2024, Hurricane Beryl became the earliest Category 5 storm ever recorded in the Atlantic, unleashing catastrophic damage across the Caribbean. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) was among the most severely impacted country, with 90% of its infrastructure damaged. On the southern islands of Union Island and Mayreau, postal facilities were entirely destroyed, while Canouan experienced partial damage. These disruptions crippled SVG Post's ability to provide essential logistics, mail and financial services to isolated communities.

UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund responds

In close coordination with SVG Post, the UPU's Emergency and Solidarity Fund (ESF) was swiftly activated to support emergency recovery efforts. The UPU's disaster risk management team conducted a joint assessment to identify urgent needs. Priority was given to re-establishing basic postal operations on the affected islands, with equipment such as generators, satellite phones, Starlink Internet systems and office furniture procured to enable service continuity in areas still lacking reliable infrastructure.

Global solidarity in action: support from Japan

The emergency response was made possible thanks to generous support from the Government of Japan through the UPU Japan Fund. This support enabled the rapid delivery of critical equipment, helping SVG Post restore postal operations, reconnect remote regions, and maintain vital communication services despite ongoing infrastructural challenges. Japan's timely contribution once again reflected its steadfast commitment to global postal solidarity and resilience building.

Conclusion

The devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl underscores the acute vulnerability of small island developing states to climate-related disasters. Through the rapid mobilization of the UPU ESF, strategic collaboration with SVG Post and generous support from Japan, this recovery initiative has helped safeguard vital postal services in the region. It serves as a powerful reminder of how international cooperation can protect essential public infrastructure and build resilience in the face of mounting global climate risks.