



BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Women and Environment

From the Beijing+25 Report and
Montevideo Strategy

BVI at a glance

- The Virgin Islands (British) are located in the Caribbean, a British Overseas Territory, between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, east of Puerto Rico. Its geographic coordinates are $18^{\circ}30'N$ $64^{\circ}30'W$. The Virgin Islands consists of the main islands of Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, and Jost Van Dyke, along with over 50 other smaller islands and cays with 15 of the islands being inhabited.
- Its natural hazards consist of hurricanes and tropical storms from July to October. There is limited natural fresh water resources (except for a few seasonal streams and springs on Tortola, most of the islands' water supply comes from wells and rainwater catchments

Reliance on the Environment

- The "twin pillars" of the economy are tourism and financial services. Politically, tourism is the more important of the two, as it employs a greater number of people within the Territory, and a larger proportion of the businesses in the tourist industry are locally owned, as are a number of the highly tourism-dependent sole traders (for example, taxi drivers and street vendors).
- The Tourism Industry in the BVI is linked heavily to the Environment
 - Beaches
 - Hikes
 - Tour of the country
- Majority of the persons employed in Tourism industry are women.

Challenges for Implementation

- In September 2017 the VI (s) was hit by two Category 5 hurricanes. Irma and Maria.

- Jost Van Dyke
post
Hurricane Irma



SOPERS HOLE



Effect on Women and the Environment

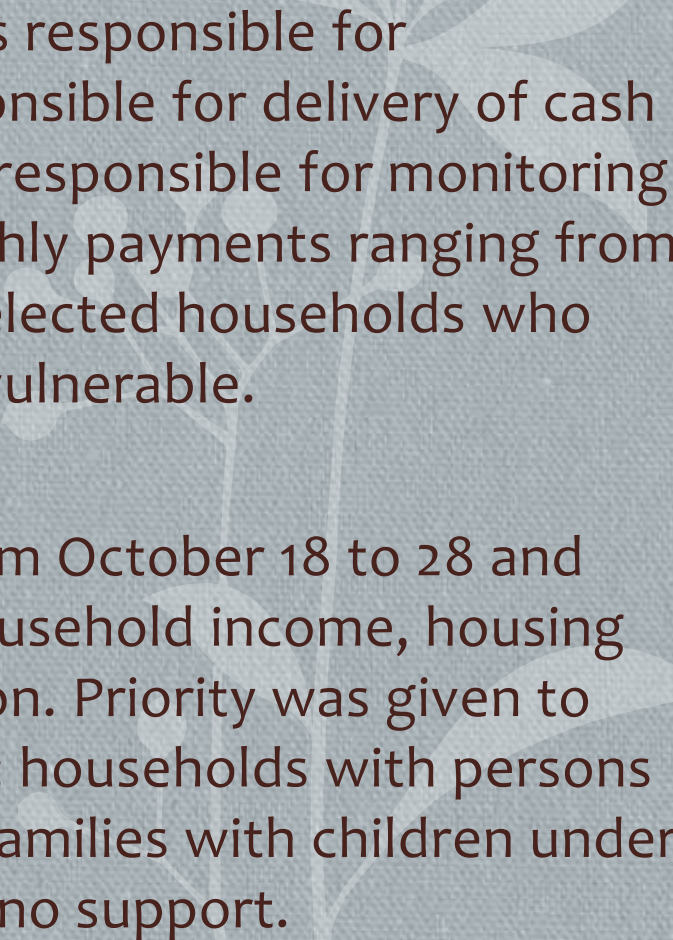
- Homes were ripped apart, vehicles and boats tossed around and dispersed and the landscape erased of any vegetation.
- The hurricanes severely damaged all major marinas and hotels of the British Virgin Islands, a vacation getaway. The storms also destroyed 70 percent of homes on the islands, which have a population of about 30,000.
- Majority of the women were without jobs coming out of the Storms. The tourism industry was almost non-existent, and
- Men were mainly in the construction field so had jobs or could find jobs coming out of the hurricanes easily.

Household Assistance Programme



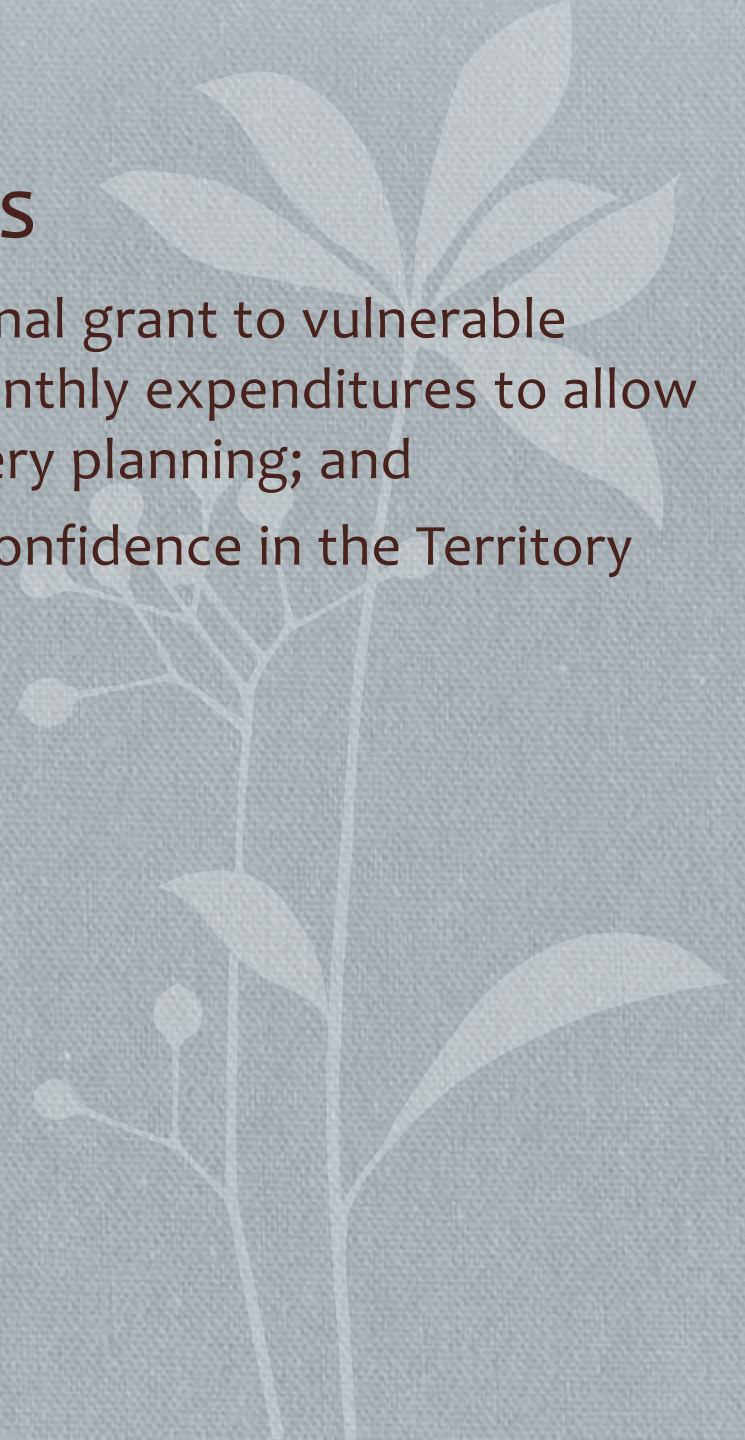
- Cabinet approved the implementation of a Household Assistance Programme in 2017 to support the basic needs of the most vulnerable households affected hurricanes Irma and Maria.
- Following Hurricane Irma, a Joint Cash Platform (JCP), financial assistance programme was established with the BVI Red Cross and Caritas Antilles (funded in large part by DFID, a global leader in using cash in emergencies and the Catholic Relief Services) and the Adventist Disaster Relief Agency (ADRA) to provide financial assistance to 1,050 vulnerable households.



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- The Social Development Department was responsible for registration, the BVI Red Cross was responsible for delivery of cash via First Caribbean Bank and Caritas was responsible for monitoring the project. Via the Platform, three monthly payments ranging from \$800 - \$1,200 per month were made to selected households who met the eligibility criteria of being most vulnerable.
 - A total of 1776 households registered from October 18 to 28 and were ranked based on factors such as household income, housing damage and post-hurricane living situation. Priority was given to larger households; single-parent families; households with persons with disabilities or severe health issues; families with children under five and persons over the age of 65 with no support.

Objectives

- i. provide a three-month unconditional grant to vulnerable households to meet basic household monthly expenditures to allow for self-recovery and longer-term recovery planning; and
- ii. stimulate the economy, building confidence in the Territory and retaining the needed labour force.



Survey

- Two household surveys and several focus group discussions were conducted with the beneficiary households to determine whether the financial assistance programme had met its objectives. The results from the household surveys and focus group discussions confirmed that the financial assistance programme had met its intended objectives of reaching the most vulnerable households in the Territory. In addition, there was a significant impact of the assistance programme on vulnerable households where recipients were able to avoid using coping mechanisms such as incurring debt and selling of assets to make ends meet. The programme directly impacted 3,274 persons.

• Thank You



