

## SVG Diaspora Mapping Project Launched in the United Kingdom

26 November 2016



**London, UNITED KINGDOM:** The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) through the Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit (RIDU) are conducting a Diaspora mapping exercise funded by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the IOM Development Fund (IDF).

The project was launched at the High Commission for St. Vincent and the Grenadines in London with presentations by Renitta Peter (RIDU) and Natalie Hanley (IOM) to a fully packed attendance including H.E. Cenio Lewis (High Commissioner), Doris Charles (Minister Counsellor), Carolin de Freitas –Sawh (Counsellor), Dr Christopher Stange (Hon. Consul) and Chairpersons of the National Committee representing the various SVG Associations across the UK.



R-L: Renitta Peters (RIDU), H.E. Cenio Lewis (High Commissioner), Doris Charles (Minister Counsellor), Natalie Hanley (IOM)

Section of the audience at packed launch

Opening prayer was delivered by Clintel Rose, followed by singing of the National Anthem, presentation and demonstration of the website portal ([www.svgdiaspora.org](http://www.svgdiaspora.org)), questions

and networking. Food provided by Akil Cauth (Chocolate Factory) and music by SV2G steel pan group.

The objective of the project is to map the skill sets of Vincentians living abroad over the age of 18, in a simple confidential questionnaire that takes two minutes to complete with disclosure of personal information purely optional.

The project aims to link Vincentians with the needs and opportunities that exist in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and will strengthen both the Government's capacity to engage and dialogue with the Vincentian Diaspora as part of the country's strategic development focus.

At the end of phase one, a Diaspora Database will be created. In the second phase, a needs assessment will be conducted in which private and public organizations, institutions, associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can participate through a consultative process to determine what skills/resources will be needed for achieving the objectives.

Some members of the Diaspora often have a genuine interest to implement developmental initiatives in their country of origin and fund programmes and projects but lack an organized medium to facilitate participation. Though some individuals and groups overseas have already taken up supporting development through the sending of remittances, investing in businesses and supporting family members, we believe this project will help the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines learn more about the Diaspora's interest and expectations to engage in a more meaningful way.

Together we can work towards making SVG better as we encourage all Vincentians living abroad to complete the online survey and provide their input.

**ENDS**