

# **USF OPERATING PLAN 2024**

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

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The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was established by the Telecommunications Act (Cap 418) of the Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2009 to efficiently regulate the telecommunications sector in collaboration with the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL). The NTRC was also mandated to manage the Universal Service Fund (USF).

## **1.1 WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND?**

The Universal Service Fund (USF) was established under Section 42 of the Telecommunications Act (Cap 418) of the Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2009. The Fund was set up to compensate any telecommunications provider who is required to provide or to promote Universal Service. Universal Services include: Public voice telephony, Internet access, telecommunication services to schools, hospitals, and similar institutions, and to the physically challenged. The USF encourages efficient access to, and the use of telecommunication networks and services throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines, with special focus on rural, underserved, and maritime areas. The provision of Universal Service will provide social, educational, and economic development for our nation.

The Fund will be used to ensure the reasonable availability and affordability of basic and advanced telecommunication services, where commercial telecommunication markets may be unable to deliver such services in a financially viable manner, independently.

The USF is mainly funded by annual payments made by telecommunication providers. The Fund may also receive income from appropriations made by Parliament and official grants, donations, bequests, or other contributions, if the NTRC considers it consistent with the best interest of the Fund. The annual payment received from telecommunication providers is calculated as a percentage of their gross annual revenue considering the number of years in operation. This payment structure ranges from 0.25% of gross revenue for the first year of operation, 0.5% of gross revenue for the second year, 1% for the third year, 1.5% for the fourth year, 1.75% for the fifth year and 2 % for the sixth and each subsequent year of its operation.

## **1.2 REGULATORY INSTRUMENTS OF THE USF**

There are several regulatory instruments that govern the Universal Service Fund. They are as follows:

### **1.2.1 Telecommunications (Universal Service Fund Contribution Order) Regulations S.R.O. #4 of 2017.**

This was gazetted in January 2017. This revised Order sets out the method for the calculation of annual payments and the deadline by which they are to be paid. This document can be accessed on the NTRC's website at the following URL:

[https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/USF\\_contribution\\_order-1.pdf](https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/USF_contribution_order-1.pdf)

### **1.2.2 Telecommunications (Universal Service Fund) Regulations (Cap 418) of the Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2009**

The Regulations were gazetted on September 16, 2008 and the aim of these regulations is to provide a broad framework for the efficient and effective management of the Fund. This document can be accessed on the NTRC's website at the following URL:

[https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/Universal\\_Service\\_Fund\\_regulations\\_20110418.pdf](https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/Universal_Service_Fund_regulations_20110418.pdf)

### **1.2.3 Telecommunications (Universal Service Fund) Guidelines 2009**

This document outlines specific procedures and policies for the management of the USF in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It also outlines the basis for the development and use of the Guidelines derived from the Telecommunications (Universal Service Fund) Regulations. This document can be accessed on the NTRC's website at the following URL:

[https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/USF\\_guidelines\\_20110418.pdf](https://ntrc.vc/docs/usf/USF_guidelines_20110418.pdf)

## **1.3 TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT 2009**

Section 42 of this Act mandates the establishment of the USF. This document can be accessed on the NTRC's website at the following URL:

[https://ntrc.vc/docs/legislations/telecom\\_act\\_2001\\_SRO\\_NO\\_11.pdf](https://ntrc.vc/docs/legislations/telecom_act_2001_SRO_NO_11.pdf)

## **1.4 USF OPERATING PLAN**

The USF Operating Plan is a policy document which outlines the priority objectives of the USF within St. Vincent and the Grenadines on an annual basis. This document summarizes the state of development of telecommunications in the country, and it sets forth the broad objectives, targets, and types of projects that the Fund may seek to promote during the year. It also provides a financial status of the fund to stakeholders.

## 1.5 USF BUDGET

### SECTOR REVIEW

Figure 1 shows the revenues generated by telecommunications operators between the years 2016-2023. There was an increase in revenue of 4% in 2023 compared to 2022.

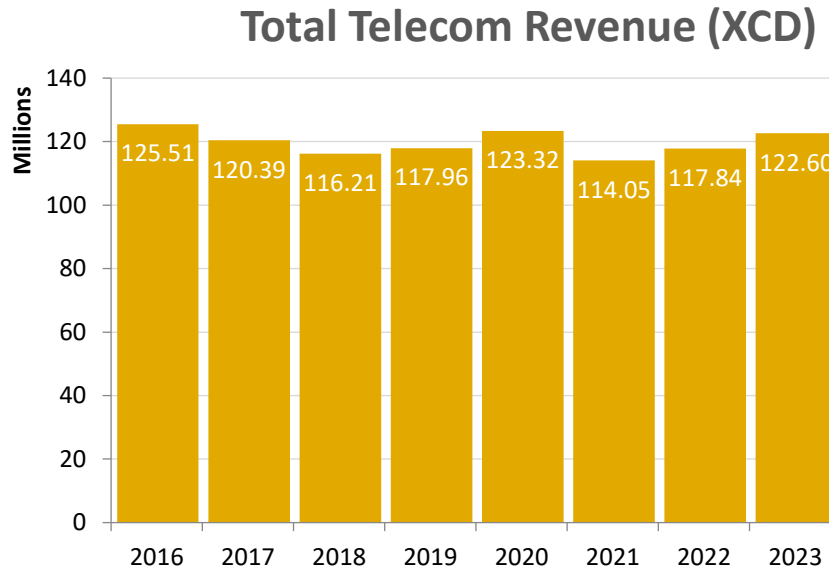


Fig 1. Source: NTRCs Annual Report 2023

## Financial Performance of the Universal Service Fund

### Revenue

For the year ended December 31, 2023, the Universal Service Fund projected to receive a total of Two Million Five Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Forty-Three Dollars and Seventy Cents (\$2,553,243.70) from Telecommunications Service Providers and an interest of Twenty-Three Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$23,700.00). Two Million Four Hundred and Ninety-Seven Thousand, Five Hundred and Forty-Two Dollars and Fifty-One Cents (\$2,497,542.51) were received from Telecommunications Providers, Twenty-Five Four Hundred and Twenty-Four Dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$25,424.79) was received from interest. Twenty-One Thousand was also received as sponsorship towards the annual MyApp Summer Programs and iCode784 competition, and additional fees of Two Hundred and Ninety-Eight Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty-Nine Dollars and Eleven Cents (\$298,759.11) were also collected from funds under contractual obligations.

## **Expenditure**

### **Recurrent:**

For the year ended December 31, 2023, the USF had projected to spend Five Hundred and Ninety Thousand, Four Hundred and Sixty-Five Dollars and Seventy-Four Cents (\$590,465.74) on recurrent expenditure. However, Five Hundred and Seventy-Six Thousand and Sixty-Five Dollars and Thirty-Six Cents (\$576,065.36) was spent. The NTRC was able to acquire free conference passes as well as a lower accommodation cost for the advance arrangements made for one staff member and the winners, from the Open category of the 2023 iCode784 competition, to travel to Barcelona as part of their prize to attend the GSMA 4YFN Startup event. This will take place within the first quarter of 2024.

### **Capital:**

For the year ended December 31, 2023, the USF projected to spend Twenty-Three Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars (\$23,900.00) on capital items. Twenty-Four Thousand and Twenty-Seven Dollars and Ninety-Four Cents (\$24,027.94) was spent in line with the projected amount.

### **Projects:**

For the year ended December 31, 2023, the USF projected to spend Four Million and Thirty-Two Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty-Seven Dollars and Eighty-Six Cents (\$4,032,327.86) for payments on projects. However, Three Million Six Hundred and Nineteen Thousand, Four Hundred and Forty Dollars and Seventy-Four Cents (\$3,619,440.74) was spent. This is primarily because the contractual obligations under some of the USF projects were not met and therefore, the payments of fees were deferred until the issues were resolved.

## **4.3 Projected Revenue for 2024**

The Fund is projected to receive Two Million, Four Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$2,466,000.00) in 2024. Two Million, Four Hundred and Sixty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,463,500.00) is expected to be collected from the Telecommunications Service Providers and interest of Two Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) is projected on the fund's balance in its savings account.

Figure 1 below shows the projected and actual revenues received by the USF from respective telecommunication operators.

### **Figure 1**

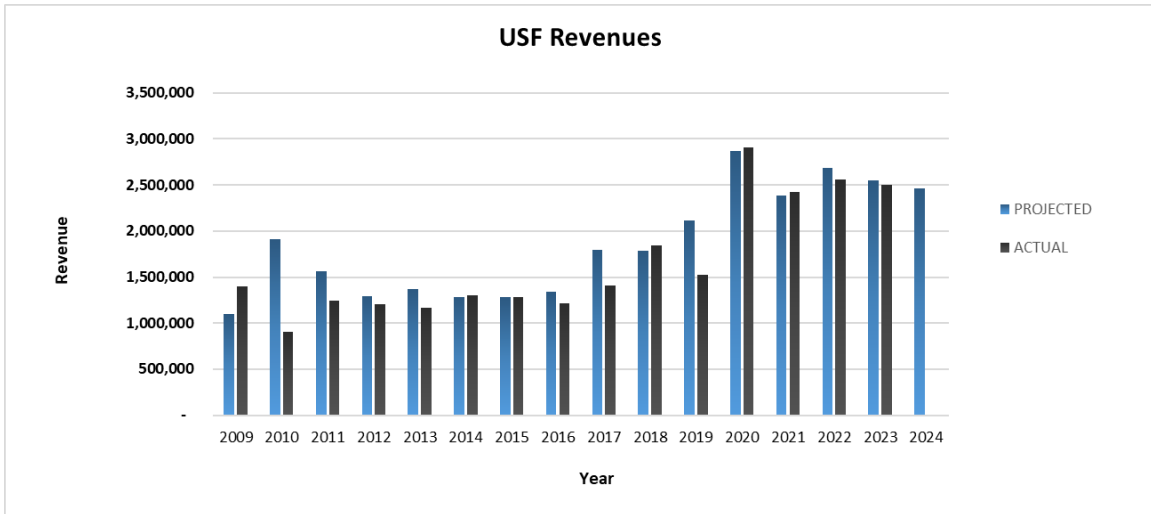


Fig 1. USF Projected and Actual Revenue (Source: NTRC Annual Report 2023)

## **2 TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

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The year 2023 reflects a dynamic and growing landscape brought about by new norms that came with adapting to Covid-19 and the volcanic eruption. A significant growth in the use of web conferencing and online classroom platforms to keep persons connected was seen. Mobile phone usage continues to be widespread, with a significant percentage of the population having access to mobile devices and cellular networks. In addition to the, the general public has also been able to access training programs at a subsidized cost through the NTRC. These programs are offered through online platforms and are geared towards telecommunications and cyber security. Throughout the period 2022-2023, NTRC was presented the opportunity to collaborate with the St. Vincent Community College to revise the Cyber Security Programme. NTRC's participation in this activity is a reflection of our continued commitment to national security and the crucial role it would play in reducing and preventing cyber crimes.

The NTRC has 866 wireless access points at 308 locations nationwide, which were installed under three (3) projects implemented by the USF. These access points are monitored and managed through a central dashboard which is hosted in the cloud. While conducting our monitoring of these access points, the increase demand for the internet was observed as we noted that a total of 1.10 PetaByte consumed by 1,672,815 users an increase from 2022 where 682.57 TeraBytes of data was consumed in 2022 by 1,486,101.

In 2023 the NTRC held the ICT training in the rural areas with the MyApp Summer Program. The program was held at the St. Vincent Grammar School where twenty eight (28) students participated and Bequia Anglican School which saw the participation of sixteen (16) persons.

### **2.1 UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND (USF) PROJECT STATUS**

The following gives an update of the projects currently being implemented under the USF:

#### **2.1.1 Payphone Project**

This project was signed with Cable and Wireless in 2011, at a cost of One Million, Four Hundred Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-Five Dollars (EC\$1,400,575). As part of this endeavor, twenty-five (25) payphones were strategically deployed at diverse locations throughout SVG, encompassing tourism sites, beaches, and key points along the main roads for public accessibility. Upon the completion of the payphone project in December 2021, the internet service, originally incorporated within the payphone framework, was transitioned to the Online 24/7 project. The surveillance cameras installed as part of the payphone initiative were retained. Facing persistent maintenance challenges, the NTRC has decided to discontinue the upkeep of payphones, leading to the removal of all payphones by December 2023.



### **2.1.2 Schools' Project**

The schools' project was first signed on June 7th, 2011, which saw all 107 schools throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines given wireless internal and external internet access points with minimum speeds of 8Mbps download and 2Mbps upload. This original contract came to an end and a new contract for this project was signed on October 23rd, 2019, for a total of Two Million Five Hundred and Fifty-One Thousand and Fifty-Four Dollars and Eighty-Seven Cents (EC\$2,551,054.87). Under the current project, speeds of 100 Mbps download and 15 Mbps upload are provided. The project will run for five years and would come to an end on October 22nd, 2024. In 2022, the NTRC identified that most of the schools experienced internet connectivity issues due to older model access points that were installed from the first project, no longer functioning optimally due to firmware updates. As such the NTRC procured 200 new access points in 2022 to alleviate this issue. All access points have since been installed. Commissioning of this component is expected to take place by the end of the first quarter of 2024. Additional access points are expected to be installed across forty-one (41) schools in 2024 to continue the improvement and expansion of Wi-Fi service.

### **2.1.3 Maritime Project**

This project was implemented to provide access to both emergency and non-emergency communications in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of St Vincent and the Grenadines and saw the implementation of a Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines at a total cost of One Million, One Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand, Seven Hundred and Eighty Dollars (EC\$1,125,780) and was maintained for a period of five years. This project was retendered in 2017 and a new contract was signed on March 8th, 2019, for a period of five years for a total cost of Five Hundred and Ninety-One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Forty Dollars and Sixty-Five Cents (\$591,840.65).

### **2.1.4 GMDSS Expansion Project in Jerome Union Island**

The objective of the project is to expand the coverage of the GMDSS. The GMDSS coverage was previously limited to the Mainland and the Northern Grenadines as there is only one transmission site located at Mount St. Andrew. The contract for the project were signed on May 17, 2022, between Cable & Wireless and the NTRC at a cost of Four Hundred and Forty-Eight Thousand, and Seventy-One Dollars and Eighty-One Cents (\$448,071.81) for the capital items for the project, while the cost of the maintenance of the project amounted to One Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Nineteen Dollars and Ninety-Two Cents (\$166,419.92). Installation work for the GMDSS expansion project was completed in November 2023. It is expected that training and Commissioning component of this would take place by the second quarter of 2024.

### **2.1.5 Police and Health Center Project**

This project was initially signed on November 1, 2012, and it provided wireless internet access at all twenty-nine (29) Police Stations and forty-two (42) Health Centers throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines at a minimum speed of 8 Mbps. The cost of this project was Seven Hundred and Eleven Thousand, and Fifteen Dollars (EC\$711,015). When this contract came to end in June 2017, a new contract was signed on May 14, 2019 which amounted to Five Hundred and Forty-One Thousand, Three Hundred and Forty Dollars (\$541,340.00). Under this project, thirty (30) police stations and forty-four (44) health centres are provided with internet at speeds of 100Mbps download and 5Mbps upload. This project came to an end in 2021 after which the project was retendered in July 2022 and will cater for improved coverage and faster speeds. During the year 2023, the scope of works for this project was revised and the subsidy applications submitted by Cable & Wireless were negotiated and agreed at the cost of One Million Two Hundred & Fifty-Eight Thousand Two Hundred & Six Dollars and Thirty-One Cent (\$1,258,206.31) in the final quarter of 2023 for service for a total of forty two (42) health centres and thirty two (32) police stations of which five (5) police stations and five (5) health centres will receive fibre internet. Minimum speeds under this contract would be 350Mbps download and 50Mbps for years 1-2 and 500Mbps download and 100Mbps upload or years 3-5. It is expected that this contract will be signed within the first quarter of 2024. In addition to the aforementioned, police and health centres will benefit from the installation of 208 new access points, this is expected to be completed by May 2024.

### **2.1.6 SMART Project**

The first contract for this project was signed on November 20th, 2012, at a total cost of One Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Eight Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Four Dollars (EC\$1,698,994) for the supply of equipment and teaching aids at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC) to enable them to offer specialized ICT training. This five-year project was commissioned on September 25th, 2014, and came to an end on September 24th, 2019. The project was retendered on July 24th, 2019, and the NTRC subsequently entered into a contract with Cable and Wireless on March 26th, 2020.

Under the new project, the NTRC provides financial aid to the Cyber Security Programme offered at the St. Vincent Community College of which seven (7) students graduated in June 2023. The provision of access to subsidized internet at a cost of ten dollars per month is another component of this project. In 2022, a target was set to connect 160 households in 2023. This target was not met as only eighty-nine applications were received and seventy-Six (76) persons were approved and sent to C&W for connection of internet service. A target has been set to connect 157 households for 2024. Under this project, six-Hundred and Forty (640) computers will be disbursed to various schools throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines over the 5 years of the contract. In December 2022, a total of seventy-eight computers were purchased and distributed in 2023 to eight (8) schools. Sixty-seven (67) computers were purchased at the end of 2023 for continued donation to schools in 2024.

### **2.1.7 Online 24/7 Project**

The Online 24/7 project is the USF's most recent project and it the community access project and the payphone project. Four lots of this project were tendered in February 2022 however, the Commission decided to proceed with Lot 1 and Lot 4 of the project only. Lot 1 saw the continued provision of wireless internet access at 120 existing locations throughout the urban and rural areas of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It also provided internet service to new locations and high traffic locations, NGOs, playing fields and hard courts with minimum speeds of 250Mbps download and 50Mbps upload in Year 1-2 then 300Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload from Year 3 – 5. Lot 4 of this contract comprises of two components.

1. The provision of high-speed internet connection at the St. Vincent Community College with minimum speeds of 500 Mbps download and 300 Mbps upload for the first 2 years and 1 Gbps download and 700Mbps upload for the last 3 years of the project and;
2. The provision of fifty (50) Internal Access Points

The contract for the project was signed on July 18, 2022, between Digicel SVG Limited and the NTRC in the amount of Four Million, Three Hundred and Twenty- Six Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty-Three Dollars and Five Cents (\$4,326,363.05), however an addendum was added in 2023 to include internet service to the two new vegetable markets and two weather stations. The project was commissioned at the end of October 2023. For 2024, focus will be placed on the monitoring of locations under this project and making adjustments where necessary.

### **2.1.8 Other projects**

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is currently in the process of executing the Digital transformation project which is expected to contribute to increased digital connectivity, digital public services and the creation of technology-enabled businesses and jobs across the participating countries: the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The project consists of the following components:

Component 1: Digital Enabling Environment: This component will support the development of a positive enabling environment for the region's digital economy that drives competition, investment and innovation while promoting trust and security of online transactions.

Component 2: Digital Government Infrastructure, Platforms and Services: This component will support public sector modernization, resilience and delivery of digital public services to individuals and businesses.

Component 3: Digital Skills and Technology Adoption: This component aims to better equip individuals and businesses across the region for the jobs and economy of the future and to spur innovation and productivity growth.

Stakeholders include: the government, citizens, businesses, and regional partners such as the OECS, ECTEL, ECCB, and CARICOM IMPACS who play a role in the implementation of the project. Several government departments also play a major role in the implementation of the project which is being coordinated by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, and Information Technology.

Departments that are directly involved with the implementation of the project include: the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), Customs and Excise, the Civil registry, Land registry, Land and Surveys department, the Electoral and Passport offices and the Treasury. These departments are expected to contribute and benefit significantly from the implementation of this project.

Other ICT projects for which the government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines is engaged includes the Education Management Information System at the Ministry of Education, an Online Entry Visa by the Ministry of National Security and the OECS Tourism Competitive project under the Ministry of Tourism. In addition, plans are on the way to establish a Digital Health Policy and Digital Health Bill, these are expected to be completed by December, 2024.

### **3 SUMMARY MARKET ASSESSMENT**

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In the year 2023, USF engaged Cable & Wireless in negotiations for the Police & Health Centre contract. The agreed upon total for the contract is \$1,258,206.31. In addition, the USF continued the execution of the SMART Project which seeks to provide subsidized Internet to underprivileged households for \$10 per month. For the School's project, the USF installed an additional 200 access points schools to alleviate persistent connectivity challenges. All installations works have been complete and this component of the schools project is expected to be commissioned before the end of the first quarter of 2024. Cognizant that the installation of access points did not cover all school locations affected with internet challenges, an additional 119 access points will be installed across forty-one (41) schools in 2024.

In 2024, the Commission plans to engage the Ministry of Finance to secure funding for the purchase of access points. The commencement of this process is scheduled for May 2024.

#### **3.1 REVENUE OF TELECOM OPERATORS**

Figure 1 shows the revenues generated by telecommunications operators between the years 2016-2023. There was an increase in revenue of 4% in 2023 compared to 2022.

## Total Telecom Revenue (XCD)

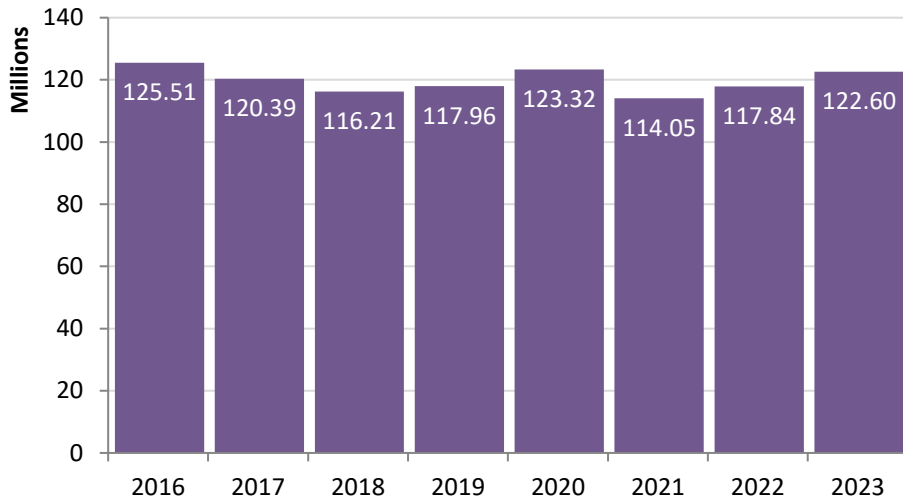
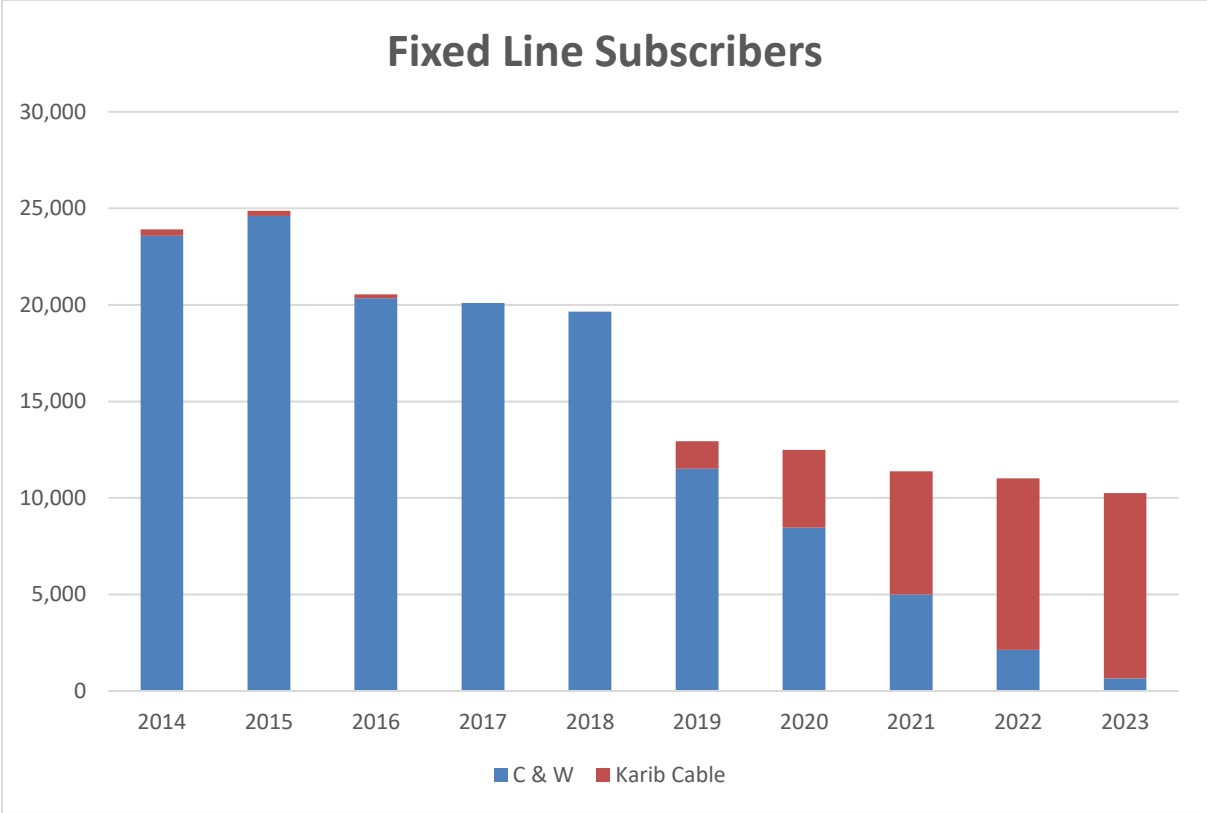


Fig 1. Telecom Revenue for the telecommunications providers in SVG (Source: NTRC)

Figure 2 shows Fixed Line Subscribers over the last ten years.

**Figure 2**

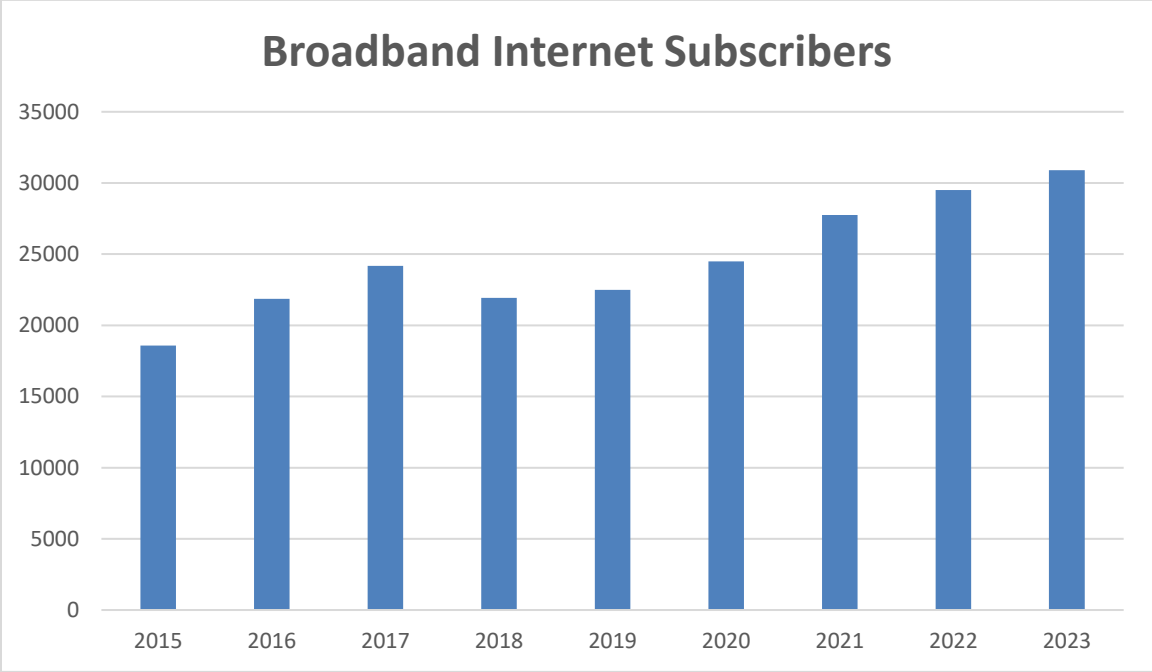
*Fig 3. Fixed Line Subscribers (Source: NTRC)*



*Fig 2. Fixed Line Subscribers (Source: NTRC)*

Figure 3 below shows the number of Broadband Internet Subscribers from 2015 to 2023. There has been an increase in the Broadband Internet Subscribers from 2015 to 2021 with the exception of 2019.

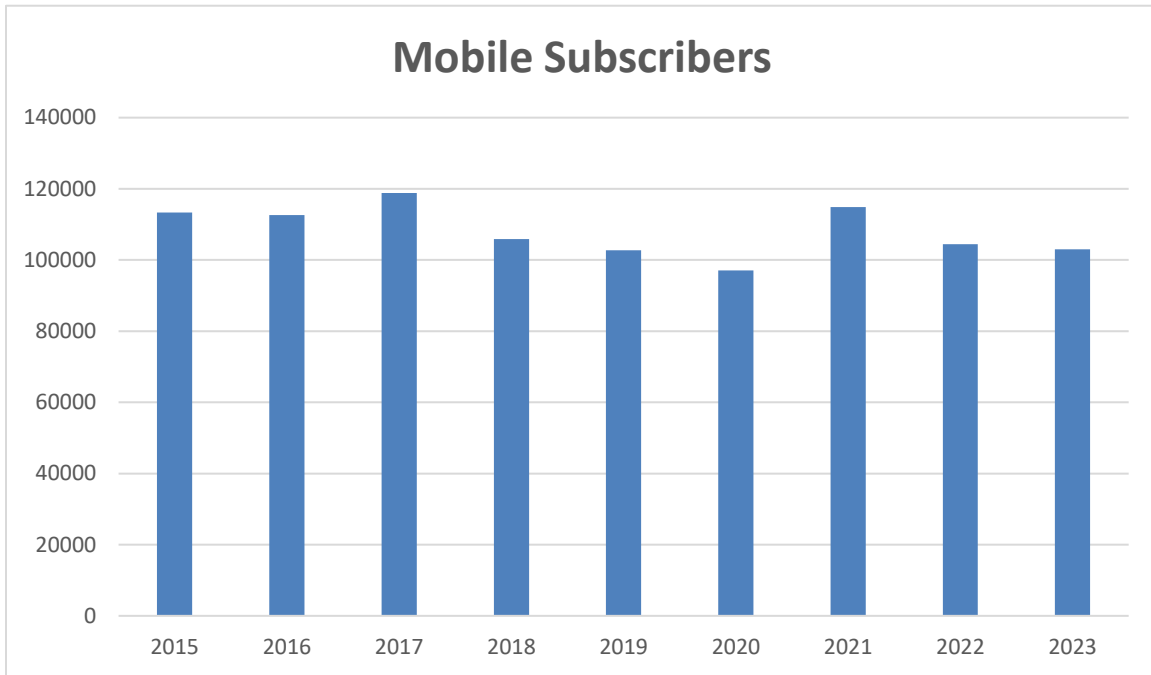
**Figure 3**



*Fig 3. Broadband internet subscribers in SVG (Source: NTRC)*

Figure 4 shows the number of mobile subscribers for the years 2015 to 2023. The figure shows a slight decrease in the figure for 2023 as compared to 2022.

**Figure 4**



***Fig 4. Mobile Subscribers (Source: NTRC)***



### 3.2 PORTABLE COMPUTERS ENTERING ST. VINCENT

Figure 6 below depicts the number of portable computers entering St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Portable computers include Laptops, Notebooks and Netbooks. In 2022, four thousand two hundred and twenty-five devices were imported while nine thousand seven hundred and ninety nine were imported in 2023. This represents an increase of 131.9%

**Figure 6**

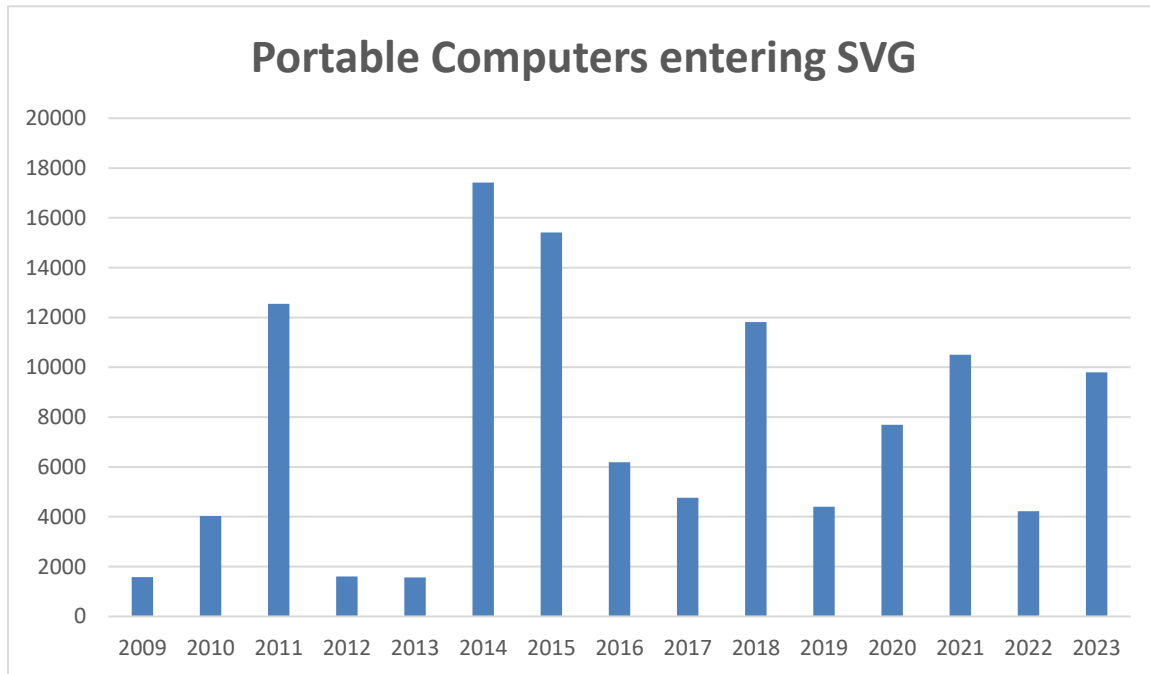


Fig 6. Portable computers entering SVG (Source: *The Customs and Excise Department*)

### 3.3 DESKTOPS ENTERING ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Figure 7 below shows the number of desktop computers entering the country. The graph shows that there was an increase in the number of desktops being imported in 2022 when compared to 2021 but a reduction was seen in the when a comparison is made for 2023 against what was imported for 2022. In 2022, one thousand four hundred and seventy-three (1473) desktops were imported representing a percentage increase of 71.5% when compared to 2021. However, this figure decreased in 2023 by 55% since only six hundred and fifty-nine desktops were imported

**Figure 7**

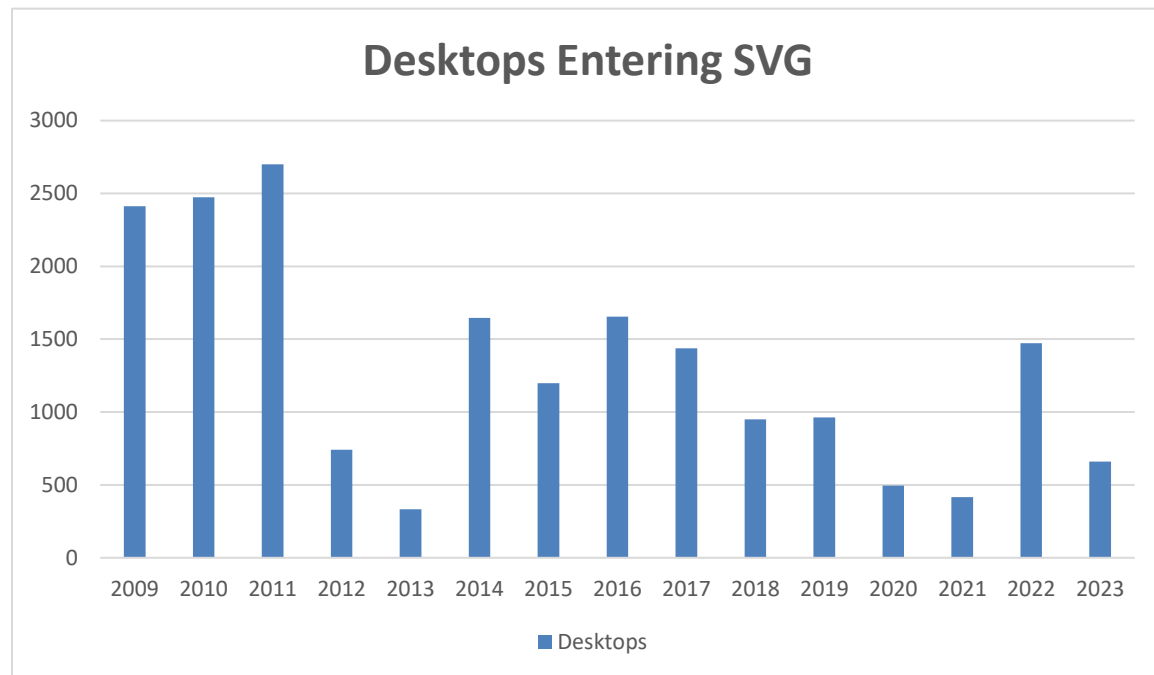


Fig 7. Desktop entering SVG (Source: *Customs and Excise Department*)

### 3.4 MOBILE PHONES ENTERING ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Figure 8 below shows the number of mobile phones entering the country. The graph shows that there has been an increase in the number of mobile phones being imported. The figure for 2021 shows that twenty-one thousand, eight hundred and fifty mobile phones were imported. In 2022, an increase of 31.2% was seen as twenty nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty mobile phones were imported. There was no data on mobile phones for 2023.

**Figure 8**

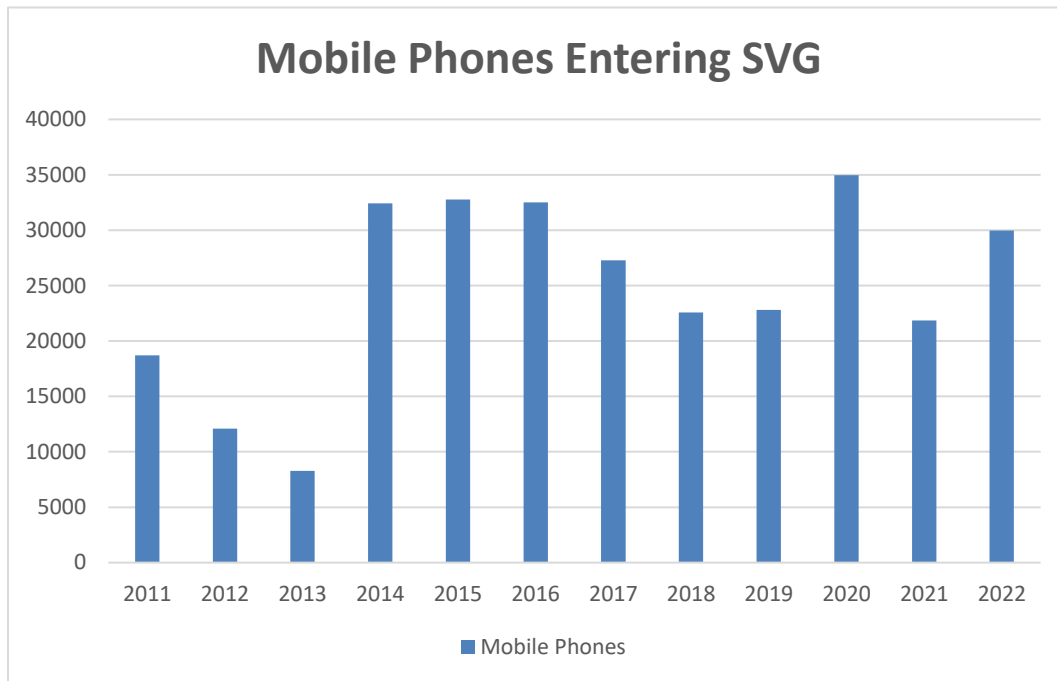


Fig 8. Mobile Phones imported (Source: *The Customs and Excise Department*)

### 3.5 PENETRATION RATES FOR TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Figure 9 below shows the penetration rates for various telecommunications services over the last seven years.

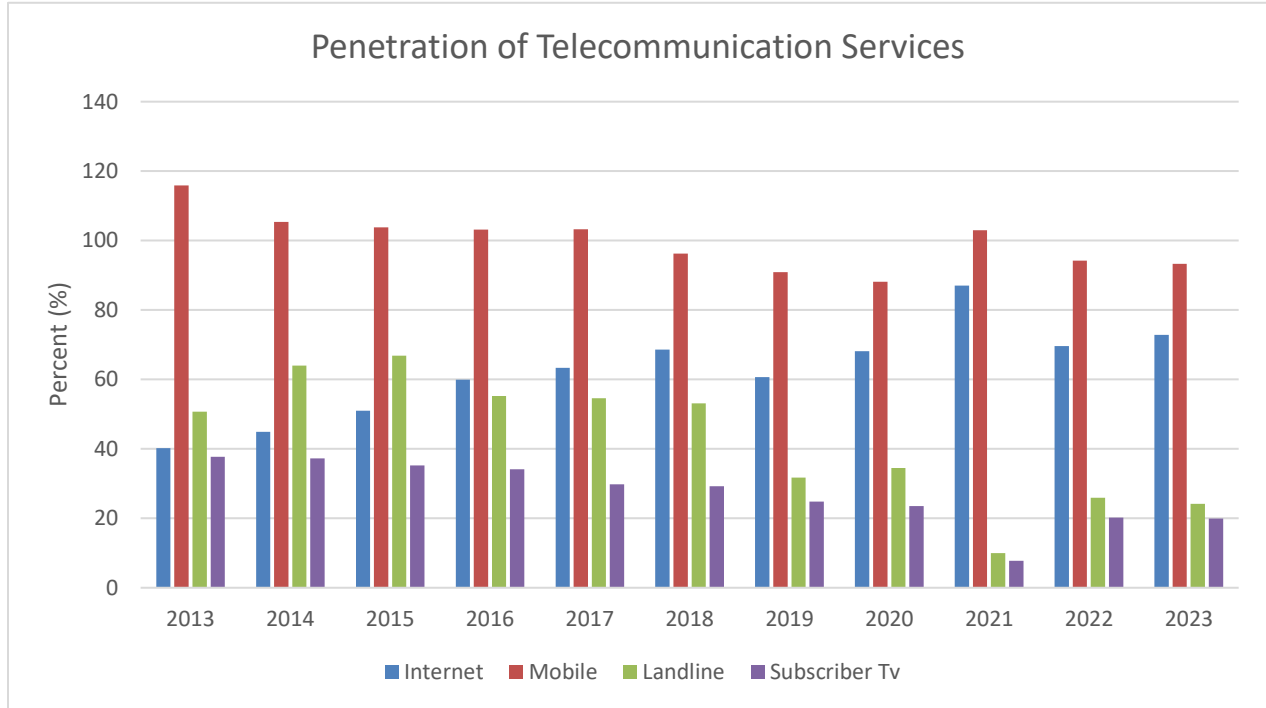


Figure 8: Penetration Rates (Source NTRC)

## 4 PRIORITY GOALS 2023

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While there was no Operating Plan for 2023, several areas were identified as priority. The status of priority goal and the sub goals are as follows:

1. **Complete the implementation of the Online 24/7 project which comprises of two lots. Lot 1 covers the provision of free wireless internet access at community centers, learning resource centers, playing fields and hard courts, tourism sites and NGOs, and lot 2 covers the provision of a high-speed internet connection at the St. Vincent Community College Glen Campus as well as, the purchasing of 200 internal access points.**

Implementation of the Online 24/7 Project is now complete. Under Lot 1 of this project, thirteen (13) learning resource centers, twenty-three (23) community centers, five (5) libraries, twenty-two (22) playing fields/hard courts, twenty-one (21) tourism sites, eight (8) fish markets, four (4) Grenadine Ports, ten (10) schools, sixteen (16) NGOs and five (5) government locations were connected with Wi-Fi internet access via high-speed fiber connections of 250Mbps. Under Lot 2, the provision of a high-speed internet connection at SVGCC Glen Campus was completed. This fiber connection is being supplied by Digicel and is at 500Mbps download and 300Mbps upload which will increase to 1 Gbps download and 700 Mbps upload in year three of the project. It complements the existing 100Mbps symmetrical (same download and upload speeds) fiber connection being provided by Cable & Wireless under our existing schools project at this location. The purchase of 200 internal access points was also completed. These 200 access points were also be installed in various schools in 2023. Some were used to replace existing access points that had reached their end of life while others were used to provide improved coverage in the larger schools.

2. **Connect 160 needy households with wireless internet access at a subsidized price of \$10 per month in our efforts to bridge the digital divide.**

The USF did not meet the target of 160. Eighty-nine applications were received. Seventy-Six (76) persons were approved and sent to C&W for connection of internet service.

3. **Monthly site visits would be conducted under the five USF projects to ensure that the equipment is functional, and services are in place at the various locations.**

This objective was completed. The USF conducted regular checks on all projects which have been implemented by the USF. This includes physical visits to the project sites to ensure that the service and equipment are functional. The NTRC also remotely monitored the services at the selected locations daily to ensure that the services are functional.

2. **Replace 200 internet access points in our schools.**

While the original plan was to replace 200 existing access points the decision was taken to ensure that the service at each school was at a certain acceptable level. To achieve this, we decided to only work at 29 schools within this project phase (secondary and large primary schools) which involved replacing access points that were end of life and adding new access points to fill in coverage as well as capacity gaps. In 2024 the NTRC will seek to address the remaining schools that need new access points, which would mainly be some of the remaining primary schools. The 200 access points were installed at the following schools:

- Bishop's College Kingstown
- Campden Park Secondary
- Division of Technical Services (SVGCC)
- Dr. J P Eustace Memorial
- Emmanuel High Secondary
- Emmanuel High Secondary
- Annex
- Intermediate High School
- St Joseph's Convent K/Town
- St. Martin's Secondary
- St. Vincent Grammar School
- Adelphi Secondary School
- Barrouallie Secondary
- Bequia Community High
- Bequia SDA Secondary
- Buccament Bay Secondary
- Canouan Secondary School
- George Stephens Secondary
- Mountain View S. D. A.
- North Union secondary
- Petit Bordel Secondary
- Sandy Bay Secondary
- St Joseph's Convent Mespo
- St. Clair Dacon Secondary
- Troumaca Secondary
- Union Island Secondary
- West St George Secondary
- C. W Prescod Primary
- St. Mary's Roman Catholic

3. Collaborate with SVGCC to update the curriculum in the Cyber Security programme.

**This is complete. The revised curriculum was sent to SVGCC on December 6, 2023. This final revision was based on feedback provided by the SVGCC on the earlier document that was developed by the multi stakeholder committee that was set up to undertake this objective.**

**4. Create a new USF project for the disabled and elderly people requiring special equipment.**

This is incomplete. Some work was done on this objective in 2023. The main reason for it not being completed was the reduction in resources in the USF department during the period April to September. The USF administrator resigned at the end of March 2023 and the post was not filled until October 2023. The tender documents for the project will be completed in the first quarter of 2024.

## **5 USF PRIORITY GOALS 2024**

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The USF priority goals for 2022 are as follows:

1. The 2024 Operating Plan will be established by March 2024. This plan will set out the objectives of the Fund for the operating year 2024.
2. The USF will ensure that the Police and Health Center Project contract is signed by the first quarter of 2024.
3. Monthly site visits would be conducted under the five USF projects to ensure that the equipment is functional, and services are in place at the various locations.
4. Connect 157 needy households with wireless internet access at a subsidized price of \$10 per month in our efforts to bridge the digital divide.
5. Execute the National ICT Survey with a sample size of 2000 persons.
6. Improve and expand the Wi-Fi service in our schools.
7. Create a new USF project for the disabled and elderly people requiring special equipment.

## **6 USF BUDGET ESTIMATES**

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The Fund is projected to receive Two Million, Six Hundred and Eighty-Four Thousand One Hundred and Sixty-Seven Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$2,684,167.50) in 2022. Two Million, Six Hundred and Eighty-One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty-Seven Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$2,681,667.50) is expected to be collected from the Telecommunications Service Providers and interest of Two Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) is projected on the fund's balance in its saving account.