

Vanuatu Shelter Cluster Recovery Guidance

Version 1 - July 2020

How to use this document

This document works through many of the considerations and aspects of shelter recovery in Vanuatu. It is intended as a reference document to support recovery thinking in the post-disaster shelter/housing sector in Vanuatu. It is intended to develop a common approach to sheltering that is based on community-participation, local decision-making, and support to social processes of self-recovery. It can be read in its entirety or referred to for specific information and guidance. It can also be used as a guide to overarching program development and to support proposal writing. This document is intended as a lasting contribution to approaches to shelter/housing recovery in Vanuatu. It is intended to be refined and redrafted over time as needs, experience, and disaster contexts change.

This is a living document. For any comments, information or new input, please contact coord1.vanuatu@sheltercluster.org. For the latest updates and further contact details of the coordination team members please see the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster website www.sheltercluster.org/pacific/vanuatu or follow us on Facebook: [@vanuatusheltercluster](https://www.facebook.com/vanuatusheltercluster)



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Extensive community consultations were not possible while preparing this paper due to COVID-19. The process of community consultation is critical for further developing the document.

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Executive Summary

Context

On 6 April 2020 TC Harold made landfall in Vanuatu as a category 5 cyclone, causing widespread destruction across Sanma, Penama, Malampa Provinces as well as the northern islands of Shefa Province. The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, led by the Public Works Department with coordination support from IFRC, was convened on 6th April 2020. Assessment data is from a variety of sources, and requires verification and field level, and as such will change as more information becomes available, the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster estimates that approximately **21,000 houses** were severely damaged or destroyed, impacting around **105,000 people**). This assessment was developed from information supplied by the SANMA and PENAMA Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) as well as estimates of damage based on wind speed data supplied by the Vanuatu NDMO, Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, and IOM.

Additionally, the National Disaster Management Office and International Organization for Migration (IOM) displacement tracking report (June 2020) states that 6,218 individuals (1,295 households) were reported to be displaced as of the 6th of June 2020, living primarily with host families and evacuation centres. Of the 6,218 people, IOM has registered and collected demographic data on 1,724 individuals (359 households) in the affected areas of which 1,228 individuals (256 households) are living with host families and 496 people (103 households) are in evacuation centres. This figure is down from NDMO's initial figure of 18,538 individuals who were initially displaced across 272 evacuation centres according to the Vanuatu NDMO's initial rapid response assessments (which were carried out between the 10 - 15 April, 2020).¹ Most of these displacement individuals have since returned home. Return will be facilitated by having access to safe and dignified shelter and housing and an outline of the recovery program for those in evacuation centres is included in overall housing loss and damage figures to private housing included in this document.

Recovery shelter/housing plans will build on the work done by the Vanuatu Government and humanitarian agencies working through the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, led by the Public Works Department. Based on reports from cluster agencies, it is estimated that 12,980 households have received emergency shelter assistance with a further 7,250 household's worth of shelter assistance in the process of distribution. When this is finally completed, an estimated 20,230 households would have received shelter assistance consisting of tarpaulins, shelter toolkits, fixings, and

¹ NDMO Vanuatu, IOM; *Displacement Tracking Report TC Harold*, June 2020, p. 5,7.

essential household items such as kitchen sets, sleeping mats, blankets, clothing, and solar lamps, as well as assistance with procurement and construction with traditional roofing materials such as natangura palm.²

There are reports of progress in recovery in more rural areas where traditional building materials are locally available and have not been destroyed by TC Harold. There are also reports of significant relief and recovery needs among urban populations, especially in Luganville where households have built using imported materials and where people are dependent on paid work in sectors such as tourism (badly affected by COVID-19) to buy materials with which to build.

Outlined by the TC Pam PDNA process in 2015, an estimated 20% of households across Vanuatu are female headed. Female-headed households often have no ownership of the land they are on and face significant constraints in accessing finance and manpower to repair or reconstruct their homes. The TC Pam PDNA further notes that:

Housing rehabilitation and reconstruction/recovery programs should be positively adjusted to prioritize female headed households as well as people living with disabilities and the elderly. Similarly, early recovery and livelihood programs should also provide specific support to female headed households to enable them to find resources for rebuilding. With regard to evacuation centers, disaster preparedness planning should address the needs of women and girls by ensuring adequate lighting and segregated wash facilities. Future planning and building of evacuation camps should also ensure accessibility for people living with disability.³

Impact of COVID-19 on Vanuatu shelter/housing response and recovery

The global COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the TC Harold response. In previous disasters in Vanuatu, greater resources have been made available to relief agencies and the Government of Vanuatu. Humanitarian response to TC Harold has been slow and there are concerns about remaining humanitarian needs and gaps in the shelter sector. It is likely that COVID-19 will continue to impact recovery through its wider impacts of impeding external assistance and suppressing local markets and economic activity.

² Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, TC Harold Sitrep 13, 10/07/2020

https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/2020.07.10_scv_tc_harold_sitrep_13_0.pdf

³ Government of Vanuatu (2015) PDNA TC Pam, p. 41 <https://www.gfdrr.org/en/vanuatu-rapid-post-disaster-needs-assessment-tropical-cyclone-pam>



COVID 19 has an impact on the livelihood of the households. Tourism is the most impacted sector and this especially impacts households living in urban areas. In addition, households with income derived from family members working overseas as a seasonal worker will see that livelihood disappear as most of the workers are being repatriated. The cost of living in urban areas as well as dependence on cash economy, income, paid jobs, and functioning markets to support both livelihoods and housing recovery means that those living in urban areas may be even more vulnerable.

A further implication is that longer term recovery investments will also need to take into account household and community timeframes for recovery. These will likely be more drawn out owing to the impacts of COVID-19.

Government of Vanuatu coordination structure for response and recovery

The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster is led by the Public Works Department and is supported, during the humanitarian phase and in preparedness by the Vanuatu Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross/Crescent Societies. The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster works under the overall coordination of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). The Public Works Department also leads on housing recovery while overall planning for longer term recovery is coordinated through the Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) within the Prime Minister's Office. Longer term housing recovery may fall under the overall direction of the Department of Local Authorities (DLA) within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

At the provincial level, the Provincial Emergency Operations Centres have provided crucial coordination services working with staff from responding agencies and the Public Works Department.

Vanuatu Shelter Cluster partner organisations

The context of COVID-19 has meant that there are not as many responding agencies in the cluster as would normally be expected following a category 5 cyclone and where there has been an official government request for international assistance. Cluster partner organisations will vary from response to response. The main cluster partners for TC Harold have been:



Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Butterfly Trust, CARE Vanuatu, IOM, NDMO/PEOC (Sanma, Malampa & Penama Province), Save the Children, Vanuatu Red Cross Society, ShelterBox, International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies, Vanuatu Climate Action Network, World Vision, Vanuatu Council of Churches (VCC), DFAT, Santo Sunset Environment Network, Edenhope, Seventh Day Adventist Mission, Caritas, Rotary Club and Vanuatu Skills Partnership (TVET).

Material & Socio-Technical Assistance

Shelter - and especially housing - is a social process that views shelter and housing not as a finished product that can be correctly introduced into a local context, but as an evolving process that emerges from local traditions, skills, capacities and resources and which can be supported in important ways. Key objectives for shelter agencies providing longer-term support in Vanuatu will be to work with communities to create an enabling environment through processes of socio-technical accompaniment based on participation and consultation. This process places emphasis on understanding context, collaboration, and the adaptability of programs to include both direct and indirect contributing factors to safe shelter recovery with a focus on education, training, and material support to underpin community resilience.

PDNA Objectives

These have been developed in relation to the Government of Vanuatu PDNA/Vanuatu Recovery Framework process which identified the following broad objectives for material/financial and socio-technical assistance:

Goal: Vanuatu households and communities effectively and appropriately self recover and have strengthened, sustained resilience

Objective 1 (Support to Early Recovery, linking relief with recovery): Support housing self-recovery processes through the provision of socio-technical assistance and durable building materials and or financial support and for both households as well as community safe houses.

Objective 2 (Training): Investment in education, training, and socio-technical support on Build Back Safer, local and traditional designs and techniques. This could involve community members and/or local carpenters in collaboration with official training certification authorities.



Objective 3 (investment in community resilience): support to household resilience-building through investment in inclusive, participatory, and community-led recovery and longer term resilience processes (such as Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness, and support to sustainable CDCCCs and Shelter Focal Points).

Objective 4 (area-based approaches): investment in area-based approaches that encompass the broader impact on shelter and housing of access to water, sanitation, livelihoods, health facilities, education and places of cultural importance. Ensure that the participation of women, people with a disability, the elderly and vulnerable groups is prioritised in the participatory process.

PART 1 - Key Recovery themes outlined in this document

i) Recovery policy context

- This Vanuatu Shelter Cluster Recovery Guidance Note falls within a wider policy context for recovery and resilience in Vanuatu including: Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific; 2030 Vanuatu People's Plan; the TC Harold PDNA and Vanuatu Recovery Strategy; Vanuatu Shelter Cluster objectives to promote community-level self-recovery processes.

ii) Social structures

- With more than 65 inhabited islands and over 100 language groups, Vanuatu has multiple highly diverse social structures within which recovery will take place. These differ from island to island and community to community and programs will need to be flexible enough to adapt to this diverse context.

iii) Households

- Household structures are defined differently by different agencies. The household can include multiple physical structures and dwellings and extended families. The Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) define household as *“Those persons who usually eat together and share the work of preparing the food and/or the cost of work of providing it”*

iv) Gender, protection and inclusion

- In the context of predominantly male migration for work, previous disasters in Vanuatu have shown that up to 20% of households in affected areas may be female headed. Recommendations from the Protection Cluster include disaggregated data, inclusion of

(mainly) female work/house spaces such as kitchens in response & recovery planning as well as ensuring widespread access to build back safer skills and messages.

v) Timing for recovery

- Timeframes for recovery differ according to circumstance and will be different from island to island, community to community and between households and individuals. Reports suggest that once basic shelter needs have been met, household priorities shift to restoring livelihoods with a view to returning to make more substantial investments in housing later once food, income and systems of exchange are restored. An implication of this is that longer term recovery investments will also need to take into account household and community timeframes for recovery. In the context of COVID-19, this will take even more time.

vi) Targeting

- Targeting can occur at different levels and at different scales: national, provincial, community, or household/individual. When targeting, careful consideration should be given to the intensity with which any one community is supported to ensure an appropriately effective scale of the response to avoid “pockets of excellence” at the expense of other affected communities which may receive far less support.

vii) Urban vs rural

- An important yet often overlooked caseload following cyclones in Vanuatu are urban communities. These are especially badly affected by loss of income, often do not own the land on which they live (unlike rural communities), and live in houses using imported building materials which can be more expensive and technically complex to repair.

viii) Hosted families

- While use of evacuation centres appears to be temporary, many more people rely on host families and such support is prevalent and ongoing.

ix) Housing, land and property

- An estimated 20% of households across Vanuatu are female headed who often have no ownership of the land they are on and face significant constraints in accessing finance and manpower to repair or reconstruct their homes. Urban communities may face similar challenges due to not owning the land on which they live, the disruption caused to their

livelihoods, and reliance on landlords whose livelihoods have also been affected to carry out necessary housing repairs. [The Housing, Land and Property Law mapping](#) carried out for Vanuatu by IFRC and Australian Red Cross provides further information on key laws and actors, common types of tenure, security of tenure of vulnerable groups, and information on eviction, expropriation and relocation.

x) Environment

- The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster [Environmental Checklist for Shelter Response](#) provides guidelines for environmental considerations to promote sustainability and lower impact from humanitarian responses in Vanuatu.

xi) Housing typology

- Vanuatu has multiple local building traditions that use sustainable local materials and have adapted to disaster risks over many generations. While these traditions are very strong there are also newer building styles used as well as mixed approaches that combine imported and traditional skills and resources.

PART 2 - Inputs to support shelter self-recovery and resilience

The process of post-disaster shelter recovery is an evolving process that emerges from local traditions, skills, capacities and resources and which can be supported in important ways. Key objectives for shelter agencies providing longer-term support in Vanuatu will be to work with communities to create an enabling environment through processes of socio-technical accompaniment based on participation and consultation in addition to specific material or financial interventions, such as tools or building materials or cash/vouchers (only if appropriate). This process places emphasis on understanding context, collaboration, and the adaptability of programs to include both direct and indirect contributing factors to safe shelter recovery with a focus on education, training, and material support to underpin community resilience. An important consideration will be the existence of strong indigenous building skills that have adapted to Vanuatu's particular geophysical context over many centuries. Responding agencies should be aware of these local traditions and strengthen, rather than replace, these skills and capacities.

Inputs into self-recovery that support households to conduct the activity of rebuilding, repairing or strengthening their houses and settlements in a safe and dignified way should aim to strengthen longer term resilience. These inputs provided by agencies and government can be put in two groups:



1. **Material / Financial Assistance (MFA)**
2. **Social / Technical Assistance (STA)**

Socio-Technical Assistance is an investment in people, promotes resilience and is more sustainable than Material or Financial Assistance alone. Sometimes both are needed to complement each other. The balance between the two is very important to maximise impact and strengthen resilience with available resources.

Some areas have had many local resources decimated and have limited access to markets (such as settlements in and around Luganville). In these areas communities may benefit from a consultative inclusive process to identify key materials to be supported by agencies or the government. These may include items such as cyclone strapping, nails, tie wire, rope, among others. However, care should be taken not to replace available effective and appropriate local materials. For example in areas where 'bush rope' is available, the provision of cyclone strap may ultimately reduce long term resilience and local traditional knowledge. The use and promotion of local building materials will be highly important in the response and will promote sustainability.

There are significant immediate, medium and long-term recovery needs in the communities which have been impacted by TC Harold. **Immediate needs include** the completion of the humanitarian phase distributions of relief items as well as Supply Chain Support - eg Palm leaf supply (short term) and planting (long term), chainsaw access or portamill.

Medium and longer-term needs will include support for early recovery programming including more comprehensive community assistance packages, education and training on Build Back Safer and traditional resilient building techniques. It will be important to support already existing processes of household and community recovery and to consider the wider context of the physical shelter or house including but not limited to access to water, sanitation, livelihoods, education, and places of cultural importance. It may be useful to reinforce local capacities for reconstruction (carpenters) and post disaster community assessment/information (CDCCC & EOCs). Importantly, mobile support teams providing on site technical advice and social support are proven and effective ways of supporting housing recovery. Demonstration Constructions - especially built through on the job training programs can support the development of construction skills and can link shelter/ housing programs with livelihoods.

An important element of **longer-term recovery will be** support for Vanuatu's long tradition of vernacular building practice that has coped with cyclones for generations. Supporting these traditions as well as education in the strengths, limitations, and adaption of imported materials and



building practices will be an important component of recovery. Other activities in the **longer term could include**: Revision of the Vanuatu Government shelter strategy response phases and institutionalize housing into the Government structure. Design standards approaches and operational frameworks according to the contexts (rural and urban) and identify roles & responsibilities of all shelter/housing stakeholders. Create integrated structures and response mechanisms that every Vanuatu administration levels appropriate and implement when a disaster strikes and development of housing policies that include traditional building approaches.

Additional activities to underpin longer term recovery include the establishment of Shelter Focal Points within the CDCCCs and CDCCC capacity strengthening. Working with suppliers to provide materials, information, education and support on safe building techniques, and community rehabilitation including small scale community infrastructure or other initiatives to support physical, social, economic, and environmental resilience.



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Introduction

This document aims to articulate an approach to post-cyclone housing recovery in Vanuatu, one of the world's most vulnerable countries to natural disasters. The immediate context for the document is the experience of humanitarian response and recovery following TC Harold, a category 5 cyclone that struck Vanuatu on 6 April 2020. The cyclone response was heavily informed by approaches to safe sheltering in the Vanuatu context that were documented during the last category 5 cyclone to have made landfall in Vanuatu, TC Pam in 2015 and subsequent cyclones since. Both the TC Pam and Harold responses were coordinated by the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster. This is a humanitarian coordination and response platform representing national and international NGOs, civil society groups, UN Agencies, Red Cross Movement members, and private sector entities, led by the Government of Vanuatu Public Works Department and co-led by International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies. Following TC Pam, The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster developed a technical guidance document that outlined best practice, principles, approaches and resources to shelter after disasters in the specific context of Vanuatu which has gone through several iterations since and has been a lasting contribution to disaster preparedness and response in the country. Five years later, this document seeks to build on the Vanuatu Technical Shelter Guidelines by providing a sustained framework for supporting recovery in the shelter and settlements sector.

Vanuatu is among countries with highest risks of natural hazards including cyclones, earthquakes, volcanic events and climate change. The archipelago sits along a volatile seismic strip called the 'Ring of Fire' in the Pacific. Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis are common. Vanuatu is prone to significant year-round seismic and volcanic activity, with over 2,000 seismic events reported annually. Most events are small scale, although larger tremors and quakes of over 5 on the Richter scale occur on a regular basis. The tropical cyclone season in Vanuatu normally runs from November to April. Throughout this period there is a high risk of strong winds and heavy rains with associated flooding, landslides and road closures.

During TC Harold, an estimated 21,000 houses were destroyed or severely damaged. Following the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster Technical Guidelines, agencies typically supported households and communities with core relief items such as tarpaulins, tools, and fixings, along with essential household items and appropriate information, education and communication (IEC) materials to support effective use of the materials. The intent behind these relief items is to support safe owner/occupier driven sheltering processes, based on Sphere Standards, and to provide the immediate basis for longer-term recovery. Not everyone, however, will receive timely or adequate assistance. Some areas are remote and inaccessible, stocks can only be distributed as they arrive



and processes of logistics and distribution can be slow, even more so during times of global pandemics as has been the case with the TC Harold response. Despite the best efforts of humanitarian agencies and communities themselves, people with vulnerabilities such those relating to age, disability, and gender may struggle. Households with lower levels of damage may not be prioritised. Long term impacts of cyclones can be significant. Disaster studies estimate that those who live through the most severe part of a cyclone can experience up to a 15% drop in income twenty years after the event.⁴ This is a finding that is of particular concern for urban communities in Vanuatu who are reliant on income earned from tourism to pay for shelter and housing recovery.

This document seeks to build on principles of support to self-recovery and to deepen and extend them beyond the emergency/humanitarian period. It acknowledges that issues of shelter and settlement recovery go together and that recovery in the housing sector is codependent with recovery in other areas of family, community and economic life. In sectoral terms, shelter recovery is incomplete unless it intersects with WASH, livelihoods, gender and protection, education sectors, among others.

“First, communities must be further supported to reduce their vulnerability and mitigate the impact of disasters. The communities visited while researching this paper said that although they had made some small preparations for the cyclone, they had never prepared for what would come. On the other hand, communities that had been supported to prepare for disasters were able to substantially mitigate the impact of the cyclone, highlighting the value of substantial, long-term investment in community-based disaster risk reduction” One size Doesn’t Fit All⁵

Vanuatu is in a constant state of recovery, and is estimated to become more so. A framework for all areas, all sectors, that provides resilience through recovery activities will strengthen resilience and preparedness across the board and benefit recovery from all disasters while reducing risk. This direction paper provides discussion points for a general framework that will be beneficial for all recovery responses, and can be used as the basis for the TC Harold recovery support. It is assumed it will have omissions and need to be updated to be relevant for any given response.

With an expectation of limited funds and a wide geographical area affected, and the whole country prone to future disasters within many different communities of differing levels of resilience, it will

⁴ Dan McGarry ‘The Vanuatu Island in the Eye of the Storm’ *The Guardian* 6/6/20.

⁵ Rebecca Barber (June 2015). *One Size Doesn’t Fit All Tailoring the International Response to the National Need Following Vanuatu’s Cyclone Pam.*



be critical to use government and non-government funds in the most effective and efficient way to extend the impact of programming beyond localised areas and build resilience for Vanuatu's ever-more frequent disasters. Incorporating recovery into resilience may provide a manageable way to align not only the funding options, but also the programming.

Importantly, there are strong indigenous traditions of risk reduction in Vanuatu both within the built environment and more broadly, especially in rural areas that have developed over many centuries and are adapted to the country's high-risk disaster context. As families and communities self-recover, it will be important for Vanuatu Shelter Cluster partners to support traditional knowledge and local recovery processes. This must be a social process that views shelter and housing not as a finished product that can be correctly introduced into a local context, but as an evolving process that emerges from local traditions, skills, capacities and resources and which can be supported in important ways. Key objectives for shelter agencies providing longer-term support in Vanuatu will be to work with communities to create an enabling environment through processes of socio-technical accompaniment based on participation and consultation. This process places emphasis on understanding context, collaboration, and the adaptability of programs to include both direct and indirect contributing factors to safe shelter recovery with a focus on education, training, and material support to underpin community resilience.

An important overarching context for this document is the COVID-19 pandemic. Vanuatu does not yet have a recorded case of COVID-19 and the Government of Vanuatu has taken strong measures to ensure that the pandemic does not spread to the country. One consequence of this is that, unlike the experience of TC Pam in which international aid agencies and aid workers were prominent in the response, the TC Harold response has been locally led and the process of housing recovery has further emphasised the importance of self-recovery, community resilience, traditional building practices, skills and resources. This document, therefore, guides shelter and settlements actors, policy-makers and practitioners by developing country-specific guidance to inform and support local processes of post-disaster recovery and to contribute to the wider localisation agenda in humanitarian action.



Part 1 - Disaster Context and Key Recovery Themes

The process of post-disaster recovery in the shelter/housing sector is complex and interconnected. There is often a temptation to simplify this process by thinking of shelter housing only in terms of physical structures or in terms of pre-defined relief packages. Instead, as this document outlines, there are many different processes, contexts, and factors that ultimately contribute to safe, adequate, and dignified shelter and housing. Housing links obviously with other emergency sectors, especially WASH, livelihoods, collective centers and host families, and logistics. Wider settlements approaches to housing - that take into account the relationships between the needs and occupations of the occupants including access to services, utilities, markets, employment, and cultural considerations, for example - emphasise a more complex network of connections that make shelters into houses and houses into homes. Crucially, in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, individuals, families and communities all make their own decisions that are the immediate basis for longer term recovery. Many different types of intervention and support can assist these processes and there is an inherent danger by simply making decisions based on physical structures that self-recovery processes may be undermined. These self-recovery processes are at the heart of resilience and it is important that shelter/housing agencies use their resources to support the longer term goal of building resilience in Vanuatu's high disaster risk context.

This document outlines the considerations and types of direct and indirect interventions that may assist particular households and communities as they go through the process of self-recovery.. They could, for example, include training, material assistance, cash, support to supply chains, support to livelihoods, or advocacy around strengthening of land tenure, among many other options. Agencies will need to work with communities to ascertain their priorities, resources, assets, and self-recovery needs that are tailored for that context rather than a predefined 'one size fits all' shelter package. What follows elaborates on some of these considerations, options, and intersectoral issues that will underpin shelter/housing recovery and resilience-building following disasters in Vanuatu.

Recovery Policy Context

There are several important policies that have bearing on post disaster shelter/housing recovery in Vanuatu and the Pacific region. These include:

Government of Vanuatu

- [Vanuatu 2030 - The Peoples Plan](#), the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 to 2030 is a policy framework that lays out the vision and priorities for Vanuatu as a stable,



sustainable and prosperous nation. It recognises the central importance of resilience, calling for “enhanced resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change and natural disasters”. There are 3 pillars to the National Development Goals - Society, Environment and Economy - all of which housing recovery programming contributes to. While there are many links, of particular relevance to designing shelter and settlement recovery interventions that are integrated with resilience are the following:

- **ENV 3.3** Strengthen post-disaster systems in planning, preparedness, response and recovery
- **ENV 3.4** Promote and ensure strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related, natural and man-made hazards
- **ENV 4.7** Build capacity and support local communities to manage natural resources
- **ECO 2.1** Increase access to safe, reliable and affordable modern energy services for all that are increasingly generated from renewable sources and reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels
- **ECO 2.2** Ensure all people have reliable access to safe drinking water and sanitation infrastructure
- **ECO 3.3** Improve access to markets through quality infrastructure, utilities, storage and processing facilities in rural areas
- **ECO 4.2** Strengthen linkages between urban and rural business and promote trade between islands

- The PDNA is still in the process of being finalised by the DSPPAC Recovery Operations Centre (Vanuatu PMO). It has fed into the Vanuatu Recovery Strategy 2020- 2023 which has been approved by the Vanuatu Council of Ministers (COM). PDNA objectives, currently in draft form, are:

Objective 1 (Support to Early Recovery, linking relief with recovery): Support housing self-recovery processes through the provision of durable building materials for both households as well as community safe houses. Local and natural building should be preferred + tools

Objective 2 (Build Back Safer): Investment in education, training, and socio-technical support on Build Back Safer techniques. Re-engaging with tried and tested building techniques

Objective 3 (investment in community resilience): support to household resilience-building through investment in inclusive, participatory, and community-led recovery and longer term resilience processes (such as Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness, and support to sustainable CDCCCs and Shelter Focal Points).

Objective 4 (area-based approaches): investment in area based approaches that encompass the broader impact on shelter and housing of access to water, sanitation, livelihoods, health facilities and education. Ensure that the participation of women, people with a disability, the elderly and vulnerable groups is prioritised in the participatory process.

Vanuatu Shelter Cluster

- [Vanuatu Shelter Cluster - Objective 8](#)
 - *“Promote and support communities’ shelter & settlements self-recovery, building back safer initiatives and traditional coping mechanisms.” and suggests that “...shelter response strategies should encourage and support people in their own coping mechanisms, with the appropriate provision of Non Food and Shelter Items, tools, technical assistance and safe shelter awareness, targeting the most vulnerable”*
- IFRC/Australian Red Cross/Vanuatu Shelter Cluster (2017) [Housing Land and Property Mapping Project](#)

Regional

- [Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific](#) - An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP) 2017 – 2030

Global / Agency

- [Sphere Handbook](#)
- [Resilience frameworks such as the IFRC Framework for Community Resilience](#) further guides recovery shelter programs of humanitarian shelter agencies. The FCR directly references, among other things, recovery as an integral part of resilience. It also has as part of its suggested outcomes and objectives functional, safe, affordable shelter and settlements for communities:



Objective

- Develop well maintained and accessible infrastructure and services in communities.

Outcomes

- Communities have well planned, well-maintained and accessible infrastructure and services.
- Communities have the ability or support to use, maintain, repair and renovate the public infrastructure and systems.
- Communities have appropriate - safe, secure and affordable shelter, -water and sanitation systems - transport and energy systems.

Social Structures

Vanuatu is especially diverse in its social structures and these may vary from community to community and island to island. There are 65 inhabited islands and three official languages in Vanuatu (Bislama, English, and French) there are more than 138 indigenous languages for a population of around three hundred thousand people. There are strong traditions of communal ownership, especially of land, and this communal tradition also underpins approaches to resource sharing and recovery and is one of the bases for the *wantok* system combining place, belonging, extended family, and ethno-linguistic groups. Social structures and hierarchies, especially in remote areas, may be quite different from formal state structures and functions and shelter agencies will need to work flexibly with community groups as social, participatory, and consultative processes and outcomes may be different in different places and with different groups.

Vanuatu comprises six provinces: Malampa, Penama, Sanma, Shefa, Tafea and Torba. Each province is administered by a provincial council, in addition to which there are three municipal councils for the cities of Port Vila, Luganville and Lenakel. Municipal councils are generally independent from provincial councils. Provinces are divided into Local Customary institutions that exist at several different levels, including those summarised below. Government Regions, which are further divided into Area Council Divisions. At the lowest level, there are village chiefs; a village may have a single chief, or a group or languages, and may be consulted in relation to any bill before Parliament.

Household

The definition of household in Vanuatu does not refer to one nuclear family living under one roof. A household in Vanuatu generally refers to an extended family, i.e. consisting of a number of



family members (parents and children) and relatives such as grandparents, aunts or uncles living in a number of buildings in a communal setting. Traditionally, the “house” is not only one building. There are at least two to more constructions with different purposes and design. It includes a garden.

- The Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) define household as *“Those persons who usually eat together and share the work of preparing the food and/or the cost of work of providing it”*
- The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and the Ministry of Health define a household as a family unit sleeping in one shelter.

As well, response actors may also have a different definition of households. For instance, international organizations such as UN-Habitat define a household as a group of individuals (not necessarily from the same family) living under the same roof. The current NDMO definition will give agencies a higher number of beneficiaries and will be the most common definition to work with in time of emergency response.

Typical traditional household dwellings in Vanuatu usually encompass different buildings, at least one for sleeping and one separated for kitchen, that is at the centre of Ni-Van culture. While addressing the emergency shelter needs of a household, it’s therefore important to consider the sleeping place, but also the kitchen area that is also crucial as constituting often also the social space for women. Providing for instance two tarpaulins by household might be relevant to cover both separated spaces or structures.

As good practice, shelter assessments should consider specific needs for gender and social groups to target the support needs for households but also communities’ infrastructures. For instance, tarpaulins should be planned to help households to cover their shelters and kitchens, but supplementary ones for livestock, nakamal for the men and community centres for women and children.

Gender, Protection and Inclusion

Looking back on TC Pam we can see that while protection, gender and inclusion were discussed, highlighted and agreed upon, very little (if anything) was actually done in support of gender equality as can be seen in this extract from the Shelter Cluster Review:



“... actually dealing to, advocating for and mainstreaming of the impact of TC Pam on women seemed ‘light’ and probably non-existent beyond this hosting of the Women’s Centre” TC PAM Shelter Cluster Review

The Protection Cluster has provided recommendations for the shelter sector to support programme design, monitoring and potential inputs into self-recovery to promote gender equality and protection:

<p>Baseline Data Recommended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land and property ownership by sex ● No. of female headed households (FHHH) ● Gendered use of land and houses ● Gender roles in house construction and maintenance ● Community infrastructure (churches, nakamals etc)
<p>Impact, Damage and Loss Data Recommended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Damage to houses, including structures used by women (e.g. kitchens) ● Loss of home property that enables livelihood engagement (pots, etc) ● Cost of damage and loss sustained by FHHH Current living conditions female HHHs as a result of the disaster ● Access to building materials and support for reconstruction and repair by FHHHs ● No. of people in temporary shelters by sex and age ● No. of people, by sex and age, living with host families ● Challenges faced by PLWD and minority groups ● Provisions of sex segregated wash and bath facilities in evacuation shelters ● GBV and protection issues reported in shelters and host families ● Impact of the damage to women and men’s social activities and livelihoods from loss of community infrastructure ● Identification of community infrastructure to be prioritised for reconstruction by women and men
<p>Recovery needs including preparedness for future shocks and resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recovery and reconstruction strategies targeted at female HHHs, PLWD , the elderly and minority groups ● Access to resources to women and men for home rehabilitation and reconstruction ● Training of men and women in BBS building skills ● Participation of women and men in housing rehabilitation and reconstruction activities

- BBS to include adequate lighting and segregated lockable WASH facilities and accessibility for PWD
- Participation of women in rehabilitation and reconstruction work
- Child-care services to allow women to participate
- Prioritisation of community structures that ease burden of women and promote women's livelihoods

These recommendations and a protection mainstreaming lens should be used when preparing a programme design.

TC Pam Shelter & Settlement Vulnerability Assessment (May 2015)⁶

35% of households were identified to have at least one member who was pregnant or lactating at the time of the assessment. Furthermore, 33% and 15% of households respectively reported that they included at least one member with a chronic illness or a physical disability.

Further, based on assessments done during TC Pam, an estimated 20% of households across Vanuatu are female headed. Female-headed households often have no ownership of the land they are on and face huge constraints in accessing finance and manpower to repair or reconstruct their homes. The TC Pam PDNA further notes that:

Housing rehabilitation and reconstruction/recovery programs should be positively adjusted to prioritize female headed households as well as people living with disabilities and the elderly. Similarly, early recovery and livelihood programs should also provide specific support to female headed households to enable them to find resources for rebuilding. With regard to evacuation centers, disaster preparedness planning should address the needs of women and girls by ensuring adequate lighting and segregated wash facilities. Future planning and building of evacuation camps should also ensure accessibility for people living with disability. - PDNA TC PAM⁷

⁶ Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, *TC PAM Shelter & Settlements Vulnerability Assessment*, May 2015

⁷ Government of Vanuatu (2015) *Post Disaster Needs Assessment Cyclone Pam*, p. 41

Timing for Recovery

Self-recovery is well underway and will continue, with or without the support of humanitarian agencies. Field monitoring and preliminary reports suggest that many HHs have constructed a rudimentary shelter that is intended to be temporary while their other aspects of recovery are prioritised. Reports suggest that livelihoods and the household garden are the current priority, and finishing appropriate, durable and safe housing will come later once livelihoods have stabilised and longer term investment in housing can be made.

Be conscious of appropriate timeframes. Recovery takes time. Only the affected population can determine these timeframes, not donors or implementing agencies. The timeframes will be different from village to village, from house to house, and from person to person. To support self-recovery, it is critical that an understanding of time frames is gained and that support provided is flexible enough to enable different time frames to exist. We can support an enabling environment that helps to expedite recovery plans, however imposing timeframes can be counterproductive and reduce resilience by removing a degree of self-determination. Consider household and community priorities, alongside annual disaster cycles to best support appropriate timeframes. Build organisational business continuity into the planning to provide sustainable ongoing support as required.

Targeting

Targeting is often considered important to ensure the most vulnerable are not left behind. Vanuatu also has an active traditional community support system with examples of communities choosing to support the construction of the most vulnerable households first. If the whole community is adequately resilient then they are able to support the more vulnerable within the community. This brings up the question of whether it is more appropriate to target interventions, limiting scale, or to aim for wider, less targeted impact. Resilience programming may be a targeted intervention however national, community and household resilience is something that all members of the community contribute to, and as such blanket approaches may be appropriate for some types of support.

While TC Harold has affected particular areas in Vanuatu, there are other ongoing responses to disasters. Furthermore, TC Harold impacted areas which are still recovering from previous hazards such as the eruption of the Manaro Voui Volcano on the island of Ambae in 2017 and again in 2018. Many of the families affected by the eruption relocated to vacant land near Luganville on Espiritu Santo Island such as the Banban area (whose main street is aptly named Manaro Street), and were then impacted by TC Harold.



When targeting, careful consideration should be given to the intensity with which any one community is supported to ensure an appropriately effective scale of the response to avoid “pockets of excellence”. If specific communities are to be targeted for specific inputs into their self-recovery then vulnerability should be the criteria, so as the most vulnerable communities are given this type of support.

Urban v Rural

Housing reconstruction rates are reported to be significantly different in urban and rural areas, which is common to many developing countries' disaster responses. Housing typologies tend to become more ‘modernised’ the closer communities are to markets, starting with hybridisation in rural market accessible areas to fully modern urban construction in urban and peri-urban areas. There are a range of potential factors contributing to this that should be considered both for targeting but also for programme design.

Markets are also affected, along with earning capacity which can be an advantage for those who can access local resources for reconstructing their houses and who have fewer expenses such as those in urban settings.

Adherence to the building code in urban areas, although not common yet, can impact the pace and cost of reconstruction greatly.

From an initial analysis of the census data on differing housing typologies it is clear that effective technical advice and support need to be tailored for different areas, and much of this relates to proximity to urban centers, but not all. Some rural areas have stronger traditional building culture which in turn means a higher prevalence of traditional structures. For example West Santo has a much higher rate of traditional thatch roofing (96%) than North West Santo (76%) even though West Santo is closer to the urban center of Santo.⁸

Urban

Inputs into self-recovery and resilience in an urban setting will need to be different to those in rural settings if they are to be effective.

⁸ 2016 Mini-Census, Vanuatu National Statistics Office, <http://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/mini-census-2016>

Community structures are different, and may not have the capacity to support the most vulnerable through traditional villages structures and chiefs. Typically in these areas there is more reliance on government regulation and support. Many may need to borrow money and support to better access to finance (this is discussed more in the Cash and Markets section). The role of community groups should be investigated and mapped in the urban areas, as there is a wider array with differing priorities.

More modern construction materials require more stringent product quality assurance and more detailed construction methods with a different skill to traditional construction. Training for construction workers, and for communities should differ in the urban context to be effective. This is covered in more detail in the section on training.

Building codes come into play in the urban and peri urban settings in Port Vila, Luganville and Lenakel. Although regulation has not begun in earnest, there is a move towards greater adherence to the code, and doing so in an urban setting will also provide more structural resilience for buildings, as this is what the code is designed for.

Housing programmes for social housing may be accessible in urban areas. Understanding what programmes are underway (through CBOs and government) or planned and how they work may be useful information for shelter agency staff and volunteers who are engaged in social mobilisation with communities (all staff and volunteers have this role by default) or for any potential help desk or information center. An example of one that has been planned for some time is: [Banban Area Provident Fund Housing programme](#).

Rural

While there are overall reports of a high degree of self-recovery in rural areas there are also remaining needs and gaps. In many cases, bush materials have been put together to form shelters based on the former houses. There are reports, however, of ongoing problems especially with roofing. In some areas, especially where the cyclone was strongest and the level of damage was highest, there are fewer salvageable materials and destruction to trees that would have provided thatching materials for roofs and walls has impeded recovery. A traditional resilience measure is that for many rural houses which are lightly constructed, there is an expectation that they will come down in high winds and that they can be relatively easily put up again. Households will add to and strengthen these houses as resources and time become available to them. The focus of shelter support in these rural areas may then be to support improvement, retrofitting, or strengthening.

During the TC Pam response, shelter agencies worked closely with existing community groups and structures in support of their recovery across a range of sectors including shelter but also livelihoods and education, among others. Consultation with communities during the project design phase revealed a high level of self-organisation which the recovery support could effectively tap in to. On the island of Tanna in Tafea Province, one recovery shelter program approach was to provide multi-purpose tool kits which could be used by the community according to their own recovery timeframe - firstly they were used for restoration of livelihoods, and later for repair and construction of housing. On the island of Buninga in the Shepherd Islands, one shelter agency learned that the community had an established ‘shelter program’ in place before the impact of TC Pam. One day per week, members of the community would get together to maintain and repair their neighbours houses where required.

Host Families and Evacuation Centers

People who are unable to return to their original homes often stay with family and friends or communities with shared historical, religious or other ties. Supporting the host to continue to shelter affected people includes support to expand or adapt an existing host family shelter, or financial and material support for running costs.

Preliminary information from the DTM assessment shows that the majority of people who were initially displaced by the cyclone are no longer in evacuation centres. Many have returned home, however a substantial number are staying with host families and a small minority remain in formal evacuation centres. Support for hosts and enabling return of the displaced should be a priority, along with ensuring evacuation options for future disasters. Support could include([See Assistant Host Families: A Step by step guide.](#)):

1. Identify and engage host communities
2. Assess vulnerabilities, capacities and resources
3. Agree a Host Families and Community Support Plan
4. Implement a Host Families and Community Examples of shelter assistance ‘packages’ for host or displaced families
5. Monitor and evaluate implementations

Evacuation center and Safe House support can include:

1. Communities need additional support to develop and maintain safe, dignified evacuation options in emergencies, including plans about who will be using which evacuation centre/safe house and strengthening evacuation centre management, including traditional safe houses.



2. National and local authorities need accurate data to plan for, respond to, and recover from displacement (*The purpose of identifying this need is to try and embed information management systems that provide timely, high quality data on displacement, shelter, vulnerability immediately after cyclone/disaster events through displacement tracking but adapted to sectoral needs*)
3. Local authorities need standardized tools and technical skills to track and report displacement

Housing, Land and Property

There are a range of forms of tenure including customary tenure. The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster [Housing, Land and Property Mapping Project](#) contains country specific information, and recommends

- Support local to national linkages and advocacy for tenure disputes to relevant authorities including the Department of Lands, the Land Management Planning Committee, the National Coordinator of Land Dispute Management and the National Housing Corporation.
- Monitor and represent informal tenure arrangements, informal settlements and the landless and impending or ongoing expropriation.

According to the [Sphere Handbook](#) security of tenure

means that people can live in their homes without fear of forced eviction, whether in communal settlement situations, informal settlements, host communities or after return. It is the foundation of the right to adequate housing and many other human rights. In the humanitarian context, an incremental – or step-by-step – approach may be the most appropriate. This recognises that displaced people can be supported to improve their living conditions in different types of accommodation. It does not mean prioritising owners for assistance, nor does it necessarily convey permanence or ownership. Shelter actors have been developing an understanding of what is “secure enough” for the purposes of designing shelter options that support the most vulnerable and tenure-insecure. For more on due diligence and the concept of “secure enough” see [Payne and Durand-Lasserve \(2012\)](#).

Shelter and settlement standard 6: Security of tenure - *The affected population has security of tenure in its shelter and settlement options.*

Key actions:



1. Undertake due diligence in programme design and implementation.
 - Achieve as much legal certainty about tenure as possible (the “secure enough” approach), given the context and constraints.
 - Coordinate and work with local authorities, legal professionals and interagency forums.
2. Understand the legal framework and the reality on the ground.
 - Map tenure systems and arrangements for the different post-crisis shelter and settlement scenarios; identify how these affect the most at-risk groups.
 - Work with local authorities to understand which regulations will be enforced and which will not, and the related time frames.
 - Understand how tenure relations are managed and disputes resolved, and how this may have changed since the onset of the crisis.
3. Understand how tenure systems, arrangements and practices affect security of tenure for at-risk groups.
 - Include security of tenure as an indicator of vulnerability.
 - Understand what documents may be required by people participating in a programme, noting that the most vulnerable may not have, or be able to access, these documents.
 - Ensure that the response is not biased towards owner-occupier or freehold arrangements.
4. Implement shelter and settlement programmes to support security of tenure.
 - Use local expertise to adapt programming to the different types of tenure, especially for vulnerable groups.
 - Ensure that documentation, such as tenure agreements, is properly prepared and reflects the rights of all parties.
 - Reduce the risk that the shelter programme may cause or contribute to tensions within the community and with surrounding local communities.
5. Support protection from forced eviction.
 - In case of eviction, or risk of eviction, undertake referrals to identify alternative shelter solutions and other sectoral assistance.
 - Assist with dispute resolution.

Urban considerations: The majority of the urban displaced live in informal settlements or in rental accommodation without formal ownership, lease and/or use agreements. Therefore, the risk of forced eviction and related forms of exploitation and harassment is a defining feature of their

lives. Shelter and settlement assistance options for urban areas should address complex tenure situations and consider incremental tenure approaches for renters, informal settlers, squatters and others.

Environment

The Vanuatu Shelter Cluster's [Environmental Checklist for Shelter Response](#) provides guidelines for environmental considerations to promote sustainability and lower impact from humanitarian responses in Vanuatu. Ensure considerations throughout the checklist are considered during project design. For example, the use of local traditions are assessed to have a lower environmental impact.

“Encourage the use of locally available materials and building practices where appropriate and able to be supported by the environment and locally sustainable supply chains. Encourage and engage in replanting of building materials.”⁹

With many trees falling during cyclones, it is an opportunity to mill much of it, however it needs to be done quickly to avoid spoiling. The milling of the trees through the provision of chainsaws, porta mills or engagement of the local millers can be done relatively quickly, but then requires additional care to ensure trees that should not be cut down for conservation reasons are not. Consultations and coordination with the Forestry Department are essential, and they can often facilitate access to mills.

Planting of trees and palms for roofing material can provide for future disasters. Additionally, internal markets for natural materials such as natangora can provide alternatives to tarpaulins, plastic sheeting and other non-biodegradable relief items.

Well made, the [standard IFRC tarpaulin](#) which is used by most Vanuatu Shelter Cluster partners can last up to 2 years if constantly exposed to the sun. Proper storage, and careful use can prolong the life of these materials. There are reports of people using tarps during the emergency phase and then packing them away for future use as last for years and years if looked after.

Housing Typology

As strong as traditional building practices are, in many areas imported materials and building techniques are used. Construction with cement blocks and iron roofing materials (kapa) is often referred to as a ‘permanent’ house in assessments and loss and damage analyses (such as the Government of Vanuatu Post Disaster Needs Assessment - PDNA - process). Houses involving

⁹ Vanuatu Shelter Cluster Environmental Checklist for Shelter Response, 2019

traditional materials are sometimes known as ‘temporary’. ‘Semi-permanent’ usually refers to concrete blocks up to 1 metre, and timber framing above. In urban areas with greater access to markets and more people living and working as part of a money economy, imported materials are used more frequently. There are exceptions, however. Ambae is an example where local markets aren't stocked with modern building materials but there are a lot of permanent houses on the island. Agencies working in the shelter and housing sector will need to be adaptable enough to support traditional building cultures while also providing support to those building with imported materials. Refreshing traditions (moving away from mixed/modern) in these areas may increase resilience.

Mixed and non-traditional structures seem to be more vulnerable due to construction and material quality. Focus on these areas for BBS will provide greater benefits to dwelling safety. Sometimes the local houses are also very vulnerable as they can be built as sacrificial structures which are easy to put back up if the materials haven't blown away. It is important to understand how the community functions, as if they have a communal safehouse which can also be a cave, or under the roots of a banyan tree, the strength of their houses may be less important.

In areas where the impact of TC Pam and Harold overlapped (i.e. Malekula) examples can be seen of buildings that were constructed as part of training on traditional techniques and BBS, that served as evacuation centers and are still standing with little or no damage from TC Harold. These, and other examples, where traditions can be shown to be stronger and safer than their modern counterparts, can be promoted and used as part of information and awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma of so-called “rubbish” houses and re-engage with traditional building culture.

Prior to TC Pam there were a number of different building typologies that are also applicable to TC Harold:

Shelter construction and materials in urban and rural areas varied considerably across the assessed areas, particularly when comparing rural, peri-urban and urban locations. Overall, 57% of households reported that they had constructed their roof from corrugated galvanised iron (CGI) prior to Cyclone Pam. However, this was significantly more commonplace in urban and peri-urban locations (75% and 85%) compared to rural locations (58%). Conversely, traditional roofing materials, such as natangora leaves, were more commonly reported by households in rural locations, accounting for 37% of households. The most common pre-crisis wall materials identified through the assessment were CGI (used by 28% of households), concrete (22%), and bamboo (20%).

Regarding floor 81% of households reported that they owned the land upon which their shelter was built.¹⁰

Other Sectors

(This section is still being completed with feedback from sectoral leads. Gender and Protection considerations are extensively explored above and this section focuses on WASH, Livelihoods, Education, and Health).

According to [Disaster Risk Management Act No.23 of 2019](#) the [NDMO](#) has responsibility for overall coordination including inter-cluster/inter-sectoral coordination for disaster preparedness, emergency and disaster response, including facilitation of international humanitarian assistance. Provincial and Municipal Climate Change Committees endorse strategies and ensure programs are implemented at the provincial and local levels.

Recovery coordination, policy and planning lies with the Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) within the Government of Vanuatu Prime Minister's Office.

WASH

[WASH](#) is central to safe and dignified homes and communities, and access to essential services and activities of a household. If communities have (site planning) skills to assess the block profile, existing trees, drainage lines and ground conditions then designs can optimise the siting of dwellings, latrines, bathing areas, drainage lines and gardens. Comfortable spaces for menstrual hygiene management must be provided at household level. The process of restoring access to sanitation presents through participatory construction of model latrines also provides an opportunity to demonstrate build back safer methods for future adaptation into dwellings. The Department of Water Resources drinking water safety and security planning process (DWSSP) can inform the operational aspects of water access, storage and safety in a dwelling (e.g. maintenance of gutters, storage, drainage). Water access is also an essential part of the construction industry, with water needed for many construction activities. In the context of COVID-19 good

¹⁰ Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, *TC PAM Shelter & Settlements Vulnerability Assessment*, May 2015

hygiene practices and the link between healthy COVID-19 safe housing and WASH is important to take into account when supporting recovery.

Livelihoods

Shelter/housing support programming should optimise employability enhancement and financial access opportunities in recovery, particularly among low income and vulnerable households that allow for appropriate time frames for housing reconstruction that allow for livelihoods priorities of households. The re-establishment of food gardens should be considered as a priority.

Health

Access to [health](#) facilities and clinics are critical for recovery of settlements particularly among low income and vulnerable households or communities. This will promote early recovery and ongoing assessments of existing health conditions, hospitalization, and rehabilitation services. The Ministry of Health – recovery plan facilitates planning and operational aspects of improving health services post disasters and creating community health awareness on non-communicable (NCD) to manage health issues and communicable diseases (CD) to mitigate disease outbreaks.

Education

[Education](#) is central to settlement approaches and schools are a key community resource. Access to educational provision is a key consideration behind where people in communities chose to live.



Part 2 - Inputs to Support Shelter Self-Recovery and Resilience

Post-disaster housing recovery is an evolving process that emerges from local traditions, skills, capacities and resources and which can be supported in important ways. Key objectives for shelter agencies providing longer-term support in Vanuatu will be to work with communities to create an enabling environment through processes of socio-technical accompaniment based on participation and consultation in addition to specific material interventions, such as tools, training or building materials. Inputs into self-recovery that support households to conduct the activity of rebuilding, repairing or strengthening their houses and settlements in a safe and dignified way should aim to strengthen longer term resilience. These inputs provided by agencies and government can be put in two groups:

1. Material / Financial Assistance (MFA)
2. Social / Technical Assistance (STA)

Socio-Technical Assistance is an investment in people, promotes resilience and is more sustainable than Material or Financial Assistance alone. Sometimes both are needed to complement each other, however, importantly MFA should never be provided without STA. The balance between the two is very important to maximise impact and strengthen resilience with available resources. Achieving this balance will depend on context: the state of the disaster response, level of self-recovery, building knowledge and capacities, access to livelihoods, and the available programmatic support and funding from response agencies and government. This document seeks to support this decision making process.

While there are very strong indigenous building skills in Vanuatu some communities (especially urban ones) use imported materials and technologies. It will be essential to support and maintain Vanuatu's local building traditions while also providing training and education for those using other techniques. Some communities may benefit from items such as cyclone strapping, nails, tie wire, rope, among others. However care should be taken not to replace available effective and appropriate local materials, moreover local natural material supply chains should be supported. For example in areas where 'bush rope' is available, the provision of cyclone strap may ultimately reduce long term resilience and local traditional knowledge.



The following section describes options for both Material / Financial Assistance (MFA) and Social / Technical Assistance (STA).

Material / Financial Assistance

Material Support (In-Kind)

Household emergency shelter kits (consisting of tarpaulins, tools, fixings, and essential household items) may have already been distributed in many affected areas during the emergency phase of a response, along with **community tool kits** (higher quality and more diverse tools for shared use). Preparing for and during housing recovery the need for tools may now be lower as a result, however it is recommended to review the community's access to tools as recovery unfolds.

Larger tools such as chainsaws and portable mills are in high demand for various reasons such as milling fallen timber and clearing roads. These tools are relatively rare in Vanuatu and require skilled and appropriately equipped people to use and maintain these resources. Agencies report that distribution of these types of high maintenance, potentially dangerous and expensive tools is challenging. Considering methods to provide access to these tools on a temporary basis will improve material availability in many areas. Fuel, personal protective equipment, and training should also be considered when designing a method for access to large tools. Focal points for responsibility and maintenance of these tools could, for example, be a Shelter Focal Point, the CDCCC, the local community based organisation. There are additional concerns about the environmental impact of chainsaws and the Vanuatu government is highly aware of the impact of logging in neighbouring Melanesian countries. In this context, appropriate governmental oversight and involvement would come from the Department of Forestry and the Public Works Department.

Access to Finance

Access to finance is a key component of recovery. TC Pam Shelter Cluster assessments found that households, especially in urban areas, prioritised livelihoods and access to income as a path to shelter recovery. Wider studies indicate that those who live through the most severe part of a cyclone can experience up to a 15% drop in income twenty years after the event¹¹. The context of COVID-19, for example, severely reduced income based on tourism in particular and made recovery significantly more difficult. Additionally, COVID-19 travel restrictions and border closures mean that household members wanting to pay for private housing reconstruction were

¹¹ Dan McGarry 'Vanuatu in the eye of the storm' *The Guardian* 6/06/20:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/06/the-vanuatu-island-in-the-eye-of-the-storm>

unable to access regional work for remittances through seasonal work schemes such as the Recognised Seasonal Employment (RSE) or the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS), which have been the practice in the past. Local income sources such as tourism, which usually contributes greatly to local income especially in urban areas around Luganville in Santo (SANMA Province) have been hit hard due to border closures and travel restrictions.

“Most people go for RSE to get the cash to rebuild after a disaster, at least that is what I have seen in the past, like with Ambae and other disasters” Jelson Naparau, Shelter Manager VRCS

As a consequence lending, borrowing, and debt (formal and traditional) will become more pronounced and will not only impact recovery from this disaster but also longer term resilience and recovery from other disasters by increasing the economic vulnerability of households and communities. While the majority of lending is reported to be informal¹², it still increases the level of vulnerability and risks of high and unregulated interest repayments. **Debt levels and interest rates should be monitored** to have a full picture of emerging vulnerabilities caused by disasters and the wider impact this may have on recovery as part of a wider coping strategy index.

There is an opportunity to work with communities, over medium and longer timeframes, to provide fair access to credit that is also sustainable. Community savings and loan and microfinance schemes may provide a way of establishing access to finance and, if sustained, will increase community resilience which may be identified as less risk, particularly for women. These schemes are often incorporated in other sectors such as livelihoods but could be broadened to provide communities with finance for housing, especially targeting more vulnerable groups. Additionally, there are building, income and finance considerations based on gender. In some communities, the home is also used to generate revenue from production of food or sale of kava, especially by women. Women are also often responsible for weaving /thatching walls, roof and floor coverings. Buying materials is often made possible through money raised in domestic industry. Access to credit, microloans for small business, and support to income-based livelihoods for women can also be central to housing recovery. Given already high workloads for women, programming should also seek to work with men and boys to reduce the overall workload for women, encourage joint decision making at household level around economic resources, and accompanied by GBV prevention and referral work. Such funds are often targeted at individuals through community credit schemes however village level disaster relief funds could also be considered which may

¹² [Social Security for All Men and Women: A source book for extending social security coverage in Vanuatu: options and plans](#)

support wider investment in settlements. Given that many communities in Vanuatu, especially those that live in remote areas, may depend on subsistence livelihoods, or may only partially participate in a money economy, micro finance schemes may need to integrate and reference traditional economic norms and practices around establishing value and means of exchange.

An example of community savings and loan schemes was established under the Department of Women and Culture in 1996 is called **Vanwood**. It is commonly regarded as one of the most successful microfinance schemes in the Pacific. While it is aimed at supporting disadvantaged women with employment opportunities and access to finance, it provides an example of what is possible for the wider community. For members, loans are available for home improvements, and response to calamities.

“The [Vanwood] project was appealing to those genuinely in need of help as far as microenterprises were concerned. They felt that Vanwood had an appropriate approach which directly addressed their everyday life situations” Social Security for All Men and Women: A source book for extending social security coverage in Vanuatu: options and plans

Access to finance can also be supported by agencies at the community level through schemes such as a simple interest free **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**. Grants can be given or even lent to communities in small amounts that are available for the more vulnerable to access, on a rotating basis. The chair (or other identified person responsible) could, for example, administer the loan. Additionally it is recommended to include sessions on financial literacy (budgeting, savings management, accessing credits etc.) to increase their awareness on managing household income and expenses and joint decision making.

For example, sufficient funds to support the construction or rehabilitation of ten houses could be made available to a fund management group within the community. These funds could then be lent to the most vulnerable in the community for the purpose of house construction or repair. When the funds are paid back, the next most vulnerable could be provided with the loan and so on until ten houses have been built. The capital funds for the loan could also be used to start community saving and lending groups, perhaps along the Vanwood lines. An advantage of this approach is that it is a way to have a cash program without investing cash directly to households.

Some examples of where it has worked, both in Vanuatu and elsewhere includes

- In Vanuatu, CARE’s Village Saving and Loan Associations, World Vision’s Savings for Transformation, and indigenous versions such as those in North Pentecost. These are



smaller scale than the example above as people can only take a loan equal to three times the value of their savings at the time of taking the loan, as a financial risk reduction measure.

- The concept of a revolving fund has been used successfully in small business and micro-enterprise recovery and development but it has also been used in housing recovery in the USA, Africa and Nepal.

Cash/Vouchers

Access to markets is varied. Some urban and peri-urban areas such as Luganville have strong linkages to markets however this is not the case for more remote or outer-island communities. In general markets in Vanuatu with the exemption of Luganville and Port Vila are supply driven and very informal. There are also very high costs associated with limited market access and transportation. Many markets have been adversely affected by past disasters, and will be by future ones. Impacts include building destruction, broken supply chains, rising prices, diminishing suppliers, as well as loss of disposal income owing to higher costs of food and staples. Functioning markets will underpin processes of self-recovery. Cash interventions may provide ways to improve market functionality by improving the demand side therefore stimulating the competition and increase in quality, but other types of support can also assist, such as facilitating collective procurement, purchasing and transportation of materials and services.

With a global push towards cash based interventions for its recognised benefits of versatility, reduction of transaction costs, and effectiveness of outcomes, it is easy to see why so many organisations are keen to see cash programming roll out in Vanuatu. Oxfam has been leading the assessments and trials to date, with the *Vanuatu Cash Transfer Feasibility Assessment* in Feb 2019 and the *UnBlocked Cash: Piloting Accelerated Cash Transfer Delivery in Vanuatu* research report in October 2019. This assessment indicated that cash was less feasible for the majority of Vanuatu due to less penetration of financial services and physical access to markets, and extensive market surveys were needed before engaging with cash distributions. There are significant concerns relating to cash and these include weak market systems, high importation and transaction costs, issues around cash owing to traditions of communal ownership inherent in Wantok social structures, and concerns about the impact of cash on community and gender-based violence. For these reasons, cash was not accepted by the Government of Vanuatu or used by aid agencies during the response to TC Pam in 2015. With subsequent studies and assessments, this outlook is currently being revisited. A detailed needs assessment and market study started last June 2020 and is due to be finished in December 2020.



TC Harold/CoViD-19: Oxfam and Save the Children in coordination with the Vanuatu CWG are planning to provide food security and livelihood support to 7,000 HH for TC Harold and Covid-19, targeting 3000 HH in Sanma, 2000 HH in Shefa and 2000 HH in Tafea. The project will use Multi-Purpose Grants (MPG) as the cash modality using e-vouchers.

It is generally recognised by the Cash Working Group that more remote areas are not suitable for cash based interventions. These are areas that have limited access to markets such as northern Santo and the smaller islands. In the urban areas such as Luganville, cash or vouchers may be suitable. The 2019 Vanuatu Cash Feasibility Study divided the areas into three categories: low, medium and high feasibility areas based on market, financial service availability and perception on Cash. Efate and Santo area are considered as the highest feasible areas as they are the economic centres of those islands. However this brings into question the potential differential of support that will emerge with the inevitable 'line' between those who receive cash or vouchers and those who don't.

Social / Technical Assistance (STA)

The Vanuatu National Development Plan, through the People's Plan 2030 calls for “enhanced resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change and natural disasters”. A programme of socio-technical assistance will lead to more resilient communities and households, and can complement any material or financial assistance to households through the reconstruction process. Even without material or financial support, socio-technical assistance is highly effective in building capacity for recovery, technical knowledge and skill, strengthening local markets, supply chains and material quality, identifying hazards, increasing preparedness and reducing risk.

Any recovery interventions should support longer-term and wider scale physical, social, economic and environmental recovery and resilience. The scope, scale, quality and timeliness of the impact of interventions will depend on the coverage, quality, and timeliness of the delivery of socio-technical assistance. This relationship can be represented as follows:

Number of houses reconstructed, repaired or strengthened = Coverage of STA
Quality of Construction = Quality of STA
Time to reconstruct = timeliness of STA delivery

The 10 Guiding principles of Socio-Technical Assistance are described as follows in *Supporting Safer Housing Reconstruction After Disasters - UN Habitat/AXA*:

1. Everyone has a right to advice
2. Harness all capacity available to provide technical assistance



3. Be strategic to optimise scarce resources for maximum impact
4. Timing matters. Start early and sustain assistance.
5. Action plan and be flexible. Housing and technical assistance are iterative processes.
6. Adopt joined up approaches for multi-dimensional topics
7. Technical assistance is an investment in people
8. Local is more sustainable. Promote subsidiarity.
9. Take a long view. Learn from the past and prepare for the future.
10. Aspirations are insufficient. Technical assistance strategies should be realistic and deliver.

The minimum requirements for socio-technical assistance with regards to reconstruction are that:

- All families and communities reconstructing and repairing their homes and settlements will have access to timely and appropriate advice to build back safer and more sustainable houses and settlements, and are adequately supported through the process.
- The availability of skills for construction will be increased and improved to facilitate reconstruction.
- Reconstruction will build longer term and wide scale community resilience.
- STA needs to be sustained long term to be effective.

Socio-technical assistance needs to be focused at the local level to reach families and communities in time to deliver locally appropriate and easy to understand advice, and to generate and promote awareness activities and skills development. Locally based support should track, report and respond to field practices, needs, and priorities. Achieving change in housing and housing construction requires broad based behaviour change, by households, by carpenters, by government, by responding agencies and by communities. STA should provide links to relevant authorities and experts to answer questions, register complaints/feedback, potential funding, and other agencies; strengthen the voice for the vulnerable, women and children and improve links to other sectors and for integrated planning.

Through an inclusive consultative process, a country specific and culturally appropriate core package of STA should be defined, documented, agreed upon, endorsed by the government and published as “Core Socio-Technical Assistance Package and Guidelines”. The Shelter Cluster Vanuatu led by the Public Works Department is well positioned to facilitate this, and support the process.

Some examples of core socio-technical assistance inputs into recovery could include, but not be limited to:



- Community / Household Orientations
- Continuous Door to Door Technical Assistance (Mobile Technical Support)
- Short Training for Carpenters
- On the Job Training for Carpenters
- Helpdesk / Technical Resource Centres
- Demonstration Constructions
- Traditional Building Material Supply Chain Support
- Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee support and development
- Chainsaws and appropriate technical and safety training.

Critical for the effectiveness and quality of STA is the monitoring of the delivery of it and its impact. Effective monitoring systems should be in place at the government and cluster level as well as within agencies. Indicators for a Management Information System (MIS) and 3W activity tracking should be based upon the agreed STA package.

Aside from the core package delivered at household and community level, STA should also be considered at National and Provincial level to ensure a unified harmonised approach and systemic impact.

Support a Unified Response

- **Support the development of a national recovery strategy that links with national recovery and resilience strategies, activities and planning.** Every disaster response brings with it an opportunity to improve the capacity of Vanuatu and its people to recover, reduce risks and prepare for the next inevitable disaster. The impact of strategies employed in each response will be amplified with national leadership and initiatives that seek to unify from the national to the local level.

Institutional Support

- **Support to PWD to advocate for the establishment of a government body with specific private housing and community settlement responsibilities.** This is also an opportunity to further invest in PWD and local leadership of the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster as a medium to long-term investment in the localisation of response capacity. COVID-19 has necessitated strong leadership of national actors (as opposed to international actors) which will place them well to continue in this capacity for future responses, which may require less external support.



- **Support the development of a vernacular/traditional building code.** While the building code describes uses of imported materials and building technologies such as reinforced concrete and multi-story buildings, housing in Vanuatu takes many forms. The vernacular building tradition is deep, rich and sustainable and is also resilient, often by incorporating collapsibility into use and design of houses with relatively light materials. There is a strong case to recognise this vernacular tradition as an important cultural tradition as well as one that is well-adapted for the context and is highly sustainable. Institutional support could advocate for the inclusion of traditional structures and techniques into the building code or national building guidance and documentation.
- **Investment in the PEOCs - and local level EOCs - around Shelter Cluster capacity and programming at provincial level.** Recommendations from TC Pam 2015 focussed around supporting decentralisation of response management and empowering Provincial level government response and recovery influence in line with Vanuatu's Decentralisation Act. During TC Harold in 2020 the Provincial Emergency Operations Centres (PEOCs) have played a central role in coordinating and responding to the disaster. They play an important role in managing the response, bridging the gap between local communities and national authorities, and have an important role to play in supporting recovery processes.

Disaster Preparedness

- **National Level:** Liaise with relevant government agencies, development partners and community groups to strengthen national level preparedness, early warning systems and hazard identification. A collaborative process could include organisations such as NDMO, PEOCs, PCCC and MCCC, Vanwoods, Vanuatu Council of Churches, VRCS, PWD, and INGOs, Women's Crisis Centre, Vanuatu Disability Desk, and Vanuatu Business Resilience Council for links to the private sector, among others.
- Align preparedness strategies with the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and the Vanuatu People Plan 2030, Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016-2030, and local plans such as the Cyclone Contingency Plan.
- **Provincial Level:** Liaise with relevant government agencies and community groups at the provincial level, including newly established Provincial and Municipal Climate Change Committees, and supporting endorsement of strategies and coordination with national and regional strategies and actors.
- Strengthen community preparedness through prepositioned stocks, simulations, local disaster relief funds, and other initiatives and formalising the Shelter Focal Point role within the CDCCCs.



- **Village Level:** Liaise with community-based disaster preparedness programmes and other partners and activities. Build on recent experiences of disaster impacts, local coping mechanisms and humanitarian response to inform future preparedness. Support local structures to develop preparedness plans and early warning communications strengthening.

Information Management

- Support national level consolidated reporting and data collection of provincial and village level outcomes and self-recovery progress.
- Support national level cluster data collection of partner activity scope, scale, timeliness and quality monitoring with harmonised relevant indicators and timely reporting. Ensure wide reaching consultative approach to the development of indicators to ensure they are what agencies will be collecting to ensure streamlined data collection.

Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability

- **Consolidate and process village level reporting.** Build community reporting capacity and focal points through the Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs - more below).
- Report on additional area council and provincial level activities. Monitor and report recovery progress for the area, including:
 - Baseline and progress on levels of knowledge, skills, practices,
 - Rate of and quality of reconstruction, repair and rehabilitation,
 - Market monitoring: availability, cost and quality of construction materials, labour and works, local investment in recovery, use of cash versus bartering
 - Housing and community building preferences, common defects, emerging technical issues
 - Inputs including demonstration buildings, participants in training, awareness activities, etc.
 - Inputs including supply chain and livelihood initiatives, community resilience projects, disaster risk management activities
 - Material and Financial inputs (cash, tools and materials): assessments, selection, provision, evaluation.
 - Consolidate cross sectoral information on vulnerability, exclusion, challenges and priority needs
 - Ensure accountability to affected populations
- Ensure accountability to affected populations. Provide regular reports and updates to the community. Promote the inclusion of all groups, households and individuals in recovery,



including technical support inputs. Identify disadvantaged or vulnerable households and groups for additional assistance.

Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee (CDCCC)

- Establish and/or strengthen CDCCCs and integrate responding agency initiatives and programming.
- Contribute to effectiveness and sustainability of CDCCCs through capacity strengthening initiatives.
- Support any review processes of CDCCCs, in order to improve capacity strengthening efforts.

The CBDRR Handbook (in [Bislama](#) and [English](#)), a publication of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) outlines the roles and responsibilities of the CDCCCs, how they are set up, and how central they are to the institutional framework for disaster response, recovery, resilience and adaptation for climate change. It highlights the importance of community determination and engagement beyond non-government agency support to achieve sustainable resilience. As these structures are within government policy and longer term resilience and climate adaptation strategies, it is appropriate to support these structures to be formed and/or strengthened if already existing, and also to engage with them as the key community structure for recovery and resilience programming.

CDCCCs are designed to have WASH, Education and Health focal points that link to provincial and national counterparts. Community WASH projects proposals can be submitted through these channels and potentially secure government funding. Each of these sectors has a corresponding government department or ministry, potentially providing support, however shelter does not, which has resulted in Shelter/Housing Focal points not being included in the design. However, adequate safe shelter contributes to resilient communities and settlements including access to facilities such as WASH, health and education. A shelter focal point within the CDCCC will support linkages between communities and government, and enhance safe housing/shelter and settlement practices.

Shelter Focal Points

“[Shelter Focal Points are] well worth investing in and supporting. Could be staff or volunteers, or from the community”, Jelson Naparau, Shelter Focal Point & DRM Officer, VRCS.



As part of the PAM recovery response the concept of the Shelter Focal Point was collaboratively developed and advocated for by the Shelter Cluster, IFRC, French Red Cross and VRCS. Since then other agencies such as CARE, IOM, Vanuatu Council on Churches and others have been supporting and building the capacity of the shelter focal points as part of the CDCCC structure with positive results.

- Facilitate and support the establishment and development of Shelter Focal Points at village and/or area council level. Ideally these should be part of a CDCCC structure and should be provided with capacity strengthening inputs. If the CDCCCs are not active a shelter focal point can be established in other local structures, including community groups, custom structures or Red Cross branches and volunteers until the CDCCCs are functioning.
- Engage Shelter Focal Points with skills and knowledge appropriate to the specific areas building typologies; i.e. local traditional building knowledge in rural areas, and modern building knowledge in urban and peri-urban areas.
- Training for and by the focal points should reflect these differences between modern and traditional, with a balance appropriate for the area.
- Each local area with traditional housing has different traditions and these differences should also be reflected in the messaging and training.
- Advocate and support the formalisation of the Shelter Focal Point within the CDCCC structure to NDMO.

Roles and responsibilities were developed following TC Pam by the Red Cross and partners, along with training guidelines and a syllabus. The 10 Roles & Responsibilities of the Shelter Focal Point were defined for work in Tanna by implementing agencies with support from the Vanuatu Shelter Cluster.

The 10 Roles & Responsibilities of the Shelter Focal Point:

1. *Attend any shelter training conducted by any organization within the community.*
2. *Organize Shelter Awareness using training tools (posters, handbook, brochure) before cyclone season.*
3. *Support community to identify safe and unsafe houses within the community before cyclone season.*
4. *Promote traditional knowledge of nimaenten (a traditional house in North Tanna) construction to community including: youth, women, disabilities.*



5. *Ensure that all community members have a safe place during cyclone (preparedness during alerts)*
6. *Carry out assessments report of damaged houses after cyclone or other natural disasters and submit to CDCCC*
7. *Support community members to build and maintain good and clean toilets before and after cyclones.*
8. *Support community to manage nimaenten local resources and promote exchange with other communities.*
9. *Liaise community members in needs of technical support with trained and recognized masons / carpenters.*
10. *Promote Shelter Community works (including evacuation roads) and update the progress to CDCCC chairman.*

This was one example developed for a specific area, and has been used as a basis for developing roles and responsibilities of Shelter Focal Points in other parts of Vanuatu.

Supply Chain Support

".. the lack of certain materials such as natangora/ palms for roofing for a 2-3 year period till they grow back means that there is a roofing gap in the shelter strategy for that time." TC PAM Shelter Cluster Review

- Support the development of **provincial supply chain strategies** including logistics measures, improved access, expansion of local production, market and storage capacities in association with business and economic development actors.
- Engage provincial and national private sector suppliers and communities with collective **procurement, purchasing and transportation** of materials and services options to reduce costs and improve timeliness and quality..
- Support and coordinate **technical, financial and environmental advice** for, thatch producers, crushed coral producers, timber and bamboo growers and sellers, forestry managers, block fabricators and other local material producers and suppliers; **link communities with relevant technical expertise** in government ministries and vocational training services.
- Facilitate and promote sustainable **inter-island and inter-area building material supply chains** and fabrication.



- Support growers and producers from non affected areas to improve/increase production and logistics/transport to become more affordable and sustainable to provide **raw thatch materials** for delivery to affected areas.

With some areas recovering having trouble to source thatching due to stripped palms houses that would traditionally use thatching may begin to use other materials such as tarps or kapa as a ‘permanent’ solution. (provide references or reports) This raises a few concerns, firstly the loss of traditional technology and knowledge, potentially changing building culture in a negative way. And secondly the structures are often weaker as a result as the buildings are designed to have roofs that allow air to flow through them.

- Support local **suppliers and producers to become agents of technical assistance** by understanding safer construction and having information available for households (such as IEC material) through targeted training and orientations.
- Support **private sector development of IEC materials** and technical information, encouraging ownership and a commitment to printing and distribution
- Support **rehabilitation of village level construction material resources** such as planting programmes, potentially linked to livelihood generation.

Market monitoring

- Regularly monitoring the availability, source, quality, and price of construction markets including construction materials, labour, and transport.
- Collect and report data from other agencies and a range of locations in the province.
- Organise regular meetings with producers, suppliers, transporters, and vendors to document challenges and recommended solutions.

Quality Assurance

- **Promote quality assurance** in the selection, preparation or production of construction materials and elements. Support construction quality and safety assurance through promotion of compliance criteria and checklists.
- Support **material testing services and quality assurance mechanisms** at area council and/or village level for blocks and concrete and other materials and elements in non-traditional building areas (urban, peri-urban and modernising villages).
- Support suppliers to access and **stock quality materials**.



Community Rehabilitation and Resilience

- Support the development of an Area Council resilient shelter and settlement strategy, in association with the CDCCCs.
- Coordinate with risk management stakeholders, including risk mapping, advice on mitigation measures, natural resource management advice.
- Coordinate with and monitor community resilience projects and funding.
- Use inclusive community based planning tools to support area council and village resilience and rehabilitation plans. Promote linkages for access to funding.
- Support the planning and implementation of settlement rehabilitation and mitigation works, including small scale community infrastructure or other initiatives to support physical, social, economic, and environmental resilience.

Mobilisation

- Ensure **broad based inclusion and participation in housing recovery technical assistance inputs** through engagement with existing community structures and mobilisation measures for the marginalised. See G&P guidance above for some recommendations.
- Support participatory community assessments of needs, priorities, plans and collective recovery actions, using tools such as PASSA where appropriate.

Mass Communications

- Support **communication of safe shelter awareness, preparedness and risk reduction** through appropriate, accessible and trusted media.
- Consider **long term campaigns** to build behaviour change.
- Work with the **communications sector** to design and test campaigns.
- Communication is a two way process and should include accountability to affected populations and feedback mechanisms.

Orientation and Awareness

- **Ensure access to information and advice** on recovery policies, available assistance, financial and technical guidance for all households and stakeholder groups, through local centres, outreach events, community meetings, door to door visits, dissemination of information materials and other promotion activities and relevant media.
- Conduct an **analysis and mapping of trusted sources** to understand the most effective places to target and provide information to.



Training, Capacity and Skills Development

- Shelter agencies should work within the national training framework to develop capacity and skill in areas that increase recovery capacity and resilience. Such programs would also be an investment in future income and livelihoods through professional certification.
- Facilitate, promote or carry out **training, mentoring, professional development and advice** for agency staff and volunteers, CDCCC and CBO members, existing and new construction workers, community stakeholders, households, fabricators and suppliers. Link with academia, private skills development providers, community groups and local community experts or teachers and mentors. This is a broad area with many components that should be designed and tailored with communities to best align with their needs.
- Besides tertiary study, training for construction workers can be broken into short and longer trainings. Shorter training (for example 1 to 7 days) includes **refresher trainings or BBS training** for existing carpenters and other construction workers, and assumes a certain level of skill.
- Longer trainings can include **On the Job Training (OJT)** which uses practical demonstrations or the construction of a building (preferably an all access community building) to deliver the training for new construction workers, helping to ensure capacity and knowledge around safer construction is accessible in all communities.

Skills and capacity development through **mentoring and professional development initiatives** are an essential part of building resilience for the nation, and also provide a way to strengthen engagement of staff, volunteers and private enterprise. Professional development and accreditation not only supports pride in their work and makes voluntary positions more sustainable and attractive, but also provides higher levels of skill and access to information in the community.

Informal training is conducted by many organisations and is an important part of capacity and skill development as well. An advantage of formalising many of these trainings is that it becomes part of professional development, however skills development doesn't need to be part of the formal system. The [coconut and thatch making training](#) facilitated by the [Butterfly Trust](#) is a good example of the effectiveness of this type of training. This example supports supply chain strengthening.

The training environment in Vanuatu is challenged by the geography and the logistics around delivery. Training providers are licensed and monitored by the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA) and all training providers are required to be registered with them. There are many training providers, both national and local often working in partnership.



A number of training providers, partnerships and accreditation agencies work in Vanuatu at different levels to support Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). In August 2016 the Government of Vanuatu launched its new Post-School Education and Training (PSET) Policy (2016-2020) with its goal of ‘a sustainable and well-coordinated skills system that maximises access to relevant and quality assured skills and qualifications that lead to improved economic, social and cultural development opportunities for all’. Sitting under the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030 – the People’s Plan, this policy is now the overarching framework for the further development of the national skills system. The Tertiary Education Directorate (TED) – Skills Division within the [Ministry of Education and Training](#) is responsible for the implementation of the PSET Policy. Its mandate is to oversee the management of the skills system, with a particular focus on supporting the delivery of quality-based, relevant, and inclusive training services. The provincial Skills Centres are the decentralised service delivery arm of TED – Skills Division. These Skills Centres, supported by the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, function as brokers between ‘demand’ – economic growth opportunities – and ‘supply’ – targeted skills development to maximise the potential of these opportunities for inclusive prosperity. [The Skills Centres](#) engage local training providers and industry coaches to deliver skills and qualifications through blended and flexible modalities – in the businesses and communities where people live and work. The National Skills Development Fund finances the cost of these training services with co-contribution from the Australian Government, partner Government departments, the private sector, and individual trainees.

The TVET Skills Partnership acts as a broker between demand and supply for training and works through provincial Skills Centers. These Skills Centers are currently located in Torba, Sanma, Malampa, and Tafea at the provincial capitals. They are led by the Provincial Training Coordinator (PTC) who was initially funded by TVET but is now entirely government funded. The PTC has close links with and works with the Area Council Administrator. Other locations or provinces can be serviced by these skills centers. The Skills Centers help to match provider capacity and expertise with client demand such as NGOs, government and communities. People from the tourism industry have been the recipient of many of these trainings to date - looking at the repair of livelihoods generating tourist buildings and lodges.

The Rural Training Centers (RTC) are a network of training providers who are independent of each other and have different capacities and specialities. They are often supported or administered by local community based organisations such as churches. TVET has also worked with some RTCs to become accredited through the VQA.



Existing trainings have included traditional construction syllabuses which provide accreditation for participants. Through the Skills Center’s network of training providers, and other providers, courses such as Chain Saw skills, Mobile Milling and Affordable Traditional House construction are available. When a need for skills is identified, and trainees and funding is available new courses can be designed and accredited.

The focus for many of the more established and formal training providers is on certificate level training that is not entirely relevant for rural communities’ skill development. In an effort to address this the VQA and the Skills Partnership along with providers have developed training packages and certification that is able to be based on ‘clusters’ of skills from the full certificate level training. This provides an opportunity to tailor a training and make it more relevant to rural needs and demand.

The development of training specific for the strengthening of resilience and skills around the humanitarian cycle are lacking in this formal setting. While construction techniques and BBS should be an important focus for recovery and resilient housing, other roles and skills may be important to look at, such as financial management and micro-enterprise, forestry, hazard reduction, literacy etc.

Demonstration

- Provide or **build examples of construction details**, part or full buildings and services for reference during reconstruction and for longer term reference.
- **Integrate the construction of demonstration buildings into On the Job Training (OJT)**. Use community buildings and kitchens (e.g. multi-purpose women’s buildings) for this, rather than investing in private housing to ensure wider and sustained community access to structural and building examples.
- Support the community to **identify community priority buildings**, and perceptions on safety, with inclusive access and ability to be used as safe houses during a disaster such as schools, churches, caves, banyan trees, private houses and nakamals.

On Site Advice and Support

- Provide financial advice, technical advice and practical demonstration for households and construction workers on site to plan for and to carry out construction. This can be through



the use of local recovery focal points or **mobile support teams** with social mobilisers and technical staff such as carpenters.

Livelihoods

- Support programming to optimise livelihood opportunities and financial access opportunities in recovery, particularly among low income and vulnerable households.
- Support the re-establishment of food gardens.
- Support appropriate time frames for housing reconstruction that allow for livelihoods priorities of households.

A theory of change for housing recovery

Supporting self-recovery effectively requires a shift away from agency support being considered outputs (such as training or cash delivered) to ‘households recovered’ being the output. For example, training of carpenters, staff and volunteers, access to finance, the provision of socio-technical assistance should NOT be considered an output or an activity, rather an input into the process and activities of the community and households recovering and building resilience to disasters. When we plan, monitor and report in this way the affected population and their outcomes become our focus.

Develop logical frameworks, monitoring indicators and reporting formats that capture household and community centered outputs and outcomes of the recovery, remembering that we are supporting self-recovery and resilience to regular disasters. This can also support programme business continuity. For example:

Goal: *Vanuatu households and communities effectively and appropriately self recover and have strengthened, sustained resilience*

Inputs - Material, financial, social and technical.

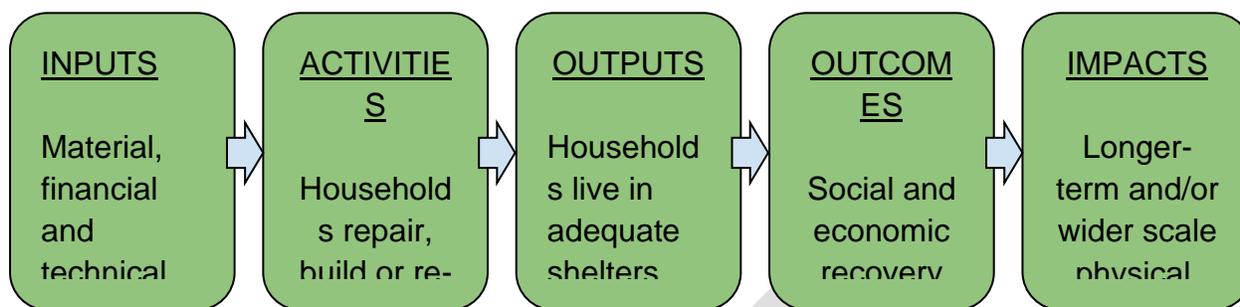
Activities - Households reconstruct, construct or repair their houses themselves or use of the local building sector.

Outputs - Households live in adequate shelters and are able to undertake livelihood activities and essential household activities with access to water, sanitation, health facilities and education.

Outcomes - Social and economic recovery of affected households.

Impacts - Longer-term and wider scale physical, social economic and environmental recovery and resilience.





Example Indicators

NB: All data should be age and gender disaggregated for monitoring and equity purposes.

- # staff and volunteers trained
- # construction workers trained
- # participants in awareness activities/orientations
- # demonstration buildings
- # supply chain and livelihood initiatives
- # CDCCCs functional
- # CDCCCs with Shelter Focal Points
- # Shelter Focal Points Trained
- # Villages/Wards with Shelter Focal Points
- # PASSA groups formed
- # PASSA plans of action
- # HH plans
- # community recovery plans drafted
- # community recovery plans completed
- # site visits
- # community resilience and infrastructure projects
- # households supported with cash/materials/tools
- # communities supported with cash/materials/tools
- # Partner Organisation staff trained
- # Area Council officials trained
- # Customary chiefs oriented/trained
- # local stakeholders trained
- # information centers/ help desks furnished
- # participants in outreach activities / coverage of media



- # small businesses supported
- # chainsaw crews trained
- # Days chainsaw crews available/deployed

Part 3 - Appendices

Appendix 1 - Lessons From TC PAM

Excerpts from - One Size Doesn't Fit All Tailoring the International Response to the National Need Following Vanuatu's Cyclone Pam

“First, communities must be further supported to reduce their vulnerability and mitigate the impact of disasters. The communities visited while researching this paper said that although they had made some small preparations for the cyclone, they had never prepared for what would come. On the other hand, communities that had been supported to prepare for disasters were able to substantially mitigate the impact of the cyclone, highlighting the value of substantial, long-term investment in community-based disaster risk reduction” *WHS One size doesn't fit all*

“Recommendations The outcome document of the World Humanitarian Summit Regional Consultation for the Pacific should include the following commitments: Supporting Communities

1. To increase investment in strengthening disaster resilience and reducing disaster risk at the community level. This could include supporting and expanding upon NGO programs to establish and strengthen CDCCCs, as well as supporting sub-national governments to establish, train and mentor CDCCCs. Additionally, to address the vulnerability of both traditional and non-traditional housing to future disasters, national and international actors could consider investing in interventions aimed at helping affected populations to access durable construction materials, and training builders in safe construction practices (traditional and non-traditional). In the aftermath of Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, efforts to strengthen resilience should start with ensuring that community-based disaster risk reduction is integrated throughout the recovery effort. Supporting National Non-Government Actors
2. To strengthen efforts to engage with the diverse range of actors involved in disaster response (including national NGOs, volunteers and the private sector), in order to capitalise upon their local connections, resources and agility, while also promoting adherence to



quality and accountability standards. Such efforts could include dissemination of the recently finalised Core Humanitarian Standard, training, mentoring, joint contingency planning, and perhaps even standing partnership agreements that could be activated in the event of a disaster. Supporting National Governments.

3. To promote understanding amongst national actors of the international tools and services available to assist with disaster response. OCHA's Guide to Tools and Services is an excellent start, and should be widely disseminated and promoted through regular training amongst national actors (government and non-government) to facilitate the inclusion of these tools and services in national planning processes.
4. To support national governments to strengthen and promote understanding of their national disaster laws and policies in order to ensure better facilitation of international humanitarian assistance. The IFRC's International Disaster Response Law Guidelines provide guidance to national governments on how to ensure that their disaster laws and policies facilitate and regulate the work of international aid providers. The Red Cross has been working with national governments to strengthen their disaster laws and policies, but these efforts require significant additional support to ensure coverage of the entire Pacific region.
5. To significantly step up efforts to support national governments to manage international humanitarian assistance. This should include ensuring that national planning processes and policies describe the international tools and services that may be utilised in the event of a disaster, and how and by whom these will be managed, as well as the relationship between national and international institutions and structures. 5 Improving the International Response.
6. For the IASC and the Pacific Humanitarian Team: to undertake a complete review of international and regional humanitarian rules, templates, checklists, guidelines and terms of reference with a view to removing the default assumption that international systems will be used, with the UN in the lead. The standard package of tools and services has enormous value where governments are either unable or unwilling to lead a response; but this is the exception not the rule.
7. To support national governments to promote understanding amongst international responders of their disaster response laws, policies, systems and structures. This could be done through the development of a 'guide for international responders' on national systems and structures, or perhaps through the creation – at national or regional level – of an online

platform where information about national disaster management systems, including laws and policies, could easily be accessed by international responders. Either way, such a guide should clearly explain how and by whom international humanitarian actors will be managed, and should be easily accessible to those unfamiliar with the national context.

8. For international actors not already present in a country when a disaster hits: to more conservatively and rigorously consider whether or not to respond. Decisions should be based on an agency's capacity to contribute resources and expertise not already available in country, not on reputation, funding opportunities, the scale of the disaster, capacity to respond or media profile; and should be made in consultation with national governments and/ or non-government coordination bodies. In most cases the most appropriate approach will be supporting the efforts of national actors or international actors with an established presence in-country.
9. To get much better at understanding contexts, respecting cultural mores and utilising in-country experience and local knowledge. This could be through additional briefings or trainings for deployable staff, or for agencies with an established presence in-country, restructuring emergency response team deployments to ensure better integration with existing staff teams. Curbing the Increase in Extreme Weather Events.
10. To call for stronger global action on climate change to curb the increase in extreme weather events such as Cyclone Pam and help Pacific Island countries, including financially, adapt to increased disaster risk. The increasing vulnerability of Pacific island countries, exacerbated by climate change, is placing increasing pressure on communities, civil society, national governments and international actors to prepare for and respond to disasters. While the recommendations above can help ensure we're as prepared as we can be, and can effectively respond to disasters, it must be acknowledged that the most cost effective strategy is to minimise the risk of increasingly severe weather events by tackling climate change and supporting communities to adapt to the impacts of it, many of which are already being felt."

Appendix 2 - Shelter Cluster Shelter and Settlements Vulnerability Assessments, 3 and 6 months

The Shelter Cluster initiated two major assessments during TC Pam, a category 5 cyclone that struck Vanuatu in March 2015. The assessments were conducted by specialist assessment agency



REACH in collaboration with Shelter Cluster agencies. They took a representative sample of households across the areas affected by TC Pam and occurred during the emergency period in May and to inform early recovery in September (3 & 6 months respectively after the cyclone). Both assessments provide relevant contextual information about the current response and recovery to TC Harold in 2020.

In general, both the May and September 2015 assessments showed that:

Households across the affected area experienced different levels of shelter damage depending on their geographic location, on their location in an urban, peri-urban, or rural area, and on the construction and materials of their shelter. This, combined with uneven access to resources, livelihood opportunities, emergency assistance, and the presence of individuals with specific vulnerabilities were identified as factors which affected a household's overall vulnerability in the aftermath of Cyclone Pam.

Key findings from the 3 Month Assessment, May 2015

Shelter construction and materials in urban and rural areas varied considerably across the assessed areas, particularly when comparing rural, peri-urban and urban locations. Overall, 57% of households reported that they had constructed their roof from corrugated galvanised iron (CGI) prior to Cyclone Pam. However, this was significantly more commonplace in urban and peri-urban locations (75% and 85%) compared to rural locations (58%). Conversely, traditional roofing materials, such as natangora leaves, were more commonly reported by households in rural locations, accounting for 37% of households. The most common pre-crisis wall materials identified through the assessment were CGI (used by 28% of households), concrete (22%), and bamboo (20%). Regarding floor 81% of households reported that they owned the land upon which their shelter was built.

- In cases where affected households had received support in repairing or rebuilding their shelter in the immediate aftermath of the Cyclone, the majority of assessed households reported that this support had been received from family and / or friends. As a result of the significant reliance on community support during immediate post-crisis recovery it is essential that the shelter cluster, and the wider humanitarian community, ensure that community based support mechanisms are fully integrated into medium to long term programming.
- 72% of households reported that they had completed substantial repairs or reconstruction work on their shelter at the time of the assessment, confirming anecdotal evidence as to the high capacity for self-recovery inherent to Vanuatu.

- Just under half of households, 45%, reported that they were able to recover and recycle materials that were suitable for use during repair and reconstruction. Fixings and nails were the most commonly reported material required to facilitate the repair and reconstruction of shelter across the affected area, with 68% of households reporting this as an immediate need.
- For the most part, cyclone affected households had chosen to reconstruct their shelters using the same construction and materials as prior to the crisis, with 64% of households reporting having made no change to roof materials, 67% to walls, and 80% to floors.
- Significant needs were reported across the affected area for increased access to nails & fixings (reported by 68% of households reporting shelter damage), milled timber (59%), and tools (59%)

Wash

- 35% of households reporting their rainwater collection system was non-operational at the time of the assessment. Sharing latrines with other households was widespread across the affected area, with 41% of households reporting that they shared their latrine with at least one other household.

Livelihoods

- It was most common for households to report engagement in wage labour (37% of households), small business (27%), and the sale of garden / home products (25%).
- Only a minority of households that engaged in income generating livelihoods reported that they had not prioritised restarting livelihood activities above shelter recovery, highlighting the importance of income generation in self-recovery.
- The majority of households reported that income generated through livelihood activities was very important to their medium to long term recovery.

Vulnerability

- 35% of households were identified to have at least one member who was pregnant or lactating at the time of the assessment. Furthermore, 33% and 15% of households respectively reported that they included at least one member with a chronic illness or a physical disability.

Urban/Peri-Urban

- The largest gap identified in peri-urban locations, where 79% of households reported they had received no emergency shelter assistance.



- Building tools were reported by almost half of all households living in urban locations as first priority needs, 49%; highlighting the need for external interventions to facilitate self-recovery. And building materials.
- Salaried employment was a significantly more common reported income generating activity in urban and peri-urban locations (for 65% and 62% of households respectively) compared to rural locations (27% of households).

Key findings from the 6 Month Assessment, September 2015

- 68% of households reported that they had received some kind of assistance since the launch of humanitarian operations,
- 90% of households who received shelter assistance reported they had completed substantial repair or rebuilding work on their shelter, compared with 29% of those who did not
- 85% of households reported that they had completed substantial repairs or rebuilding of their shelter at the time of assessment. Female headed households were slightly less likely to have completed substantial repairs or rebuilding to their shelters compared to those headed by males. 60% of households reported they had made changes to their building techniques as a result of the Cyclone; including general strengthening, changes to the foundation, and the addition of bracing
- 81% of households reported that they had remaining needs to facilitate full shelter recovery. Of this population 79% reported that they required fixing and nails, 53% milled timber, and 22% chainsaws and accessories. 68% of households with remaining recovery needs reported that the primary barrier to accessing the materials and equipment they require was a lack of financial resources. 13% of households reported that the main barrier to full shelter recovery was that they had other priorities. This highlights that as immediate shelter needs are met, a number of households may focus on restoring livelihoods to pre-crisis levels rather than full shelter recovery.
- Livelihoods: 70% of households reported that they were primarily engaged in agricultural livelihoods, including subsistence gardening, prior to Cyclone Pam. Regarding post-crisis livelihoods, 64% of households reported that they had not yet restored their primary livelihood to pre-crisis levels.
- Health: 31% of households reported that at least one member had instances of diarrhoea since Cyclone Pam. Furthermore, instances of malaria and skin rashes were commonly reported, 13% and 12% of households respectively.
- 81% of households reported they had remaining needs to facilitate full shelter recovery, despite 68% of households reporting that they had received shelter assistance. Where remaining needs were reported, the most common were fixing and nails, milled timber, and



chainsaws. With the majority of households reporting that the primary barrier to accessing the aforementioned materials and equipment is financial, it is clear that there is an opportunity and a need for shelter actors to continue providing recovery support to affected households.

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Appendix 3 - Recovery Coordination Structure

PMO and DSPPAC structure to be added

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Appendix 4 - Key Contacts

To be added

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Appendix 5 - References and Resources

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