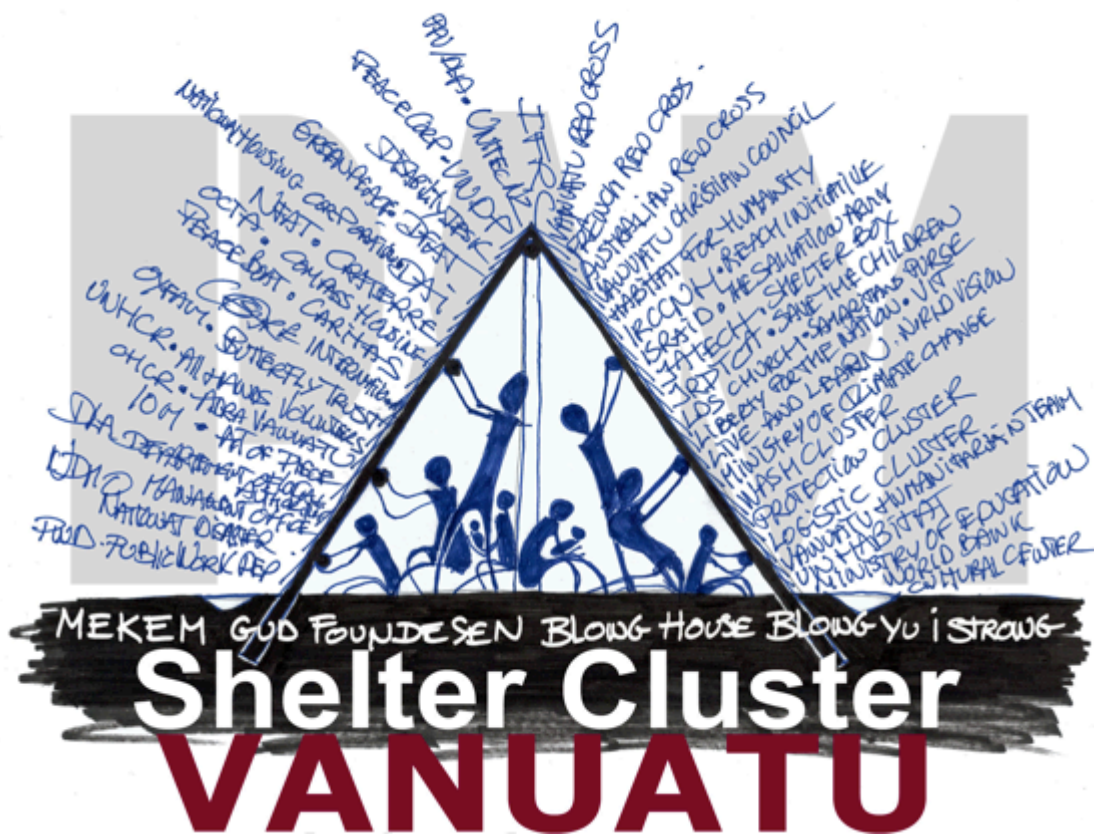


Tropical Cyclone Pam Response



Shelter Cluster Strategic Framework Executive Summary - V 2.2 15 September 2015

Shelter response to tropical cyclone PAM

1. On 13 March 2015, Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Pam (TC Pam) struck the vast archipelago of Vanuatu. The category 5 cyclone caused widespread damage across five provinces – Shefa, Tafea, Malampa, Penama and Torba. The cyclone eye passed close to Efate Island in Shefa Province, where the capital Port Vila is located, with winds around 250 km per hour, and gusts peaking at 320 km per hour. According to the Government of Vanuatu, 188,000 people have been affected by the devastating cyclone. Eleven fatalities have been reported. Community disaster preparedness, traditional coping mechanisms, early warning systems and access to government, community and private evacuation centres have altogether contributed to prevent a higher death toll.
2. The shelter cluster targeted 18,000 households (i.e. 90,000 people) for emergency shelter assistance under the 3 shelter cluster objectives of the Humanitarian Action Plan¹ (HAP – prepared by the Government of Vanuatu for the period of time between 1st of May to the 31st of July). More than 26,304 households reached with tarpaulins (for a target of 18,000), 10,029 with kitchen sets (for a target of 8,500) and 13,420 with access to toolkit (for a target of 18,000).
3. The primary goal of the shelter cluster was to support self-recovery through the provision of appropriate tools, materials, and technical assistance, primarily through the distribution of tarpaulins and tools during the relief phase, and activities promoting early recovery and complementing the recovery initiatives undertaken by the affected households in order to repair, retrofit or rebuild their dwellings and make those safer, stronger and more resilient to future cyclones and other types of natural hazards.
4. Vanuatu is among countries with highest risks of natural hazards including cyclones, earthquakes, volcanic events and climate change. Post-Pam shelter recovery effort would not be complete without considering of the different geohazards, weather-, climate- and climate change-related disaster risks inherent to Vanuatu. It is therefore critical that post-Pam reconstruction and recovery efforts be accompanied by multi-hazard risk reduction measures, which should also inform on going and future disaster risk reduction, urban planning and urban policy formulation initiatives.
5. Similarly, those efforts would also be incomplete without addressing the problem of informal settlements, where disaster risks, exposures and vulnerabilities are amongst the highest in Vanuatu.

Shelter Cluster current coordination framework in Vanuatu

¹ HAP Cluster Objective 1: Provide emergency shelter and non-food items for people whose houses have been partially damaged or destroyed.

6. The Government of Vanuatu is leading and coordinating the response to TC Pam. Recognizing its status as one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, Vanuatu has set up a national structure for disaster preparedness and emergency operations. The cluster coordination mechanism was adopted by the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT) in 2011 and was activated for the response. The clusters are led by relevant Vanuatu Government line ministries, and co-led by VHT agencies.

7. To ensure preparedness and coordinated response to the humanitarian shelter needs faced by the affected population in anticipation of future disasters in Vanuatu, NDMO had contacted the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) 3 weeks before PAM to setup the Shelter Cluster, which was not yet present within the existing clusters coordination platform in Vanuatu.

8. Public Works Department (PWD), following a decision taken at the level of the Prime Minister Office (PMO), currently leads the Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as cluster co-lead.

9. To better reflect the need to liaise humanitarian shelter and long term housing issues, and to enhance emergency shelter response and preparedness, the Department of Local Affairs (DLA) and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) are supporting the Shelter Cluster led by Public Works Department (PWD); with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for emergency, and UN-Habitat (for recovery) humanitarian co leads. The Shelter Cluster will be contributing to preparedness strengthening under NDMO and Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation (MCCA) leadership.

10. To ensure inclusive governance of the shelter cluster in Vanuatu, a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) have been formed. Its membership aims to represent key stakeholders in Vanuatu for shelter-related issues. The SAG is chaired by the cluster leads PWD & DLA and made up of one individual from the following organizations:

- i. Government – PWD
- ii. Government – DLA
- iii. Government – NDMO
- iv. Cluster Co-Lead for emergency - IFRC
- v. Cluster Co-Lead for recovery – UN Habitat
- vi. Council of Chiefs (MCC)
- vii. Large International NGOs – CARE International
- viii. Small International NGO – Butterfly Trust
- ix. National NGOs – ADRA Vanuatu
- x. Red Cross Red Crescent Movement – Vanuatu Red Cross
- xi. Vanuatu Christian Council
- xii. Evacuation centres working group - IOM
- xiii. Protection & Gender cluster – Women’s Affairs
- xiv. Donor – DFAT

It is important to note that SAG membership is not definitive as it could evolve following particular issues to be addressed, and representatives of larger group could rotate.

11. The Evacuation Centre Working Group (ECWG) is lead by NDMO with IOM to co-lead in country. The NDMO has determined that the ECWG currently sits under the Shelter Cluster but operates autonomously. The intention is that the ECWG will become a full cluster in due course.

PAM shelter & housing recovery response framework

12. TC PAM humanitarian assistance phase, Humanitarian Action Plan and clusters based coordination framework has ended on July 31 2015. TC PAM recovery response is coordinated through the Recovery Framework and Vanuatu Government line ministries sectorial coordination.

13. The shelter cluster is now focused on preparedness as per pre TC PAM clusters coordination platform; TC PAM shelter/housing recovery response is coordinated through the Housing Sector Working Group (HSWG), led by Public Works Department & Department of Local Authorities with the support of UN Habitat.

Key issues

14. Government and agencies encourage wherever possible community resilience and shelter self-recovery. Shelter and housing recovery has started rapidly, showing once again the resilience of Ni-Vanuatu. However very few dwellings were repaired and rebuilt with integrating hazard resistant principles. Communities' vulnerability to potential new hazard is higher than before PAM hit Vanuatu.

15. A significant part of the resilience of Vanuatu is founded on traditional shelter and settlement related knowledge, practices and coping mechanisms. This includes specific construction materials, techniques and typologies which are a part of the Ni-Van traditional building culture, social organisation and safety net that have been established over time, which need to be better understood by agencies assisting in the recovery efforts, and promoted to further enhance community resilience. These techniques, typologies and processes could be analysed during shelter assessments of the cluster and implementing agencies, best practices documented and retained with other information, education and communication (IEC) materials developed for the response to tropical cyclone PAM.

16. It is important to identify the traditional individual and community cyclone-proof houses and other buildings that resisted well to cyclone PAM so to learn from traditional knowledge principles that could inform modern building and settlement practices and even be integrated into the national building code

17. An impressive number of dwellings built outside traditional communities, in rural, urban and peri-urban areas —mainly in informal settlements—, are made of mixed traditional and modern materials and construction systems that are often incompatible. Unsurprisingly, these suffered the most damages from TC PAM and are currently being rebuilt the same way as before and thus, recreating (when not exacerbating) the pre-TC Pam hazard vulnerabilities, due to a lack of proper materials, building know-how and financial resources. This situation is particularly worrying as it puts the dwellers at high risk of being injured, not

to mention the loss of personal assets, due to probable collapse of the dwelling structures if not constructed properly.

18. To strengthen shelter and housing resilience, it is crucial to include “building back safer” principles/initiatives as core area of reconstruction/disaster risk reduction programming and strategies through households and community safe shelter awareness, training schemes of self- and skilled builders, grassroots education programs and public communication campaign alongside improved building regulations, urban planning and mitigation measures. The Shelter Cluster has agreed on a Building Back Safer guidance note.

19. To complement Government-led evacuation centres strategies relying on public building such as schools, there is the need to support identification, repairing, retrofitting and reconstruction of cyclone-resistant community-led traditional buildings as like nakamals, churches, community halls, kindergarten and other nimaenten or nimatkiskis.

20. Shelter and housing recovery strategies must prioritize the most vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly or disabled, but also those with exacerbated vulnerability due to weak knowledge and resources to support their shelter recovery process.

Shelter cluster agencies capacity and the recovery framework.

21. Shelter Cluster agencies have actual capacity through on going and planned projects to respond to some of PAM-affected population’s shelter recovery needs, at community and households levels. While some of these activities have been initiated under cluster HAP’s objectives 2 and 3², most of these would continue to be implemented within the recovery framework timeframe define by the Government.

22. Building on the shelter cluster’s coordination platform, which ended on 31 July 2015 for TC PAM response and partners’ recovery capacity, Public Works Department (Ministry of Infrastructures and Public Utilities - MIPU) has implemented a Housing Sector Working Group (HSWG) starting on 1st of August, with the support of Department of Local Authorities (Ministry Of Internal Affairs - MOIA) and National Disaster Management Office (Ministry of Climate Change and Adaptation - MCCA). The aim of the working group is to coordinate some of the related priority actions under the strategy “Assist to rebuild/repair/upgrade private housing and infrastructure,” especially on projects submitted to the priority action “strengthening housing & settlement community resilience.” This encompasses activities initiated within the HAP and newly planned projects aiming to:

- (1) assist in the repairing, retrofitting and reconstruction of damaged houses
- (2) household and community safe shelter awareness
- (3) building back safer training of skilled and unskilled workers
- (4) assist in the repairing, retrofitting and reconstruction of damaged community building

² 2. Assist affected people with repair and reconstruction of houses, water and sanitation facilities..

3. Investment in safer community buildings.

- (5) local and traditional construction knowledge and capacity strengthening
- (6) building back safer knowledge dissemination, mass and affected population communication
- (7) strengthen local and national capacity in post disaster shelter & housing

29. The priority action “strengthening housing & settlement community resilience” has been submitted with 15 fully funded projects, which 11 having already started within the HAP period or 4 starting after the 31 July³.

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu and related preparedness activities

30. In order to strengthen preparedness of shelter response and coordination in Vanuatu, IFRC will facilitate a 3 days training on shelter coordination and SPC 2 days on evacuation centres management from 7 to 11 September 2015. It will be hosted by PWD and open to 13 key staff from PWD, DLA and NDMO, at national, provincial and communal levels.

31. The Shelter Cluster is developing the “Technical guidelines for emergency shelter response to future natural disaster in Vanuatu” document, which is aiming to show (1) the recommendations for future responses of the Shelter Cluster to natural disasters in Vanuatu, (2) recommended shelter and non food items (NFI) technical specifications for relief and recovery phases of a response and (3) case studies and key references

32. The Shelter Cluster has conducted from August 12th an evaluation of the shelter response to cyclone PAM, following the Shelter & Settlement vulnerability assessment done in April/May 2015, to inform the (1) evaluation of the effectiveness of the shelter operational response detailed in the humanitarian action plan (2) identify barriers to recovery. It will look at 4 specific objectives:

1. Monitor the sheltering conditions for families affected by TC Pam since the baseline assessment;
2. Evaluate the utility of various shelter interventions provided by Shelter Cluster agencies and others stakeholders to enable families and communities to recover
3. Determine if emergency shelter residual gaps and recovery needs exist & if there are any access barriers
4. Inform future preparedness and contingency planning with respect to risk reduction, prepositioning of materials, and identification of vulnerable groups and sites

Key findings and recommendations has been shared with cluster partners, Housing Working Group and Government of Vanuatu late September.

33. IFRC will develop a case study about the Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu to inform learning and advocacy at pacific and global levels.



34. IFRC will continue to support the Government of Vanuatu Shelter Cluster from its regional base in Suva as part of its shelter cluster convener role within the Pacific Humanitarian Team, and remain committed to deploying suitably trained cluster coordination resources to Vanuatu in the event of another disaster and if/when requested by the Government of Vanuatu.

33. In order to respond to El Nino impact, the Shelter Cluster will contribute, as needed; to the preparedness response plan led by NDMO, WASH and Food Security and Agriculture clusters.

34. Through project proposal submitted to TC PAM Recovery Framework, National and local governments (PWD/DLA and Municipal and Area Councils, with the support of UN Habitat) will increase their capacities for post-disaster recovery through training and professional/technical advisory services in post-disaster shelter/housing recovery planning and coordination,

35. Through project proposal submitted to TC PAM Recovery Framework, NDMO will strengthen (1) its emergency response with the support of IOM, regarding internal displacement and evacuation centres, including Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) implementation, identification/mapping of evacuation centres and standards; (2) Humanitarian logistic capacity, including warehousing construction/rebuilding, NFIs distribution capacity building and operationalization at provincial level; and (3) Community resilience through reinforcement of Community Disaster Committees (CDCs), mitigation measures and safer housing promotion for the vulnerable groups.

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