Tropical Cyclone Pam
Lessons Learned Workshop Report
June 2015
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Foreword

On behalf of the Vanuatu Government, I wish to thank all participants who attended the Tropical Cyclone Pam – Lesson Learned Workshop and all the agencies, sector partners, communities and individuals who supported the relief efforts. Allow me to also thank the Pacific Community (SPC) for their generous assistance in funding this very important workshop and this report so that we can learn from the experience to ‘Build Back Better – and Safer.’ I also want to thank the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) for organising and arranging all the work required to hold the meeting here in Port Vila.

Vanuatu has experienced one of the worst natural disasters in recorded history. Tropical Cyclone Pam has affected an estimated number of 188,000 people more than 80 per cent of the population. The people of Vanuatu are still smiling but continue to need support.

The response to Tropical Cyclone Pam tested all areas and levels of emergency response, including legislation, governance, policy and planning, community resilience and the livelihoods of all people. In the wake of the cyclone, the Government of Vanuatu as a sovereign nation with established management procedures, has led and coordinated the relief efforts. Collaborative partnerships at all levels led to generous donations of funds, labour and goods.

The cyclone caused major damage to both public and private infrastructure. In some locations, 90 per cent of houses, almost 70 per cent of health facilities and more than 50 per cent of schools were damaged or destroyed. Along with this, 68 per cent of rain water catchments were destroyed. Extensive damage to gardens and livelihoods will mean a long recovery for the People of Vanuatu, especially now with the current El Nino event.

As the push to return to normality continues, communities across the country have started to rebuild and reconstruct. Students are returning to schools – some in temporary classrooms. Health facilities have re-opened, gardens are being replanted, water and sanitation systems are being repaired, but the need for assistance remains. The Government of Vanuatu, with the support of humanitarian partners, continues its work to meet the needs of the community as we move into the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Phase.

Alongside the immediate humanitarian response, extensive work was done to support the restoration of livelihoods and self-reliance of the affected people and to re-establish and strengthen basic services across all affected areas.

The Government of Vanuatu wishes to wholeheartedly thank the international community; donors, UN Agencies and International NGOs for their support during this event. Vanuatu is ranked as the most vulnerable country in the world to multi-hazard natural disasters. The recommendations of this Lessons Learned Workshop Report, building on our historical customary resilience and traditional coping strategies, will provide a template for pragmatic future planning and response.

Mr Jesse Benjamin
Director General
Ministry of Climate Change and Chair of the National Disaster Committee
Foreword from Pacific Community Director-General

The impact Tropical Cyclone Pam had on Vanuatu was devastating but the resilience from the community to recover from this disaster shows the sense of community and strength that exists within Pacific Island countries to respond to disaster when they inevitably strike.

The Vanuatu Lessons Learned Workshop and subsequent report outlines clear recommendations on how, with coordinated support, we can learn from this disaster and increase our resilience into the future both directly within Vanuatu and more broadly across the region.

Tropical Cyclone Pam was the most intense cyclone to hit Vanuatu in recorded history with wind gusts of up to 320/km per hour. We know with the impact of climate change these disasters are predicted to become more intense and for this reason we recognise the fact it’s more critical to ensure the region is able to prepare for, respond to and recover from these disasters in a more collaborative way.

As part of supporting this process the Pacific Community’s (SPC) ‘Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project,’ supported by the European Union has worked with key stakeholders from the Vanuatu government, affected communities, the civil and private sector along with non-government and international response agencies to create this report.

This report is a compilation of recommendations on how to best prepare disaster response agencies into the future whilst supporting the long-term recovery necessary across the country of Vanuatu. Furthermore, SPC supported communities with technical assistance and post disaster assessment needs immediately after devastation struck almost 12 months ago.

We are privileged to be able to support such resilient communities and help provide technical assistance and support into the future to ensure the entire Pacific community becomes more resilient to disaster hazards into the future.
Foreword – European Union

It is with great pleasure that the European Union has supported the critical work of the Vanuatu Lessons Learned Report as part of the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project, implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC).

The European Union recognises the critical need to help develop disaster-resilient communities. The countries in the Pacific region are already witnessing the effects of climate change, which is expected to increase the intensity of disasters in the future.

Vanuatu’s people, government and emergency response agencies have shown real resilience in the face of Tropical Cyclone Pam in the way they prepared for, responded to and recovered from the 250 km/h winds that tore through the country last March.

It is through projects like the BSRP that the European Union helps communities in the Pacific region better respond to the increased challenges of climate change and natural disasters.

We will continue to ensure this support reaches those who most need it. It is therefore with great pleasure that we are able to support such a valuable report to ensure the lessons from Cyclone Pam are best applied to Vanuatu and other countries in the Pacific region.

Ambassador Leonidas Tezapsidis
Head of the European Union Delegation to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu
# Introduction

A national debriefing workshop to identify lessons learned following Tropical Cyclone Pam (TC Pam) was facilitated by the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) with support from the Pacific Community (SPC) and the European Union (EU). Technical support was also provided by SPC through the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project and in close cooperation with sector partners.

The Tropical Cyclone Pam Lessons Learned Workshop was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu, from 24 to 25 June 2015 to review key aspects of coordination, including preparation and response. This report summarises the discussions and outcomes from that workshop.

## Key Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordination</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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| **Early Warning Systems and Communications** | Increase the reach and use of HF radio network and SMS to enable warning messages to more effectively reach communities.  
Review the content of messages that are being shared with communities (translate into languages, such as Bislama, that will make sense to people).  
Information sharing strategies to consider who communities are likely to listen to/take advice from and devise a strategy for sharing information around this.  
Community Disaster Committees (CDCs) are very useful – these groups should continue to be set up and provided with ongoing, consistent support. Vanuatu communities are resilient in many ways; community-based Disaster Risk Management (DRM) interventions must recognise this fact and build upon it.  
Continue to strengthen Provincial capacity for risk management.  
Revise the existing risk management legislation and develop corresponding standard operating procedures (SOPs) to specifically address provincial level systems, security protocols and the role of emergency response agencies.  
Inclusive communication between national-provincial-community levels needs to be improved.  
Provincial Institutions: Rural Training Centres (RTCs) and the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Centres could be utilised.  
Formulate operation and institutional framework for Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) (SOP, standards for evacuation centres, Guidelines).  
Adoption of a ‘National Standard’ for the selection and assessment of ECs, that takes into account minimum criteria for safe and accessible location, structural standard (minimum for Category 4 cyclones), capacity, water, sanitation and hygiene, safety and protection, emergency power supply and communications.  
Where schools are rehabilitated or newly constructed, design should include a secure storage room to protect books, desks and equipment, during the time when the school is used as an EC.  
Identification of alternative ECs available for longer-term sheltering, to reduce the reliance on schools.  
Formal authorisation of ECs through review against the criteria from the ‘National Standard’ (as suggested above).  
Mapping, planning, monitoring and upgrading of Evacuation Centres, including evaluation infrastructure and assets (including logistics).  
Capacity Building at local, provincial and national levels (training and simulations).  
Communication DRM planning focused on evacuation (Traditional Knowledge and Early Warning). |
| **Provincial Level Response and Coordination** | |
| **Evacuation Centres (ECs)** | |
### National Level Coordination

- Increase disaster management related funding for disaster management and capacity building throughout Vanuatu at all levels of the disaster management system.
- Strengthen linkages between responding agencies in the field and the central government agencies. Work out what support functions central agencies can provide. What training and exercising/simulations for staff would assist them in fulfilling those roles.
- Development of a web-based information management system to allow improved disaster management communications at National, Provincial and Area Secretary levels for all ministries and agencies involved in preparedness, response and recovery to share information.
- Review/rewrite SOPs that clearly set out policies and procedures of different elements within NDMO and Emergency Operating Centres (EOCs) and other government agencies to suit different scenarios.
- Review the National Disaster Management Act and improve awareness of roles within the legislation: Sourcing of technical assistance to support the review of the Act is underway. It is expected that a revised Act can be presented to Parliament in 2016. There needs to be greater awareness of the National arrangements so that all government agencies are better prepared and understand their roles in disaster response and relief.

### National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC)

- Train surge personnel from across government to support critical functions within the NEOC.
- Recruit CCCM, information management, media and communications, logistics and coordination staff for the NEOC.
- Strengthen the link to, and utilise the Joint Police Operations Centre (JPOC) which has the capacity to provide useful resources before and during the time of response.
- Regular NEOC meetings and simulations: Hold regular simulations and briefings of senior NEOC staff to ensure a ‘common operating picture’ is shared and well understood among the key stakeholders. Pursue ongoing training for NEOC personnel.
- Increase funding for NEOC and Provincial Emergency Operation Centres (PEOCs), investing in capacity building and strengthening links between the NEOC and PEOCs.

### Cluster System

- Cluster System role: A high-level decision-making group – including government and non-government members – should meet in order to determine how the Cluster System should be developed and how it should function in the future.
- The Cluster System and inter-cluster coordination should be as purposeful and efficient as possible without adding additional workload though lengthy meetings.
- Clear Terms of Reference and SOPs need to be developed for the clusters’ roles and operations.
- Cluster meeting schedules should be well coordinated to avoid timing conflicts.
- Clusters and inter-cluster coordination should be a strategic and decision-making forum, rather than a reporting forum.
- Data collection, collation and sharing between clusters needs to be improved.
- The Shelter and Evacuation Working Groups should develop stronger relationships to progress common issues.

### The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT)

- VHT role review: The VHT should undergo peer review to evaluate its role as a supporting mechanism for the NDMO and to analyse its relationship with other bodies, such as cluster leads, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)/United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC). This will ensure provision of timely, well-coordinated and appropriate support to the NDMO when it is requested.
The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT)

Responsibilities: The VHT coordinators should discuss with the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) their respective roles, responsibilities and operational relationships in preparedness and response operations in support of the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) post TC Pam.

VHT and PHT coordination: The VHT coordinators and PHT should provide a brief on the outcomes of these discussions to the GoV and the NDMO.

Accreditation processes for voluntary workers should be put in place with Vanuatu procedures for entry and governance processes, respected.

M&E: Reporting by VHT to the GoV on auditing and reporting of fund sources, fund flows, expenditure and recipients/beneficiaries to enable the GoV at central and provincial level to better coordinate and manage response.

GoV sovereignty: Donors should complement the requests of the Government of Vanuatu in ensuring appropriate and timely relief is deployed.

Respect towards needs and procedures of a Sovereign Nation: There should be a disciplined approach to provision of relief and personnel, respecting the needs of the government. Auditing and reporting mechanisms back to the Ministry of Finance and to the Prime Minister’s Office must be complied with.

Regional Coordination – Regional Mechanisms

Humanitarian preparedness should be well integrated into the cluster system and corresponding government and non-government agencies. External support for enabling this could be explored.

Coordination with non-traditional donors needs to be improved.

FRANZ partners and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) played a significant role in supporting government-led interventions. These mechanisms need to be strengthened in the context of Pacific Island countries supporting each other.

The role of Vanuatu’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the requests and approval of inbound teams is essential and should be consistently considered as a matter of protocol.

There is a need to strengthen the protocol linkages, as well as International Disaster Response Law to ensure sovereignty and national ownership is maintained and respected.
**International Coordination – International Mechanisms**

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<tr>
<th>Coordination</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthen the national (and sub-national) structures in disaster management and ensure international teams are aware of the local context and coordination mechanisms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), Flash Appeal and Joint Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP). There is a significant need to enhance awareness and understanding of international funding mechanisms and operational processes, such as the UN CERF, Flash Appeal and Joint HAP.</td>
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<td>UN coordination and funding mechanisms should be adapted to Vanuatu’s operational context and support government-led coordination efforts.</td>
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<td>Tracking of international funding provided through UN partners, including Flash Appeals and WFP funding, needs to be more transparent, with clearly identified mechanisms through which the government can identify strategic direction and priorities for response.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The UN is encouraged to engage systematically with the Government of Vanuatu prior to disasters in order to appropriately complement government’s capacities in relation to the activation of Flash Appeals and response coordination, and support stronger alignment of Flash Appeal content with government-led disaster response.</td>
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<td>Establish a certification or accreditation process and registration for international emergency workers and agencies to enable identification of those authorised to engage in emergency response.</td>
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<td>Regional and international linkages could be formalised through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to provide clear legal policy and operational frameworks.</td>
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<td>Revision and/or development of Sector humanitarian and disaster response plans needs to be undertaken.</td>
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<td>Seek agreement for longer deployments (minimum of six months) of surge personnel in key positions for large-scale emergencies. This will likely lead to improved operational stability through reduced staff turnover and strengthened internal coordination of succession planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All offers of international assistance by states and inter-governmental organisations are to be directed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the appropriate embassy or diplomatic mission via Diplomatic Note or Note Verbale.</td>
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188,000
Est. people affected

65,000 people
displaced from their homes

96% of agricultural crops wiped out in affected areas

81% of homes in affected areas sustained some level of damage
CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Gender and Protection (G & P) at Community Level

Work with community leaders to ensure that men, women, boys, girls, People Living With Disabilities (PLWD) and other vulnerable groups have equal access to any community-based Disaster Management (DM) training opportunities.

Ensure information is shared in simple ways so that everyone, including PLWD, can access and understand.

Enable and encourage communities to develop household DM plans to ensure that all family members have clear roles and responsibilities.

Develop inclusive Provincial DRM plans in consultation with representatives of all groups (women, men, boys, girls, PLWD) and ensure that the plans include monitoring indicators for gender and protection issues.

G & P at Provincial Level

Nothing About Us, Without Us: Full participation and inclusion of representatives of all groups in decision-making on projects discussed at Provincial-level for communities.

Representation on Provincial Disaster Committees (PDCs): Ensure representation of women, men and PLWD on Provincial Disaster Committees.

Encourage consultations on sensitive issues and/or when appropriate at all levels, to be disaggregated (men, women, youth) to ensure that all important topics are properly addressed.

Inclusive Consultation: Ensure that ‘hidden’ people are consulted (e.g. PLWD).

Identify female ‘champions’ at national and cluster levels and actively seek their input into policies and plans by including gender issues in all clusters and ensuring gender balance of clusters.

G & P at National Level

Community coping strategies: National planners need to have a better understanding of community coping strategies to ensure that traditional ways to mobilise women’s capacities can be enhanced.

Clarify definition of ‘household’: Develop a clear definition of ‘a household’ to ensure that we do not exclude women, children and other vulnerable groups.

Kitchen house assessment: Include reference to ‘kitchen houses’ in assessments. ‘Households’ and ‘sleeping houses’ are captured but not ‘kitchen houses’, where women spend most of their time with their children.

Information Management and Assessments: Data Preparedness and Tools

Establish, coordinate and maintain an Information Management (IM) System for disaster response in NDMO: This should include the core/essential datasets for disaster emergency response needs and be built from data available from various sources (National Statistics Office (NSO), Health, Communications, Police, Area Secretaries).

Establish IM units for data preparedness and response within agencies and clusters, actively seeking support from the NSO for technical resources to assist with data preparedness.

Establish MOUs for data sharing and protection of intellectual property across agencies.

IMWG focal points: Each cluster and relevant ministry must nominate an IM focal point for the IMWG.

Establish a full time, permanent IM position within NDMO and seek support from relevant external partners for capacity building for this position (in particular), and the IMWG (in general).

IMWG and NDMO IM equipment: Seek support for equipment and software required to support the IMWG and NDMO IM Officer.

IM customised products and services support in-country capacity to develop more visual products with the aim of improving coordination and decision-making.

Explore appropriate technologies to enable access to datasets for all users (including provincial offices) as soon as possible for decision-making.

NDMO’s Information Management Working Group (IMWG)

Tropical Cyclone Pam Lessons Learned Workshop Report June 2015
CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

**NDMO’s Information Management Working Group (IMWG)**

Situation reports or Sitreps and the value they add to efficient and timely response, should be carefully considered. Clusters should identify trained people and ensure disaster-readiness to contribute information towards Sitreps. Current procedures for the maintenance of Sitreps and contact lists must be reviewed to ensure they are kept up-to-date and consistently utilised.

Assessment instrument training: Trained personnel must be available during response to ensure initial assessments are undertaken by local women and men in a timely manner. PDC and CDC members must, therefore, participate in appropriate training on the use of forms, as well as transmission of data to central data collection points.

Investment should be made to review the processes required for completion of multi-sector, inter-agency assessments realistic to the Vanuatu context. The review must include consideration of the: timing; forms; appropriate people; processes; suitable communications systems; funding for assessment logistics at the provincial level; and suitable technology solutions. The review should contribute to the preparation of detailed SOPs at National, Provincial and Community levels and apply guidance from the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Cluster Leads and other selected partners.

The application of advanced media technology to serve humanitarian preparedness should be encouraged through cluster systems and coordinated by NDMO.

Standardized assessment forms for provinces: Develop agreements with the provincial authorities to ensure that standardized assessment forms from the NDMO are used to complete assessments. Only assessment forms developed in-country are to be used to ensure that other agencies are not conducting assessments without government knowledge and approval.

Informal assessment capture: Ensure that informal assessments [general public completing forms and letters] from remote locations that arrive at the NDMO are fed back into the appropriate provincial assessment reports.

Data analysis capacity: Review and build capacity at national and provincial levels to analyse data.

Strengthen clearance of goods at port authority/customs: Put relevant processes/policies in place to expedite and to check that goods coming in are requested and needed.

Useful items list: Establish and share a list of useful items, endorsed by GoV, needed for response. All offers of international assistance handled outside the established coordination structure and that are not in line with the agreed priorities and standards set by the Vanuatu Government will be deemed “unsolicited donations”. It is important to raise awareness with donors and communities abroad of donation needs and the additional burden on already stretched systems to deal with clearance, handling and storage of unsolicited items. Unsolicited donations are strongly discouraged by the Vanuatu Government; however, if unsolicited items are sent, the GoV requests that this is after a certain timeframe (e.g. one or two months) to avoid blocking the system for managing requested items.

Identify appropriate organisations/personnel to deal with unsolicited items and support them to work with biosecurity, customs and quarantine officials.

Review legislation for disasters to regulate international assistance.

Regional best practice: Share experiences of good practice related to prepositioning and handling of unsolicited goods.

**Assessment Recommendations**

**Logistics and Coordination**
Integration of international assistance: The interface of international assistance with provinces needs to be better integrated. A system needs to be established, whereby international teams coming into a community to conduct assessment or work come through the provincial system, i.e., be introduced to relevant authorities, Chiefs, etc. There is a role for strong national level coordination; however, this should not undermine the capacity and role of provinces and communities.

Provincial CivMil Centres: Develop capacity at provincial level to manage any response involving CivMil operations, specifically, and logistics, generally.

Partner logistical agencies: Key agencies with strong logistical capacity, i.e. Vanuatu Police Force (VPF), Vanuatu Mobile Force (VMF), Red Cross to support the Logistics Cluster at national and provincial levels.

Strengthen mechanisms for coordination and information sharing between CivMil and government agencies.

Strict guidelines on the use of military assets need to be communicated to government to then relay to NGOs and Provincial agencies.

GoV CivMil Policy: Vanuatu Government should have a clear policy/mandate on how to engage with CivMil operations. Any CivMil deployments need to conform to diplomatic channels and protocols.

Prepositioning of stock and authorisation at Provincial level: Guided by NDMO, establish guidelines with Provincial authorities on establishing, replenishing, release and reporting on prepositioned stock, once Provincial management capacity is reached. PDCs should have the authority and capacity to distribute these items efficiently and equitably.

Community Disaster Committee kits: Supply CDCs with prepositioned tool kits.

Kit standardization/culturally appropriate kits: Establish through better feedback from communities what actually needs to be prepositioned – ‘standard kits’ from abroad may not always fit the Vanuatu context.

Standard Operating Procedure: Establish SOPs related to distribution of non-food items at National and Provincial levels.

Provincial Disaster Committee planning: Prepositioned stocks should match up with PDC disaster plans.

NDMO/EOC to prioritise, coordinate and move heavy duty equipment to clear roads to priority areas in order to move supplies and personnel in the first days following the impact of a disaster.

Accurate data sets [including disaggregated data sets] to be available at Provincial level to aid effective and equitable planning, coordination and distribution.

MOUs and commercial contracts with private suppliers and service providers are tendered, negotiated and signed to ensure stock and services for government response to disaster/emergencies as needed [food, fuel, water containers, tarps, toolkits, shipping, communications, aviation services, logistics].

Logistics and Coordination – Civil Military Deployment (CivMil)

Logistics and Coordination – Preparedness and Prepositioning
Tropical Cyclone Pam

According to the World Risk Report developed by the United Nations Institute for Environment and Human Security, Vanuatu is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world [UN, 2014]. The reality of this hit home on March 13-14 last year when the most intense cyclone in Vanuatu’s recorded history smashed into the country.

Winds of 250 km/h with gusts peaking at around 320 km/h flattened homes, schools and villages causing 11 deaths with more injuries recorded and an estimated 65,000 people displaced from their homes. An estimated 188,000 people were affected as a result of Cyclone Pam with reports of approximately 17,000 buildings being damaged or destroyed along with severe damage to crops on a large scale compromising the livelihoods of at least 80% of the country’s rural population.

The focus of this workshop was to review the actions taken by the Disaster Response Agencies to review key aspects of coordination, including preparation and response to the largest cyclone to hit land in Vanuatu in its recorded history.
TROPICAL CYCLONE PAM TIMELINE

9th March
Cyclone Pam Strengthens

11th March
Cyclone Warning Issued
National Emergency Operations Centre activated
National Disaster Committee meet
Evacuation centres activated

12th March
Tropical Cyclone Pam strengthens to category 5

13th March
Tropical Cyclone hits Vanuatu
14th March
Initial assessments and relief begins

15th March
Evacuation centre registration begins

16th March
STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED
Ariel assessments by Australian Defence Force
Bauerfield Airport opens
International support begins to arrive

17th – 18th March
Ariel assessment reports issued
Initial assessment teams deployed

18th March – 20th March
Prime Minister Hon. Joe Natuman visits Tanna
UN humanitarian coordinator arrives
Government allocated VUV 96 million to food distribution Initial site assessments completed

21st – 22nd March
Food distribution begins
Displacement Tracking Matrix in 25 evacuation centres
Australian Foreign Affairs Minister, Julia Bishop visits

29th – 31st March
(10 days post TC Pam)
10-day Aerial survey of affected areas begins
2nd phase of multi-sector assessments

1st – 15th April
STATE OF EMERGENCY extended for two weeks

21st – 23rd April
Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Report released

May
18,000 households reached with emergency shelter support
Roll outs of food supported by World Food Program
Shelter assessments completed

June/July
Lessons Learned reports presented by clusters
Lessons Learned workshop held
Third round of food distribution to Efate
Workshop Objectives

The Lessons Learned Workshop was a national debriefing event to identify key learnings from the response to Tropical Cyclone Pam. This workshop brought together government representatives, humanitarian organisations, members of the public, the private sector, non-government organisations (NGOs), academic institutions, community leaders and other stakeholders to achieve the following objectives.

- Recognise achievements and discuss key challenges facing disaster response coordination in Vanuatu.
- Generate recommendations to improve current systems and response mechanisms.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and develop new partnerships.
- Shape the next chapter in humanitarian action to better meet humanitarian needs.

The experiences and learnings of these stakeholders during the Cyclone Pam disaster response were identified throughout the two-day workshop, and led to the formulation of key actions to help strengthen the country’s resilience to disasters in the future.

Recommendations for improvements to the current national and sub-national level coordination system were also ascertained by participants with further actions identified by the respective government agencies and other responding actors.

The purpose of this process was to implement better coordination and improved consistency among key humanitarian and government agencies. This has been recognised as essential to improving the standards of humanitarian response along with strengthening the confidence and credibility of the government’s disaster response, the affected communities, and the national and international humanitarian actors.
The lessons learnt from Cyclone Pam were explored in a two-day workshop designed to achieve the workshop objectives and identify emerging issues through group discussions.

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<th>CYCLONE PAM - LESSONS LEARNT WORKSHOP PROGRAM</th>
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<td>THEME</td>
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<td><strong>DAY ONE</strong></td>
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| Coordination I | • Early Warning Systems and Communications  
• Provincial Level Response and Coordination  
• Evacuation Centres |
| Coordination II | • National Level Coordination  
• National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC)  
• Cluster System  
• Vanuatu Humanitarian Team  
• Regional Coordination – Donors  
• Regional Coordination – Regional Mechanisms  
• Regional Coordination – International Mechanisms |
| **DAY TWO** | |
| Cross-Cutting Issues: | • Gender and Protection  
  o Community Level Responses  
  o Provincial Level  
  o National Level  
• Information Management and Assessments  
  o Data Preparedness and Tools  
  o NDMOs Information Management Working Group (IMWG)  
  o IM Customised Products and Services  
  o Assessments |
| | • Logistics and Coordination  
| | • International Assistance  
| | • Civil Military Deployment  
| | • Preparedness and Pre-Positioning  
| | **Inter-Cluster Panel Discussion**  
| | **Plenary Session and Workshop Closure** |

Workshop participants were divided into groups, according to the various sub-themes listed in the Program, in order to facilitate in-depth table discussions. Each of these thematic discussion sessions was concluded by an open plenary with reports presented by each group on identified issues and suggested options for improvement and ways forward. An Inter-Cluster Panel Discussion, an ‘Open Mic’ question and answer session, final remarks and evaluation concluded the workshop.
Outcomes

Coordination

Early Warning and Communication Systems

Exploring multiple channels for communications and increasing coverage beyond city walls were key areas that all members of the group reflected on. Participants reiterated that high frequency (HF) radios should be installed for all levels – Provincial Disaster Council (PDC), Community Disaster Council (CDC) and Area Councils. With respect to multiple channels, one cannot limit communication to radios or mobile phones; in many areas, communities do not have access to either. Clearly, beneficiary self-help mechanisms that are their own traditional coping mechanisms should be incorporated.

Advocacy is required to increase the coverage of mobile phone networks and also to keep many lines of communications open for various mechanisms; in case one channel is blocked, there are other means to relay information.

There is a need to reassess legislative frameworks/agreements before an emergency to facilitate key responses, such as free SMS during disaster response; support to the telecom sector for surveillance during disaster; and authority to the telecom regulator to give quick approvals for access to disaster response information.

Achievements and What Worked Well

1. At a national level, the National Emergency Operations Centre provided an important focal point for communication responses to the provinces, both as a meeting place for all agencies involved and as a centre where technical support was provided for communication mechanisms. Following Cyclone Pam, the role of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) as a central communications agency was tested at a national level for the first time.

2. Nationally, the role of the Government Information and Communications Office (OGCIO), in close cooperation with the NEOC, was pivotal in providing immediate, effective and innovative communication to provinces, as well as facilitating partnerships with local telecommunications providers, utilising SMS, satellite phones and the traditional mobile and landline systems.
3. At a provincial level, the training previously provided to the PDCs and CDCs supplied an established web of communication lines, even when technical communication methods broke down.

4. At a community level, the importance of informal, traditional communication methods cannot be underplayed, although, some customary beliefs, such as the ability of kastom to deflect a cyclone need to be addressed. National and Provincial authorities were able to communicate with communities through chiefs, church, women, school leaders and health officials. The wide coverage by mobile phones, once the relay tower system was re-established, provided extensive communications for rural areas. Unexpected and innovative communications support with isolated rural communities was delivered by the maritime and international yachting communities through HF radio.

5. Although the lessons learned point the way for stronger, more integrated communication, the effectiveness of the combined communications in place saw an unexpectedly low mortality rate as people were made aware of the approach of Vanuatu’s largest cyclone in recorded history and moved to safety. In the same way, the messaging to move back to villages from evacuation centres and safe havens meant a more rapid recovery and rehabilitation response.

What Needs Improvement?

1. Early Warning Systems need to be strengthened, utilising mainstream communication methods, such as radio and telephone, i.e. private sector and public ‘voice over internet protocol’ (VOIP) and through HF Radio.

2. Few people in rural areas understood what a Category 5 Cyclone was and that preparation of communications in simple language is needed so that people can more readily understand messages and take appropriate action for pre-positioned response.

3. Communication lines need to be clearer, i.e. NDMO, as the recognised national authority through its NEOC to Provincial Authorities to Chiefs to community group leaders, so that messaging is not diluted or confused by unauthorised agencies/persons.

4. HF Radio systems would need regular maintenance and training but a partnership with the maritime and yachting communities to provide this training could be explored.

5. The proactive and innovative role of Telecom Providers is recognised but this partnership could be supported and strengthened. A stronger legislative and policy framework is needed to allow the Regulatory Authority to issue approvals for access to disaster response information. The use and lower/subsidised cost of SMS messaging in a disaster needs to be explored.

6. Multi-layer communication responses must be strengthened so that as one system closes, such as loss of mobile phones through relay tower destruction, other systems can be utilised.

7. The National Disaster Management Office needs restructuring with positions specialising in information communication technology (ICT) systems and information management.

8. The legislative and policy framework for NDMO needs review so that the law and standard operation procedures governing responsibility and processes for communication are clearer and more effective.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. Improving and increasing coverage of all modes of communication - radio, mobile coverage and activation of traditional warning mechanisms. The Lessons Learned Workshop agreed that no one system would provide the integration needed for effective coordination and communication. As one system fails, others need to be activated, such as HF radio when telephone communications fail due to destroyed towers. Use of satellite phones proved effective but their availability and training in their use needs to be addressed. The usefulness of traditional coordination systems – simply walking to another village – was emphasised, but the chain of approved communications must be strong so that the right messaging and coordination takes place.

2. Capacity development of key actors, such as community disaster councils and area managers who are operating HF radios. The use of HF radios was supported but it was recognised that not only do these equipment need to be made available, but training must also be provided for operation and maintenance.

3. Exploring back-up options when the first installed means of communication fails. Cyclone Pam demonstrated that the reliance on one or two communication and coordination systems is unwise. Multi-layered and integrated systems providing effective backup is essential. Communications Redundancy Systems, as well
as alternative power supplies for radio, telephone and mobile phone systems involving generators and solar charging, need to be investigated.

4. Simplifying the language of messages that communities can understand. Terms such as ‘Category 5 cyclone’ are not easily understood by rural communities. Furthermore, the potential impact should also be communicated in messaging that facilitates prompt action among communities. People living in remote communities need clear, simple explanations in Bislama, to explain what the impact/effect of a Category 5 Cyclone might be. The PDCs and CDCs need to be able to understand so that they can respond to simple, effective and properly authorised messaging and contribute to a coordinated response, which should be tested with simulation exercises.

Provincial Level Response

This section is based on feedback from individual table discussions and larger group-of-tables discussions, followed by a plenary session. The ‘Achievements and What Worked Well’ and ‘What Needs Improvement’ sections were derived from templates and flip charts that were made available to table groups to record their responses. Table groups were also asked to make recommendations; however, the content of the ‘Recommendations’ section included here was produced as a result of the group-of-tables and plenary discussions to identify the agreed priority recommendations made by the various table discussions, rather than an exhaustive list.

Achievements and What Worked Well

1. Provincial level responses saw: i) a government presence and identified roles for response; ii) a functional structure and inter-provincial support; and iii) coordination support to provinces that was provided by other provinces. These were deemed to be examples of good practice. Language barriers were overcome by engaging, and utilising multi-lingual NDMO and provincial staff. Early activation of the PDC in Tafea Province was cited as also beneficial – they activated two days before the cyclone made landfall.

2. There was an obvious difference between working with those communities that had CDCs established and those communities that did not, in terms of: i) better communication flow; ii) quicker response; iii) more effective assessments that required less external support; and iv) less conflict. The group concluded that having CDCs is essential for more effective disaster preparedness and response.

3. Communities applied traditional knowledge as a means of preparing for and recovering from the impacts of TC Pam. Useful examples cited included ‘cyclone houses’ and food preservation techniques (manioc, coconut jam).

What Needs Improvement?

1. Provincial structures need to be strengthened where they are weak. In particular: i) lines of communication between national-provincial-community levels; ii) understanding of assessment forms and processes; iii) connectivity of PDCs to affected islands; iv) contingency planning around logistics and distribution; and v) clarity around roles and responsibilities for Area Secretaries and between the national and provincial levels.

2. The process of establishing and building capacity of CDCs needs to be rolled out to all communities and strengthened in those communities where CDCs already exist. Community understanding of disaster-related messaging needs improvement; people struggled to understand colour-coded alerts and technical language (e.g. ‘Category 5 Cyclone’). Visual aids are also needed. Delivery of relief items should be more in line with the content of the CDC completed assessment forms.

3. Some forms of traditional knowledge applied following TC Pam were not beneficial; rather they increased the risk for communities; e.g. ‘cyclone chasing’. Support for traditional approaches and systems, including the roles of chiefs, needs improvement.

4. Communication capacity, particularly to remote areas (HF/VHF Radios, SMS messaging).

5. Other stakeholders (e.g. private individuals, churches, unregistered NGO’s, politicians, etc.) bypassed the formalised structures and delivered uncoordinated relief to individual households and communities.
Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. Continue to strengthen provincial level capacity for risk management. Information management at the provincial level should be supported through: i) establishing and maintaining a database/inventory of ‘cluster relevant’ assets available in the province (i.e. health resources, prepositioned items for shelter, etc.); ii) availability of census data for the respective province; iii) standardisation of assessment processes and forms, and training on the use of processes/forms and the ability to analyse the data that is collected; and iv) standardised lines of communication between province – national level and province – clusters. Capacity building for PDC’s should include: i) gender and protection training; ii) support for their coordination role, in particular, how to manage incoming support (clusters, NGO’s, etc.); and iii) how to be responsive to the needs of communities as identified in assessments. In addition, partners must be made aware that providing bilingual human resources (Bislama + English/French) to support provincial level activities is strongly recommended.

2. CDCs are very useful – these groups should continue to be set up and provided with ongoing, consistent support. Vanuatu communities are resilient in many ways; community-based DRM interventions must recognise this fact and build upon it. The processes involved in establishing and supporting CDCs should be: i) standardising across organisations involved in this work and include a clear definition of roles; ii) involving ‘whole of community awareness’ rather than focussing only on CDC members; and iii) providing the CDCs with a ‘peace time’ function to encourage them to continue meeting and working together. It was suggested that this should be around climate change adaptation to keep the focus on risk reduction. Those communities that already have CDCs should be provided with ongoing support in the form of refresher courses rather than ‘one-off’ training. CDC training should encourage the practice of useful traditional knowledge (TK) and, beyond this training, practical TK for disaster resilience should be documented and shared. Traditional systems, including the role of Chiefs, should be supported and developed.

3. Revise the existing risk management legislation and develop corresponding SOPs to specifically address provincial level systems, security protocols and the role of emergency response agencies. The DRM Plan and Act should include processes that stakeholders can, and will, follow. The roles of all relevant stakeholders should be clearly articulated and PDCs should be empowered through this revised legislation and corresponding SOPs. In particular, there should be clear guidance about: i) what an official declaration of disaster/emergency means for PDCs in terms of any specific authorisations/ functions that are enabled through this declaration; and ii) what the roles of Area Secretaries and Area Councils are.

4. Inclusive communication between national-provincial-community levels needs to be improved. There needs to be greater efforts to deliver meaningful and timely DRM messages to communities, particularly those living in very remote areas. Two critical issues must be considered: i) what means are appropriate for delivering these messages (what technology should be used, who will communities listen to/take guidance from); and ii) the content/relevance of the messages that are sent and the ability of communities to understand them. Communities need to know which sources of information are reliable and, therefore, should be followed.
Evacuation Centres - Coordination and Management

Immediately prior to Cyclone Pam, an Evacuation Centre Working Group was established through the National Disaster Management Office as no effective CCCM capacity existed. In the formation and operations of the Evacuation Centre Working Group (ECWG), pivotal roles were played not just by GoV Central Agencies, such as the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education, but also by non-government organisations and civil society organisations that utilised their already well-established network of community relationships. This facilitated the establishment of 43 Evacuation Centres, accommodating 4,981 people in and around Port Vila alone.

Churches and schools were widely used and, although deaths and injuries were largely related to the lack of appropriate safe evacuation centres on a national level, conversely, the low mortality rate was also an outcome of suitable centres being identified, operationalized, registrations and assessments undertaken and provided with food, water and emergency supplies.

Achievements and What Worked Well

1. The ECWG was established where no such group previously existed. This group later transitioned into the Internally Displaced Persons Working Group within the Shelter Cluster with effective integration of responses, as experienced locally-based players took the lead.
2. The GoV's NDMO took the lead in coordination and operations with the ECWG, implementing responses. This allowed the coordination of relief assistance provided by partner agencies.
3. Information flows were strong and centrally coordinated through NDMO.
4. Volunteer assistance and private sector support were utilised.
5. Initial minimum standards were developed and implemented for the establishment of evacuation centres.
6. A Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) was rolled out and assessment surveys undertaken to establish needs for emergency supplies and shelter.
7. An Evacuation Centre Exit Strategy was developed and implemented, resulting in a rapid return to their communities of most Evacuation Centre residents.
8. Communities with previous Disaster Risk Management training and simulations were most resilient and experienced the least damage and on-going negative consequences – a demonstration of the effectiveness of Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) planning and implementation.

What Needs Improvement?

1. NDMO does not currently have dedicated CCCM capacity within its structure, concentrating on policy, procedures resourcing, awareness and training for Rapid Response CCCM.
2. Evacuation Centre Management Guidelines and standard operating procedures, from establishment to operations to closure, have not been finalised.
3. Lack of coordination between the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the ECWG led to early unannounced closure of some centres as the MoE moved rapidly to re-open schools for a return to normalcy. Better communication and coordination is needed.
4. Tension between camp residents and host communities developed because the centre operations were not understood by the local residents who saw relief supplies, food water and tarpaulins delivered to camp residents, when they felt they were in need and received little or nothing.
5. Mapping and data availability was a major gap with few pre-determined evacuation centres with proper demographic mapping/data to act as the basis for emergency relief response. Some evacuation centres initially received no supplies because they were not registered or recorded.
6. Security of evacuation centres needs to be improved as the residents are highly vulnerable and gender protection, protection of children and people Living with Disabilities (PLWD) becomes more pronounced in times of a disaster/emergency.
7. Whilst some training had been undertaken in rural areas on ‘Camp Management and Disaster Risk Reduction/Disaster Risk Management (DRR/DRM)’, urban training had not taken place. This needs to be addressed.
Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. Normative dimension: Formulate an operational and institutional framework for CCCM (Guidelines/SOPs, standards for evacuation centres, Implementation Protocols, etc.) The Cyclone Pam experience saw widespread recognition of the need for a legislative policy and procedural framework for evacuation centres. These would include SOPs for: i) pre-disaster response; ii) operations during the emergency; iii) post-disaster plans; and iv) standards for evacuation centres. Clear responsibility guidelines, with implementation protocols, need to be drafted. The lack of resources: human, physical, data and financial, needs to be addressed under the aegis of the NDMO. Information to guide planning is available but not always readily accessible. The restructure of the NDMO that is currently underway should include a permanent position for CCCM and Rapid Response.

2. Human dimension: Capacity building in CCCM at local, provincial and national levels to government and civil society/camp management agencies – evacuation SIMEXs (Simulation Exercises, such as Mass Evacuations in Natural Disasters [MEND]), trainings, Training of Trainers [ToTs], manuals/SOPs, etc. Capacity building for CCCM at local, provincial and national levels requires review with a strong focus on Distribution Methodology. With this intervention, the tensions between host communities and those in ECs should be alleviated. Protection issues need investigation and addressing, especially using the established relationships of sector partners and agencies operating in the Shelter Cluster, such as the NGO/Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Better mapping areas and knowledge of population at CDC and PDC level by accessing and applying census data will allow for more efficient response and support mechanisms. Evacuation Centre SIMEXs, along with ToTs should be undertaken by PDCs and CDCs. Standardization of non-food items (NFIs) kits could help to limit conflict and feelings of unfairness amongst recipient communities. The potential role of Rural Training Centres to deliver training sustainably was raised and should be further explored; helping people within their own communities should be a priority.

3. Physical/material dimension: mapping, planning, monitoring and upgrading of evacuation infrastructure and assets [assessments, legal/ownership rights, building, etc.] It was agreed that better mapping of population and approved/potential evacuation centres is a priority. Designated and approved structures in villages/communities would allow for pre-positioning of supplies and stronger information management/tracking. The lack of guidance or planning of EC locations negatively affected preparedness with poor assessment of the safety of EC structures (traditional, western and hybrid) and their ownership (public vs private) needing to be undertaken. With identification, upgrading and mapping of suitable centres, prepositioning of supplies and targeted training could be taken on. Reliance on public buildings may not always be the best option as schools and health facilities need to revert to their core activities as soon as possible for a return to normalcy. Funds could be sourced to bring identified centres up to a national standard. The provision of transport by NDMO was effective but could be formalised.

4. Integration of CCCM features into Community-based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) activities (CBDRM/ bottom-up planning that will align with provincial and national level (top-down) planning). Planning for ECs is a priority recognized by those involved and by those attending the Cyclone Pam Lessons Learned Workshop. With the creation of a permanent post in the NDMO’s newly proposed restructure with TORs specifically designed to meet the recommendations of this Report, these issues can be addressed in a sustainable way. Planning at a national, provincial and community level with data collection and mapping of centre sites is needed. Identified ECs need repair funding to meet standards as yet to be adopted. Alternative or additional centres need to be located. Centre management and operation procedures must be clearly developed with opening, operations and exit strategies clearly defined. Local communities need training and awareness to understand the role of the ECs and the part they, as the host community, will play to avoid tensions that may arise in regards to relief supply distribution, use of scant community food and water resources and closure processes. The integration of EC issues through the clusters is important but, in particular, in Water Sanitation Hygiene (WASH) and Gender and Protection Clusters, needing security considerations.

Source: Vanuatu NDMO
National Level Coordination

The session on National Coordination saw discussion on themes of – national coordination, the operations of the National Emergency Operations Centre, an overview of clusters operations, the roles of the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team – before moving on to regional coordination through donors, regional mechanisms and international agencies.

Achievements and What Worked Well

1. The presence of highly qualified and experienced regional and international experts provided an opportunity for skills acquisition for the NDMO team and Ni-Vanuatu Cluster members.

2. The complex national response mechanism was seen as both a strength and a potential area of concern given that so many agencies are involved in national coordination, decision making and response – Prime Minister’s Office, Council of Ministers (COM), Development Committee of Officials (DCO), donors, National Disaster Committee, Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT), Government Ministries, particularly Foreign Affairs, Municipal Councils, Provincial Disaster Committees, Community Disaster Committees, National Clusters, as well as regional and international agencies. These all work through the NDMO, which is understaffed and under resourced.

3. The Cluster System provided, at national level, an effective and powerful planning response and relief mechanism. An appraisal of the cluster system is provided later in this report.

4. The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team provided support through strongly established networks of local partners in a timely, effective response and often in an innovative manner. A fuller assessment of the VHT follows.

5. The NEOC provided a venue for centralised decision making but also for decentralisation of activities back out to the provinces and communities, as well as clusters and the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team.

6. The basic response structure already established with clusters, PDCs and CDCs was further strengthened through the support of the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team and their already strongly developed provincial network.

7. Standard operating procedures had been drafted, but never fully operationalised. Cyclone Pam saw these tested to some good effect but gaps were identified that need addressing.

8. This disaster provided an opportunity to test the NEOC and its operating procedures at a national level. Although there have been many gaps or opportunities identified, as a result, the NEOC proved to be effective as a national coordination agency.

9. Logistics capacity had recently been introduced into NDMO and the NEOC and worked well given it was new, but it must be strengthened.

10. An already developed legislative and policy framework contributed to operations but gaps were also identified in both.

What Needs Improvement?

1. The standard operating procedures had been drafted but never put into practice for a disaster of such national scale. These need revision and harmonization with new National Disaster Management (NDM) legislation to be drafted later in 2015.

2. Coordination of international assistance. The existing structures were not in place when international assistance was needed. This resulted in confusion and continued changes to procedures as SOPs were overruled. There had not been enough simulation exercises between government agencies. Schools were not given enough lead-time nor were some remote islands. Linkages were weak between Central Government Agencies with strong provincial outreach.

3. The Cluster System was both a strength and a weakness. It needs to be reviewed and gaps need to be identified – coordination, data flows, duplication, assessment form standardization, fiduciary governance (reporting of funds use and audits to central GoV agencies, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) and Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC)) must be addressed. Weakness in communication between cluster leads should be reviewed.

4. The current legislative framework is not supportive of effective and integrated response. This contributes to weak policies and SOPs.
5. Data flow and information management coordination capacity is insufficient to deal with the multiple roles that the NEOC is expected to fulfil during disaster response. The NDMO needs permanent, trained staff in its structure to deal with this issue.

6. Logistics proved extremely taxing given the geographical nature of Vanuatu as an archipelago of 83 islands – poor infrastructure, maritime services and telecommunication problems made coordinating logistics very difficult. A Logistics Officer position in NDMO does not exist to ensure processes and relationships are in place.

7. There is no proper framework for the operation of ECs, no CCCM capacity within NDMO and a lack of personnel for logistics and communication.

8. The NEOC building is unsafe with no cyclone shutters. GoV and donor funds are required to improve the security of operations of the building.

**Agreed Priority Recommendations**

1. Resource the NDMO to be more effective – human, financial, equipment and infrastructure. Restructure the NDMO to provide human resources in key areas identified by the Lessons Learned Workshop, as well as providing a sufficient operations budget for coordination, training and awareness. Commitment from the government is required in order to recruit PDO, CCCM, a communication officer and other support staff at NEOC to each cluster.

2. Strengthen the link to and utilize the Joint Police Operations Centre (JPOC), which has the capacity to provide useful resources before and during the time of response. VMF, VPF and JPOC officers need to be utilised and work across all clusters.

3. Regular NEOC meetings and simulations. Hold regular simulations and briefings of senior NEOC staff to ensure a ‘common operating picture’ is shared and is understood among the key stakeholders. Pursue ongoing training for NEOC personnel.

4. Capacity building at national, provincial and community levels: Increase disaster management-related funding for disaster management and capacity building throughout Vanuatu at all levels of the disaster management system. More simulation exercises were recommended at all levels – national, provincial and community, but also in urban areas.

5. Strengthen linkages with the central government agencies, working out what support functions they can provide, training and exercising staff for those roles. Identify central government agency officers able to be trained and seconded to NDMO in times of emergency and disasters to improve national coordination and use of national technical, human and infrastructure resources. This would create a national, sustainable ‘surge capacity.’

6. Review/rewrite SOPs that clearly set out policies and procedures of different elements within NDMO and EOCs and other government agencies to suit different scenarios. Review the SOPs in light of the Lessons Learned Report but also accommodate the new legislation. This review of SOPs should make it possible to provide earlier warnings; before cyclones cross into national territory.

7. Review the National Disaster Management Act: the NDM Act will be revised in late 2015 with advertisements for Technical Assistance already placed. It is anticipated that the Lessons Learned Report will significantly inform the drafting of the legislation that is expected to be in draft for extensive sectoral consultation by late 2015, ready to be submitted to Parliament in 2016. There needs to be greater awareness of the new Act and national arrangements so that all government agencies are better prepared and understand their roles in disaster response and relief.
Rebuilding after Tropical Cyclone Pam
CLUSTER SYSTEM

National Cluster System

The National Cluster System is a mechanism that builds partnership, collaboration and inter-operability between all sectors. The cluster system in Vanuatu is built on the existing institutions, considering the sustainability for the clusters.

Clusters consisted of related agencies:

- Logistics;
- Shelter;
- Food Security and Agriculture;
- Education;
- Health and Nutrition;
- Gender and Protection (G and P); and
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

Achievements and What Worked Well

1. The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team and the Pacific Humanitarian Team worked collaboratively with the Global UN Cluster System to assist and support the National Cluster System.

2. Given the limited resources for the national clusters to fully operate, the agreement was made between the UN global cluster members to collaboratively support the local cluster lead agency.

What Needs Improvement?

Issues related to relocation or internally displaced people, and other overlapping concerns are incorporated into the existing clusters. Currently, the linked issues of internally displaced people and informal settlements are integrated into the Protection and Shelter Cluster’s coordination systems.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. A high level decision making group that includes government and non-government members should meet in order to determine how the cluster system should be developed, including how it should function in the future.

2. The cluster system and inter-cluster coordination should be as purposeful and efficient as possible without adding additional workload through lengthy meetings.

3. Cluster meeting schedules should be well coordinated to avoid timing conflicts.

4. Clear terms of reference and standard operating procedures need to be developed for the clusters’ roles and operations.

5. Clusters and inter-cluster coordination should be a strategic and decision-making forum rather than a reporting forum.

6. Data collection, collation and sharing between clusters needs to be improved. This was a serious issue with either duplication or lack of access to databases held by different clusters.

7. The Shelter and Evacuation Working Groups should develop stronger relationships to progress common issues.

Vanuatu Humanitarian Team

The Vanuatu Humanitarian Team was a supporting arm for the national coordination mechanism to assist the NDMO to coordinate and collaborate with the Pacific Humanitarian Team. The Pacific Humanitarian Team, in turn, took up a coordination role with the NDMO to facilitate international and regional interventions.
Achievements and What Worked Well

1. After initial uncertainty, roles became defined and the agencies in the VHT worked cooperatively. This proved to be a good learning environment for NDMO staff and sector partners.

2. VHT contributed significantly to the ‘3 W’s’ (who, what, where), using their already established provincial networks and relationships.

What Needs Improvement?

1. Roles and responsibilities for the VHT need to be more clearly defined with operating procedures for accreditation, auditing and financial reporting in place.

2. Duplication of effort leading to inefficient responses, i.e. with assessment forms needs to be resolved.

3. The Vanuatu Government strongly represented that financial resourcing to VHT’s NGOs and CSOs needs to be through central government agencies, such as the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management with appropriate GoV financial reporting and audit reports on fund sources, fund flows and recipients/beneficiaries.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

- The VHT should undergo review to evaluate its role as a supporting mechanism for the NDMO and to analyse its relationship with other bodies, such as cluster leads, OCHA/UNDAC. This will ensure provision of timely, well-coordinated and appropriate support to the NDMO when it is requested.

- The VHT coordinators should discuss with PHT their respective roles, responsibilities and operational relationships in preparedness and response operations in support of the Government of Vanuatu post TC Pam.

- The VHT coordinators and PHT should provide a brief on the outcomes of these discussions with the Government of Vanuatu and the NDMO.

- Accreditation processes for voluntary workers will be put in place with Vanuatu procedures for entry and governance processes respected.

- Reporting by VHT to the Government of Vanuatu on auditing and reporting of fund sources, fund flows, expenditure and recipients/beneficiaries should be done to enable the GoV at central and provincial level to better coordinate and manage response.

Regional Coordination – Donors

There were initial challenges with the collaboration between donors, regional and international actors during the TC Pam response. Lack of knowledge of the existing national coordination system was an issue. Donor mandates and Government of Vanuatu processes were potentially an issue. The protocols for deployment of donor assets and military assistance were not clearly understood by all GoV agencies. However, this was resolved and assistance was responsive. The humanitarian organizations, as independent bodies proved to initially be difficult to coordinate through the National Coordination Agency (NDMO). However, inter-governmental humanitarian partners, UN agencies and bilateral support from foreign governments worked collaboratively with the NDMO.

Achievements and What Went Well

1. Existing strong relationships and processes through well-established donor partners in Vanuatu saw rapid response to requests.

2. Long established systems, i.e. FRANZ, meant that Government of Vanuatu requests to FRANZ were quickly responded to.

3. National needs were stated by GoV and donors responded to this.

4. The Foreign Affairs Department in Vanuatu played a key role as a linking agency.

5. Coordination of information flows between donors and GoV agencies, as well as VHT worked quite well but could be strengthened.
What Needs Improvement?

1. Despite several hindrances to the overall coordination system, most of the regional, donor and international actors fed well into the incident management system. The main functional areas, such as planning and intelligence, logistics and information management were well supported by the international experts.

2. The principle of flexibility was introduced to accept the behaviour of humanitarian actors who were not cooperating with the National Disaster Management Office. Government invited and briefed them on their main plans and objectives and offered support. In doing so, all the humanitarian actors, both government and civil society organisations formed a more collaborative and working relationship. The GoV out-sourced some humanitarian activities to civil-society organizations to implement on behalf of the government.

3. The Government of Vanuatu needs to liaise with donors to fully understand the processes and protocols of deployment of military assets, an issue for the GoV and Logistics Cluster to better understand. Military assets have very strict guidelines on usage, and these need to be communicated to the Government of Vanuatu from the outset.

4. Any incoming foreign assistance (Civil or Military) needs to follow and conform to the host country’s diplomatic channels – the Fiji Response Team provided an excellent example of this.

5. Initial planning prior to the disaster onset with JPOC, VMF, VPF and the Maritime Wing would strengthen the effectiveness of response.

6. The role of the NDMO as the ‘central linking agency’ between military and humanitarian teams must be recognised so that coordination, location and prioritisation of military assets is strengthened.

7. A stronger GoV framework to track funding, donations and resources of agencies was strongly advanced by key GoV actors, as were auditing and reporting mechanisms back to the Ministry of Finance and to the Prime Minister’s Office.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. Government of Vanuatu Sovereignty: Donors need to complement the requests of the Government of Vanuatu in ensuring appropriate and timely relief is deployed.

2. There should be a disciplined approach to provision of relief and personnel, respecting the needs of the government.

3. Humanitarian preparedness should be well integrated into the cluster system and corresponding government and non-government agencies. External support for enabling this could be explored.

4. Coordination with non-traditional donors needs to be improved.

5. Auditing and reporting mechanisms back to the Ministry of Finance and to the Prime Minister’s Office must be complied with.

Regional Coordination – Regional Mechanisms

Already established relations and procedures saw regional organisations, such as the Melanesian Spearhead Group able to play an immediate role. Deployment of the Fiji Response Team was a good example.

Achievements and What Went Well

1. Regional partners, governments and agencies responded promptly to requests for assistance.

2. The Fiji Response Team provided an example of how regional cooperation mechanisms can be utilised.

3. Red R deployment successfully supported GoV and Vanuatu civil agencies.

4. Regional actors understood the operational constraints of working across many isolated islands and the need to respect kastom and culturally based traditional response mechanisms.

5. Previous assistance provided a network of relationships able to be utilised.
What Needs Improvement?

1. Duplication of efforts could be avoided through stronger coordination via SOPs and MOUs, particularly when so many actors – GoV, VHT, in country donors, regional and international agencies – are involved.

2. The pivotal role of NDMO needs to be more clearly defined and respected.


4. Regional programs, i.e. DCP could be utilised for emergency and disaster simulation.

5. There is a need for a mechanism for managing unsolicited goods flowing from non-traditional donors, service clubs, CSOs, NGOs and private citizens living/operational in regional partner nations – the Pacific diaspora is both a positive and negative factor.

6. All offers of international assistance by states and intergovernmental organisations are to be directed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the appropriate embassy or diplomatic mission via Diplomatic Note or Note Verbale.

7. Many NGOs have a regional network and these could be used more proactively for planning, pre-disaster preparation and response.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

1. FRANZ and the MSG played a significant role in supporting government-led interventions. These mechanisms need to be strengthened in the context of Pacific Island countries supporting each other.

2. The role of Vanuatu’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the requests and approval of inbound teams is essential and should be consistently considered as a matter of protocol.

3. There is a need to strengthen the protocol linkages, as well as International Disaster Response Law to ensure sovereignty and national ownership is maintained and respected.

International Mechanisms

International response was good. However, with Vanuatu facing its first truly national emergency, there was some misunderstanding of how international response mechanisms are triggered and utilised. The UN system of humanitarian response with its inter-cluster coordination system provided an in situ working-training experience for understanding the global UN system.

The Cyclone Pam response became a capacity building experience for the NDMO and GoV agencies responding to international players, in terms of identification of priorities, direction, facilitation, coordination and reporting needs. The declaration of the State of Emergency facilitated rapid deployment of international assistance. Open access to key Gov actors, i.e. Director General’s and Prime Minister’s Office personnel, enabled immediate response to requests from international teams. Needs for information and assistance were met promptly with the provision of modern, central office accommodation, equipment and ICT support.

It was recognised in Vanuatu that the country’s needs must include prioritisation of national capacity to identify gaps in NDMO and other key GoV agencies to reduce future reliance on the international community.

Achievements and What Went Well

1. The deployment of UNDAC and other surge teams was received well.

2. International agencies responded to urgent requests by GoV for specialised, technical personnel, i.e. MapAction deployment.

3. The Flash Appeal raised funds critically needed for immediate and post disaster rehabilitation and raised Vanuatu’s global profile. This was quickly in place and supported by international personnel and technicians.

4. The international response provided critical support for GoV initiatives, such as the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), progressing in parallel with the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA).

5. The Global Cluster system was replicated and provides a solid base for coordinated response, utilising local agencies and pre-existing networks.
6. International response and assistance was strong but it would have been more effective if it were prepositioned instead of arriving after the disaster.

7. The GoV was able to stipulate standards for what arrived or who and where, especially once the PDNA took place to reflect the needs of the government.

8. Avenues already existed for information, communication and assistance flows from international response teams to national teams to provincial agencies to community groups, providing vital assistance to international agencies unfamiliar with Vanuatu. These could be further strengthened and their value emphasised to internationally deployed teams.

9. The international surge of highly qualified and experienced personnel provided a valuable learning environment for NDMO officers and Vanuatu-based agency staff.

10. Uninvited, uncertified and non-aligned individuals used the more porous border of the emergency and international response effort to enter Vanuatu illegally and to operate in-country on unapproved activities.

11. GoV central agencies, i.e. customs, immigration, aviation sector and maritime authorities responded flexibly to the arrival of international teams.

**What Needs Improvement?**

1. UNDAC and other surge teams were deployed into an environment with a very fluid structure that caused confusion.

2. It initially proved difficult for the GoV and NDMO to control and coordinate international assistance. There was a need to understand the linkages between PHT to VHT to GoV and then to the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator (HC/RC).

3. GoV agencies and sectoral actors did not fully understand the operational constraints of the UN financial system.

4. There was a GoV expectation that 100 per cent of Flash funds would be raised and provided; there is need for better understanding of the time frames for Flash and HAP processes to better align UN and GoV needs.

5. GoV was not aware of the humanitarian funding allocation and prioritisation process – who decides what percentage of Flash funds are allocated to GoV, NGOs or in-country donor agencies.

6. The Cluster system worked very well but competing demands between FLASH, PDNA, ERF and undertaking relief responses pushed the many newly formed Vanuatu Clusters to the brink – resourcing, coordinating and funding of simulation and capacity building is essential with clearer SOPs for operations coordination and harmonisation to avoid duplication.

7. A review of the staging and planning of early recovery should be progressed to inform and guide future emergency responses.

8. Stronger security support for relief activities is required.

9. Knowledge of where assistance was needed was not always clear or available. NDMO needs to improve its information management and data collection and flows to provide a statistical base for international response.

10. There needs to be discussions and subsequent recommendations to clarify the GoV’s reporting requirements.

11. International teams and equipment being deployed need to respect GoV processes with appropriate and timely prior negotiation regarding arrivals to meet immigration and customs needs.

12. Registration of international workers by international agencies would remove confusion as to accreditation of arriving officers.

13. Ni-Vanuatu officers need to take a stronger leadership role in activities.

14. Coordination of international assistance from national level to provincial disaster committees and community disaster committees needs improvement with funding for capacity building and simulations.

15. The overall impact of international surge personnel was perceived to be positive. However, short term deployments, frequent rotations and frequent hand-overs between surge waves in key positions were very disruptive to coordination and put additional strain on NDMO and the Cluster system.
**Agreed Priority Recommendations**

1. Strengthen the national (and sub-national) structures in disaster management and ensure international teams are aware of the local context and coordination mechanisms.

2. UN CERF, Flash Appeal and Joint HAP: there is a significant need to enhance awareness and understanding of international mechanisms, such as the UN CERF, Flash Appeal and Joint HAP.

3. UN coordination and funding mechanisms should be adapted to Vanuatu’s operational context and support Government-led coordination efforts.

4. Tracking of international funding provided through UN partners, including Flash Appeals and WFP funding, needs to be more transparent with clearly identified mechanisms through which the government can identify strategic direction and priorities for response.

5. The UN is encouraged to engage systematically with the Government of Vanuatu prior to disasters in order to appropriately complement government’s capacities in relation to the activation of Flash Appeals and response coordination, and support alignment of Flash Appeal content with government-led disaster response.

6. Establish a certification or accreditation process and registration for international emergency workers and agencies to enable identification of those authorised to engage in emergency response.

7. Regional and international linkages could be formalised through MOUs to provide clear legal policy and operational frameworks.

8. Revision and/or development of Sector humanitarian and disaster response plans needs to be undertaken.

9. Seek agreement for longer deployments (minimum of six months) of surge personnel in key positions for large-scale emergencies. This will likely lead to improved operational stability through reduced staff turnover and strengthened internal coordination of succession planning.

10. All offers of international assistance by states and intergovernmental organisations are to be directed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the appropriate embassy or diplomatic mission via Diplomatic Note or Note Verbale.

**Gender and Protection**

The cross-cutting issue of Gender and Protection (G and P) was addressed through PowerPoint presentations and the distribution of ‘TC Pam: Women in Emergency Response and Recovery Forum’, as well as the screening of a powerful, short film, encapsulating the experiences of women, children and PLWD during Cyclone Pam and its aftermath. The Lessons Learnt from Tropical Cyclone Pam for the Tafea Provincial Disaster Committee demonstrated integration of such concerns into reporting and future planning.

In opening discussions, it was pointed out that CDCs and PDCs are almost exclusively male and without representation of PLWD. Mainstreaming Gender and Protection at national level into disaster planning and across all clusters – ‘cross fertilisation’ – was strongly recommended.

Women, girls, boys, men and PLWD have different needs, capabilities and constraints. Emergencies, such as Cyclone Pam have different effects on each group and often change a household’s dynamics and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

Jotham Napat, the then Director General of the Ministry of Climate Change and NDMO stressed that ignoring the capacity and potential contribution of women, youth and PLWD to disaster preparedness and management is to ignore a valuable resource.

‘Nothing About Us, Without Us’ promoted this concept of broad inclusion in disaster preparedness, information gathering, assessment, response and recovery.

**Achievements and What Worked Well**

At a national level, having a Gender and Protection Cluster provides a forum for targeting emerging issues, exploration of solutions and delivering positive outcomes. Early activation of the Gender and Protection Cluster allowed prompt responses to be activated. Inter-cluster cooperation and receptivity to G and P issues promoted positive outcomes to emerging issues for women, youth and PLWD.
Improvements Needed at Community, Provincial and National Levels

Community Level

1. At the community level, governance needs to be addressed to ensure women and PLWD are represented on area councils and community disaster committees. From national level down to the community, there needs to be clear definition of roles and responsibilities. The lack of knowledge and awareness of the needs of women, youth and PLWD amongst chiefs, area councils, churches and community leaders needs to be addressed to ensure meaningful roles and responses for disadvantaged groups and individuals.

2. Information on preparedness, the approaching cyclone and relief programs was not readily accessible. Girls at boarding schools were not provided with sanitary supplies. The shelter kits were not appropriate for Vanuatu’s extended households.

3. Vulnerable groups, including widows, elderly and female-headed households could not afford to buy needed materials at times, for example to prepare wood to cover windows.

Provincial Level

1. Provincial Disaster Committees do not have representatives from women, youth and PLWD to adequately reflect their needs and concerns in preparedness response and rehabilitation. Disaster response training and awareness programs did not include G and P representatives. This made them even more vulnerable to the impact of Cyclone Pam. Food and relief supplies were often delivered to men or groups led by men, and these were not always distributed equitably.

2. The assessment forms did not address the issue of ‘Households.’ Women, youth and children use the kitchen area for rest, play and food preparation. This needs be recognised. Shelter assessments counted houses that people sleep in, i.e. one house per household. However, in the Vanuatu context, the kitchens (generally shared amongst two to three families) in rural areas are in a separate building. Kitchens are seen as the most important building for women and the centre of their lives as they spend much of their time there, preparing and cooking food, caring for children, weaving mats and baskets, and socialising.

National Level

1. SOPs were not available for food distribution for people with special dietary needs. Identification of ‘Women Champions’ would assist to progress gender and protection issues. G and P needs to be integrated across all clusters but also across national policy, planning and budgeting – mainstreaming G and P issues.

2. Disaggregated data is important for national planning. Unless we know who is affected – women, girls, boys or men, PLWD – and who among them is the most at risk, the services we provide may be off-target. Data on the population affected by the crisis should always be broken down by age and sex and other relevant factors, such as disability.

Agreed Priority Recommendations

Community Level

1. Work with community leaders to ensure that men, women, boys, girls, PLWD and other vulnerable groups have equal access to any Disaster Management training opportunities.

2. Ensure information shared is done so in simple ways so that everyone, including PLWD, can access and understand.

3. Enable and encourage households to develop household Disaster Management plans to ensure that all family members have clear roles and responsibilities.

Provincial Level

1. Develop Inclusive Provincial Disaster Risk Management plans in consultation with representatives of all groups (women, men, boys, girls, PLWD), and ensure that the plans include monitoring indicators for G and P issues.
2. Nothing About Us, Without Us: full participation and inclusion of representatives of all groups in decision making on projects discussed at Provincial level for communities.

3. Representation on PDCs: ensure representation of women, men and PLWD on Provincial Disaster Committees.

**National Level**

1. Encourage consultations on sensitive issues and/or when appropriate at all levels, to be disaggregated (men, women, youth) to ensure that all important topics are properly addressed.

2. Inclusive Consultation: ensure that ‘hidden’ people are consulted (e.g. PLWD).

3. Identify female ‘champions’ at national and cluster levels and actively seek their input into policies and planning by including gender issues in all clusters and ensure gender balance of clusters.

4. National planners need to have a better understanding of community coping strategies to ensure that traditional ways to mobilise women’s capacities can be enhanced.

5. Clarify definition of a ‘household’ to ensure we do not exclude women, children and other vulnerable groups.

6. Include reference to ‘kitchen houses’ in assessments. ‘Households’ and ‘sleeping houses’ are currently captured but not ‘kitchen houses’, where women spend most of their time with their children.

**Information Management and Assessment**

The key recommendation from the Information Management and Assessment session was integration; recognising that both information management and the various sectoral assessment forms need to be more effectively harmonised and applied.

The IM Lessons Learned session highlighted three key issues and sought consensus from all the participants on the way forward. The key issues were:

- Strengthen the Information Management Working Group (IMWG) so that required local capacity and resources are available for IM preparedness and response;
- Update and maintain key datasets and make sure that all necessary inter-agency protocols have been followed to access this information; and
- Ensure that IM products and services are customised to local context and all users are familiar with the process and the information inflow at all levels.

The group discussion in the breakout session focused on the above three issues. The overall summary is as follows.

**Achievements and What Went Well**

1. The establishment of the IMWG and brief training by NDMO before the cyclone.

2. The introduction of the Humanitarian Response Information Website to share reports, maps, contact lists and meeting schedules.


4. Pre-compiled statistics, data and maps from the National Statistics and Lands Departments. Education and Health Ministries also made information accessible.

**What Needs Improvement?**

1. Commitment of key government agencies and humanitarian partners to appoint IM focal points to be included, trained and available for the IMWG. Maintain an IM roster with names and specialities of IM practitioners.

2. Provincial capacity in IM.

3. Skilled staff members from National Statistics Office and Land Department need to be more involved in the IMWG.
4. There is a lack of information sharing practised among data custodians.
5. Mapping exercises are required to develop a baseline of all existing data, capacities and processes.
6. There is a lack of clear guidelines, SOPs and TORs and clearly defined information flows.
7. Greater awareness of IM products and services among users at all levels is required.
8. Provision of visual representation of locations and well-defined p-codes (3W operational presence).
9. Introduction and use of new technologies to enable more efficient processes, e.g. Smart devices.
10. Lack of NDMO IM staff and funding compounds all of the other IM issues listed here that need improvement.

**Agreed Priority Recommendations**

1. Establish Memorandums of Understanding across agencies, including the private sector, with clear mandates to share required information while assuring protection of intellectual property rights.
2. Establish, coordinate and maintain an IM System for disaster response in NDMO that would include the core/essential datasets needed for disaster emergency response needs and be built from data available from various sources (NSO, Health Sector, Communications Sector, Police, Area Secretaries, etc.)
3. Establish IM units for data preparedness and response within agencies and clusters, actively seeking support from the National Statistical Office for technical resources to assist with data preparedness.
4. Each cluster and relevant ministry must nominate an IM focal point for the IMWG.
5. Establish a full-time, permanent IM position within NDMO and seek support from relevant external partners for capacity building for this position, in particular, and the IMWG, in general. This support should include increasing in-country capacity to develop more visual products with the aim of improving coordination and decision-making.
6. Seek support for equipment and software required to support the IMWG and NDMO IM Officer.
7. Explore appropriate technologies to enable access to datasets for all users (including provincial offices) as soon as possible for decision-making.
8. Sitreps and the value they add to efficient and timely response should be carefully considered. Clusters should identify trained people and ensure disaster-readiness to contribute information towards Sitreps. Current procedures for the maintenance of Sitreps and contact lists must be reviewed to ensure they are kept up-to-date and consistently utilised.

**Assessment Tools**

Discussions of the groups on Assessment Tools focussed on the following questions: i) how to improve the assessment process; ii) how to improve coordination of assessments to avoid ‘assessment fatigue’ and duplication; iii) how to manage assessment analysis for consolidated reporting whilst ensuring resources are made available during response time to allow assessments to be undertaken by the provincial authorities in a timely manner.

Agreements with the provincial authorities were discussed to ensure that standardized assessment forms from the NDMO are used to complete assessments and to ensure that PDC and CDC members are trained sufficiently to use the forms and collate the information.

Coordination of assessments to avoid assessment fatigue and duplication was recognised as a critical issue. Assessment forms developed in-country should be the only ones used, to ensure agencies coming in are not making further assessments without government representation and that informal assessments (e.g. the general public completing forms and letters) are merged with the provincial assessment reports.

It was suggested that the difficult process of report consolidation should be addressed through standardisation of training of PDCs and CDCs to compile assessment reports in an approved format and through building capacity at national and provincial levels to analyse data.
**Achievements and What Went Well**

1. Action was quickly taken to conduct rapid assessments.
2. Several government staff participated in the assessment process; this raised awareness within government of the impact and the need for strengthened preparedness.
3. Assessment teams reached sites in a timely manner, assisted by local residents and staff.
4. Some forms were standardized across all NGOs and government.
5. The CDCs that had participated in training on the use of assessment tools were able to provide data when incoming assessment teams reached their locations.
6. Some reporting and data analysis was done at provincial levels.

**What Needs Improvement?**

1. Communication links with the provinces in the immediate aftermath of TC Pam radio had to be used as other forms of communication were not functioning.
2. In some provinces, the PDCs were not well established and CDCs had not been trained.
3. Channels to send information via provinces are not suitable for all islands.
4. It was challenging to carry out assessments over large areas and each Area Council contains many villages.
5. Limited financial support was available for conducting assessments - no money for transport or for recharging mobile phones.
6. There was little control/oversight in terms of personnel carrying out assessments.
7. Data compilation was arduous – this meant that analysis, and recommendations based on this, were slow to emerge:
   - different templates were used for assessment forms;
   - excessive time lag between conducting assessments and receiving data/reports from the provinces; and
   - informal feedback was often missing from analysis and, therefore, did not aid distribution.
8. Rapid assessment forms had not been field tested for different scenarios.
9. No clear process for information flow back from national level to provinces after initial data was provided by provinces.
10. Misunderstanding around prioritization of provision of most critical information, e.g. education (damage to schools).

**Agreed Priority Recommendations**

1. Assessment Instrument Training: Trained personnel must be available during response to ensure initial assessments are undertaken by local women and men in a timely manner. Therefore, PDC and CDC members must participate in appropriate training on the use of forms, as well as transmission of data to central data collection points.
2. Investment should be made to review the processes required for completion of assessments realistic to the Vanuatu context. The review must include consideration of the: timing; forms; appropriate people; processes; suitable communications systems; funding for assessment logistics at the provincial level; and suitable technology solutions. The review should contribute to preparation of detailed SOPs at national, provincial and community levels and apply guidance from the VHT, UNOCHA, cluster leads and other selected partners.
3. The application of advanced media technology to serve humanitarian preparedness should be encouraged through cluster systems and coordinated by NDMO.
4. Standardize assessment forms for provinces. Develop agreements with the provincial authorities to ensure that standardized assessment forms from the NDMO are used to complete assessments. Only assessment forms developed in-country are to be used to ensure that other agencies are not conducting assessments without government knowledge and approval.
5. Ensure that informal assessments (general public completing forms and letters) from remote locations that arrive at the NDMO are fed back into the appropriate provincial assessment reports.

6. Data analysis capacity should be reviewed and capacity built at national and provincial levels to analyse data.

**Logistics**

The discussion from the session on Logistics highlighted the essential issue of logistics, investigating areas of:

- a. Coordination – NDMO
- b. International assistance
- c. Civil military deployment
- d. Donors needs
- e. Unsolicited donations
- f. Preparedness and pre-positioning

**Achievements and What Went Well**

1. The NDMO’s role as a central agency was enhanced by the presence of a logistics advisor who was able to assist with processes and capacity building on the roles of logistics.

2. Use of in-country yacht capacity for shipping.

3. VMF was involved in distribution in some areas – though this role could be enhanced.

4. Logistics and WASH Clusters worked well together.

5. The role of civil military coordination in NDMO is a critical link between humanitarian partners and the military.

6. A flexible approach by Customs, VAT Office, Immigration, as well as the maritime and aviation sector officials allowed rapid arrival, clearance, and delivery of supplies and personnel.

7. In relation to international assistance; national needs were stated early and donors responded to this.

8. Donor presence in-country played an important role, liaising with military agencies (e.g. FRANZ) to establish logistical needs, issues and solutions.

**What Needs Improvement?**

The NDMO’s role as a central agency needs to be more clearly defined in regards to logistics. Logistics should not only include transportation, but also the coordination of assets.

1. It was suggested that elements of logistics should be independent of NDMO and that public/private partnerships be explored through GoV processes (e.g. Central Tender Board) for movement of relief supplies into Vanuatu and dispersal to communities and evacuation centres.

2. Timing issues need to be investigated and monitored. Shipping and flight schedules/availability must be kept up-to-date.

3. No security measures or policies are in place for the safety of personnel.

4. Logistics in Vanuatu could be improved through:
   - clearer roles and types of clusters;
   - understanding that clusters do not purchase assets; they coordinate/inform NDMO; and
   - clearer structures and processes.

5. Identify key people in a Logistics Contact Database and keep this up-to-date pre/post disaster.

6. There is a lack of skills and knowledge in agencies to deal with disaster situations, e.g. business continuity plans/disaster recovery plans.
7. Logistics has a key role to assist telecommunication companies to assess damage and move equipment to severely damaged infrastructure to restore communications [key information flow]. This was overlooked in TC Pam.

8. Elements of logistics could be decentralised to greater effect — setting up operation centres in key locations (e.g. Port Vila, Santo) with required personnel available (e.g. identified drivers, boat captains, etc.) to serve small islands challenged by remoteness should be explored.

9. Coordination of international assistance, from National agencies to PDCs, needs improvement – this will require funding to be made available to provinces. It was difficult to control/coordinate and track international assistance following TC Pam.

10. Coordination and information sharing with other government agencies (e.g. VMF, VPF) to assist with logistics must be improved.

11. The GoV needs a clear mandate on how and when it wants to engage military assets in disaster response. Military assets have strict guidelines on the use of their assets; systems need to be reviewed to ensure that these can be made available earlier.

12. Any incoming foreign assistance (civil and military) needs to follow and conform to host country’s diplomatic context.

13. Unsolicited donations created a number of problems:
   - inappropriate items;
   - expired food and drugs;
   - items that were not helpful in Vanuatu’s context;
   - quality not in-line with standards, i.e. tarps and tents;
   - it takes people time to evaluate and sort these items;
   - some items required additional support (e.g. parts); and
   - it puts a strain on shipping capacity.

14. Lack of pre-positioned stocks in PDCs delayed response.

**Recommendations**

1. Strengthen clearance of goods at port authority/customs. Put relevant processes/policies in place to expedite, and to check that goods coming in are requested and needed.

2. Establish and share a list of useful items endorsed by GoV needed for response. All offers of international assistance handled outside the established coordination structure, and that are not in line with the agreed priorities and standards set by the Vanuatu Government are deemed “unsolicited donations”. It is important to raise awareness with donors and communities abroad of donation needs, and the additional burden on already stretched systems to deal with clearance, handling and storage of unsolicited items. Unsolicited donations are strongly discouraged by the Vanuatu Government; however, if unsolicited items are sent, the GoV requests that this is after a certain timeframe (e.g. one or two months) to avoid blocking the system for managing requested items.

3. Identify appropriate organisations/personnel to deal with unsolicited items and support them to work with biosecurity, customs and quarantine officials.

4. Review legislation for disasters to regulate international assistance.

5. Share experiences of good practice related to prepositioning and handling of unsolicited goods.

6. The interface of international assistance with provinces needs to be better integrated. A system needs to be established whereby internationals coming in to a community to conduct assessment or work, come through the provincial system, i.e. introduced to relevant authorities, chiefs, etc. There is a role for strong national level coordination; however, this should not undermine the capacity and role of provinces and communities.

7. Develop capacity at provincial level to manage any response specifically involving CivMil operations, and logistics, more generally.
8. Key agencies with strong logistical capacity, i.e. VPF, VMF, Red Cross should support the Logistics Cluster at national and provincial levels.

9. Strengthen mechanisms for coordination and information sharing between CivMil and government agencies.

10. Strict guidelines on the use of military assets need to be communicated to government to then relay to NGOs and provincial agencies.

11. Vanuatu Government should have a clear policy/mandate on how to engage with CivMil operations. Any CivMil deployments need to conform to diplomatic channels and protocols.

12. CivMil coordination needs to be recognised as an integral part of the Logistics Cluster with developed capacities related to this function.

13. Guided by NDMO, establish guidelines with provincial authorities on establishing, replenishing, releasing and reporting on prepositioned stock, once provincial management capacity is reached. PDCs should have the authority and capacity to distribute these items efficiently and equitably.

14. Supply CDCs with prepositioned tool kits.

15. Establish through better feedback from communities what needs to be prepositioned – ‘standard kits’ from abroad may not always fit the Vanuatu context.

16. Establish SOPs related to distribution of non-food items at national and provincial levels.

17. Prepositioned stock should match up with PDC disaster plans.

18. NDMO/EOC should prioritise, coordinate and move heavy duty equipment to clear roads to priority areas to move supplies and personnel in the first days following the impact of a disaster.

19. Accurate data sets (including disaggregated data sets) should be available at provincial level to aid effective and equitable planning, coordination and distribution.

20. MOUs and commercial contracts with private suppliers and service providers should be tendered, negotiated and signed to ensure stock and services for government response to disaster/emergencies as needed (food, fuel, water containers, tarps, toolkits, shipping, communications, aviation services, logistics).

Source: Vanuatu NDMO
Inter-Cluster Panel Discussion

On the second day, an inter-cluster panel discussion (Shelter, WASH, Education, Early Recovery, Agriculture and Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition Clusters) was convened to discuss lessons learned from these respective clusters. This was followed by a lively inter-active ‘open microphone’ session, during which questions were fielded by panel representatives, prominent Government of Vanuatu officials and from the floor.

Presentation highlights, comments and questions are summarised as bullet points.

The afternoon was completed with closing remarks by NDMO Director Shadrack Welegtabit to complete the two-day TC Pam Lessons Learned Workshop.

Shelter Cluster

Established only a few weeks before the Cyclone struck, the Shelter Cluster met for the first time only days before. Initial planning was for 13,000 households but 24,000 households were reached in the Cyclone Pam response.

Lessons Learned

- Strengthen Shelter Cluster by integrating with NDMO and with other clusters
- Good level of cooperation with partners, such as, WASH, Gender and Protection and Agriculture Clusters, Red Cross, Malvatumauri and CCCM
- Delay in response and importation for shelter kits
- Quick decision of GoV to have the Public Works Department (PWD) lead on Shelter Cluster
- Group set up, led by stakeholders, to agree on challenges moving forward
  - How does humanitarian shelter contribute to long-term housing issues?
  - Need for CCCM to be strengthened and not to be confused with ‘shelter’
- If resilience is to be supported, the traditional coping models for shelter and preparedness must be accommodated, i.e. traditional building materials so that we not only ‘Build Back Better’ but ‘Build Back Safer’

Water and Sanitation Cluster (WASH)

Lesson Learned

We need to be better prepared to reduce the response time gap because WASH needs are basic life needs.

Summary

- 68 per cent of household rainwater harvesting systems were damaged
  - 250 direct flow, 22 hand pumps and 272 community gravity-fed water systems damaged
  - 30 per cent recorded ‘not washing hands’ in affected areas
  - 21,000 people were reconnected to water
- Activated in Shefa and Tafea provinces only
- Response coordinated by Geology and Water Resources
- >1000 people receive WASH water supplies
- Sanitation situation had returned to pre-Pam level
- Need to be well prepared to reduce length of response time to immediately after cyclone passes
How can clusters work together?

WASH representatives were in Health and Education meetings to share information. Health and Education also have representatives in the WASH group. It takes time to receive information from other clusters. During assessment periods, only selected sites were assessed.

Health Cluster

The purpose of the Ministry of Health is to save lives. Just before Cyclone Pam hit, the Ministry activated an Emergency Centre in the Ministry.

Lessons Learned

- Acknowledgement of existing guidelines as the SOP in NDMO
- Ministry will revisit its Strategic Plan and take in the Lessons Learned to create a Disaster Management Plan with exercises and drills
- Database has been established
- An established referral system is in place already but partners need to be better linked to the Ministry system
- National Disaster Management Act needs to be revised to look at coordination and mandated roles for the clusters
- Team’s mobilisation tested absorptive capacity of the Ministry – coordinating and resourcing were issues

Summary - Areas responded to:

- Nutrition
- Reproductive health
- Disease surveillance
- Logistics issues with medicine
- Evacuation of patients to Vila Central Hospital
- Infrastructure rebuilding
- WASH issues
- Vector control
- Foreign medical teams
- Immunisation
- Information – ‘info-mation’ messages

Responses

- Five organisations responded to the Ministry
- Multi-cluster surveys were conducted
- Rapid assessments were done in 71 health facilities
- Coordination of visiting teams 24/7
  - 25 local teams mobilised
  - 20 foreign medical teams came in to assist – USA, Israel
  - 75 medical evacuations
  - Established 24 early warning systems to detect likely outbreak of diseases (increased from seven)
Issues

- Communication issues
- Information collection and dissemination
- Lack of coordination among 11 response groups

Ministry of Education and Training Education Cluster

The objective of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) Education Cluster is to ensure schools are open with resumption of learning programs.

Below is a brief summary of 2014 Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS) data of Primary and Secondary Schools for Shefa, Tafea, Penama (Pentecost and Ambae) and Malampa, Paama and Ambrym.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of schools operating before Pam</th>
<th>No. of classrooms</th>
<th>2014 student enrolment</th>
<th>No. of schools affected during Pam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tafea</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>11,007</td>
<td>81 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shefa</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>16,100</td>
<td>71 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penama (Ambae and Pentecost)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>17 classrooms totally destroyed or with major and minor damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malampa (Paama and Ambrym)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1,653</td>
<td>23 classrooms totally destroyed or with major and minor damage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below shows a brief summary of Kindergarten or Early Childhood Care and Education data before and after the cyclone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of kindergartens before Pam</th>
<th>Student enrolment</th>
<th>Number of kindergartens attached to primary school</th>
<th>Number of kindergartens affected by Pam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tafea</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2617</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shefa</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>3819</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penama (Pentecost/Ambae)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malampa (Paama/Ambrym)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The MoET Cluster’s main objective for Tropical Cyclone Pam Response Operations was to ensure all primary and secondary schools, kindergartens and tertiary institutions in the affected areas are re-opened with resumption of learning programs straight after Tropical Cyclone Pam had struck.

This main objective led the MoET with Education Cluster partners to work collaboratively together to:

- bring classrooms back into use, thereby allowing children to attend school;
- close/decommission evacuation centres in schools, to allow resumption of classes;
• provide teaching and learning materials and equipment through Vanuatu Education Support Program (VESP) to allow teachers to teach in learning spaces (tents, school kits, teacher’s kits);
• provide funds to assist the community to set up temporary learning spaces for kindergartens to start up; and
• provide food rations to boarding schools to allow them to operate their programs after the cyclone.

It is globally believed that education is very important in times of emergency as it can protect children and youths from many issues to which they are most vulnerable when left without appropriate supervision. Therefore, the overall outcome of the response was to ensure that all children were provided with temporary learning spaces and learning materials, and were back to school as soon as possible.

Achievements of the MoET and Education Cluster

• Resumption of Programs
  o Schools with minor damage re-opened and resumed lessons on 30 March 2015 and others with major damage and fully destroyed followed after
  o All schools were back to full operation by Term 2

• Early response and recovery was possible with the help from partners
  o Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) gave their support of VUV 191,000,000 in grants to schools
  o Save the Children Australia, UNICEF and other partners supported MoET and schools with tents, learning and teaching kits, recreational kits, supporting psychosocial activities, etc.
  o Local communities supported the repair and rebuilding of classrooms in the affected schools, e.g. Mele community rebuilding classrooms

• Setting up of the Education Reconstruction Committee
  o Prioritise, coordinate, facilitate and approve all reconstruction in schools making sure all buildings are built according to a standard and are disaster resistant

Lessons Learned

Logistics

MoET logistics worked very well with the NDMO Logistics and managed to send out educational relief supplies, using their sea transport arrangements and vehicles allocated to NDMO to transport some relief supplies from donors to the MoET office

Coordination

• Overall coordination was well managed with partners who report to the MoET, becoming part of the Education Cluster. It was clear who was doing what, where and when
• MoET officers were part of manning NEOC during, and 2 weeks after TC Pam impact

Information Management

• Information was shared well between Education Cluster members and partners
• ‘What, Where and When’ data was provided to NDMO
• VEMIS data was available for the Education Cluster to use for emergency response
Assessments

- MoET Directors and senior management took a leading role in carrying out assessments in schools on Efate in the first week straight after Tropical Cyclone Pam.
- There was collaborative work from all MoET officers. Although they were also affected, national duty was a priority to go out to the fields to do their assessments.

What Needs Improvement

Coordination

After TC Pam, there were some individuals who responded directly to schools without informing the Ministry of Education and Training or the Education Cluster, resulting in duplication of response.

Logistics

Logistics information on transport arrangements, especially shipping arrangements, was not well shared. The shipping registration forms used for shipment need to be reviewed to suit the MoET context with the local shipping industry and also the local hardware companies.

Information Management

VEMIS data will be updated with current enrolment for school response.

Assessment

Conduct of damage assessments must be suitable to meet the needs of individual sectors. For example, the Tropical Cyclone Pam Education Assessment was only done in some schools. This was due to time and transport constraints imposed by poor assessment coordination. Many damaged schools have been left out of the MoET sectoral reports. The HAP and other important documents were submitted without this information due to time constraints to capture the information from these damaged schools.

EARLY RECOVERY, AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER

In early November 2014, the Cluster met to develop specific roles for cluster members, which included preparation of assessment templates, training on how to conduct assessments, preparation of key information messages (SMS) on 9 March 2015 for 120,000 people and community meetings. This meant the cluster was able to operate from day one.

Lessons Learned

- The Ministry of Agriculture role/mandate is not for distribution in times of emergency but for helping farmers produce crops.
- Bringing in food from islands and overseas is logistically difficult and there is a shelf life issue.
- Paper-based data collection was difficult to collect then analyse, use and disseminate.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) is in the process of establishing a Disaster Resilience Unit so we are better prepared and coordinated in the future. This unit will also investigate more resilient planting materials/types, traditional food storage and food security/resilience mechanisms.

Summary

- Expert assessment determined there would be enough food for three to four weeks.
- First distribution of food went out two and half weeks [1 April] after disaster struck Efate, Efate Offshore Islands and Tafea.
- Other unaffected islands, such as Santo and Malekula assisted with food relief and cuttings to restart gardens.
- Distribution of day-old chicks to Pele was carried out with enough ‘starter pellets’ for six weeks.
- 28 MT of fish were sold in the market in Port Vila at subsidised prices.
- 3174 MT of food was sent to Shefa, Tafea, Malampa and Penama.
- 38 MT of tools went out to 38,000 people.
- The seed planting program was provided with seeds, distribution, radio coverage/awareness and SMS.
- SMS was used to pass on information to affected communities.
- An internal assessment was conducted two months after the cyclone with active collaboration of cluster partners.
- The ‘Genetically Modified’ group tried to hijack the relief program.

Queries on why traditional, healthy island food was not used more

Responses: The focus was on providing rice, tinned fish and noodles as these are easily transported and have a long shelf life. Logistic difficulties caused delays in shipping to other islands, where local foods arrived unfit for human consumption. ‘Man Vanuatu’ has relied heavily on rice for years. During a talkback show that was aired immediately after the cyclone, it was expressed that local food should be used instead of food from outside. It was noted that in unaffected islands, local food is available that could be used if ‘standard rations’ are developed. The research station in Santo has developed suitable resilient planting types and these should be distributed. Traditional Resilience needs to be utilised and encouraged. The then Director General Jotham Napat agreed this is an issue for the GoV and it should be captured in the Lessons Learned Report. MAF noted that it intended to set up a Disaster Resilience Unit.

Query on the perception of ‘dumping’ food and equipment past its use-by date

Response: We need to establish border/boundary responsibilities to check donations or purchase quality items.

Query on what the role of clusters should be between emergencies and disasters

Response: WASH Cluster representative stated that clusters need clear Terms of Reference and to collaborate, not just in disasters, but in intervening periods, i.e. WASH should work with Health and Education Clusters for improved collaborative procedures.

Query regarding better cash funds dispersal systems

Response: There is a need to budget for an Emergency Contingency Fund as Ministries have no specific budgets for events like Pam. The Ministry of Health has one.

Query regarding the condition of evacuation centres and schools

Response: Many of our public buildings are from pre-independence/colonial times. If used as evacuation centres, they do not necessarily meet building codes/standards. This is an issue to be explored by the GoV – identification of suitable evacuation centres and ‘Building Back Better and Safer’.

Query regarding the lack of a Communications Cluster: reliance is on normal ICT technology but, when towers are wiped out, then satellite phones are needed. Assessments take two weeks to come in because of a lack of communication, e.g. a person in Mataso died unnecessarily as this island is just offshore from mainland Efate; a helicopter could have been organised to evacuate this person had there been reliable communication.

Response: Communications and reporting roles should be included in each cluster’s SOP. It is a complex issue – communications system, information and data sharing and reporting/recording. It was recognised that there were gaps, especially for those living in remote, rural areas. A restructure of the NDMO will put officers in place whose
sole responsibility will be Information Coordination and Management. Extensive assistance and relief supplies were mobilised. There is a need to inform the people, as well as Parliament with consolidated data via:

- social media;
- web;
- local newspapers; and
- local radio and television.

Query regarding the role and utilisation of VMF and VPF. They did not seem to be utilised as well as they could have been in response to Cyclone Pam

Response: The understanding is that VMF and VPF work on national security matters with NDMO when there is an emergency. Military assistance/security is a cross-cutting issue for all of the clusters. Also, the Commissioner of Police is part of the National Disaster Committee (NDC) and has the responsibility to make plans to address the cyclone situation and operations. This role is recognised in the current NDM Act. The role played by members of the forces in Cyclone Pam really helped with distribution and is a role to be strengthened in the future.

Query regarding the timeline for implementing proposals arising from the Lessons Learned Workshop with so many recommendations

Response from Jotham Napat, the then Director General of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and NDMO:

‘I am very excited by this Lessons Learned Workshop. We will need participants’ assistance to prioritise areas we have identified for the short, medium and long-term.

We recognise an El Nino already starting to affect Vanuatu and we need to start planning now. One concept is to move the NDMO and NEOC to the Prime Minister’s Office where a higher level of support and linkages would be possible. We will be relying on our donor partners to help strengthen the systems and gaps we have. The whole exercise of lessons learned from Tropical Cyclone Pam has given us a lot of insights as to the way forward. We need financial and technical support from international partners. We need to identify roles/responsibilities for each component of disaster response. But I will reiterate that natural disasters are not just NDMO’s business. Natural disasters are everyone’s business.’

Benjamin Shing, Director, DSPPAC, Prime Minister’s Office added:

‘We have so many proposals and need to analyse them and move forward — policy, structure, and operation, including legislation. Cyclone Pam has taught us some hard lessons. Our responses must be pragmatic.’

Query regarding what was not appropriate in the Cyclone Pam response (This query was from a donor representative who had been fielding this question from fellow international and regional donors).

Response from Benjamin Shing, Director, DSPPAC, Prime Minister’s Office:

The issue is not one of good will and good intent – it was that people came in and forgot we are an effective sovereign government with systems in place and that response partners need to complement those systems. Coordination is the critical issue in all areas, including:

- philanthropic;
- private sector;
- faith-based;
- regional;
- bilateral;
- international; and
- our traditional donor partners.
A multi-layered Communications Redundancy System is needed so that if one system fails, another takes over. Ni Vanuatu organisations and individuals need to participate in leading roles in the NEOC as this appeared at times to be overrun by international organisations.

Query regarding the response from the Vanuatu private sector and how immediate and powerful it was. How can the role of the private sector be more formally incorporated?

Response from Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, Deputy Head of Office at United Nations OCHA:

‘The strong involvement of the private sector demonstrated that it is not just Government of Vanuatu, churches, NGOs and communities – the private sector could be better involved. We need to open up a channel of dialogue in preparedness plans. This is not just a Vanuatu issue but a global one, when you look at large conglomerates who could be involved and are looking for ways to assist.’

Closing Remarks

Benjamin Shing, Director, DSPPAC, Prime Minister’s Office thanked all participants and Cyclone Pam response partners: ‘This Lessons Learned Workshop will guide the second and third phase. We need to hold hands and work together’.

Mr. Jotham Napat, the then Director General Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation (MCCA) at the workshop acknowledged all partners and thanked them all for their support: ‘Thank you especially to the NEOC for their support. During these days, we have identified some things that work and others that don’t. Thank you to all of you working in NDMO, NEOC and the clusters – you have been faithful stewards. Thank you to civil servants along with those still in the field, distributing food. You all deserve applause and recognition for the effort made in responding to the impact of Vanuatu in a first time CAT 5 Cyclone. I declare this two-day Lessons Learned Workshop officially closed’.

Conclusion

Shadrack Welegtabit - Director of National Disaster Management Office

Tropical Cyclone Pam was the strongest cyclone Vanuatu has faced in recorded history. The category 5 cyclone tested facilities, responses and systems — from international to community level. Some things worked; others did not. I would like to remind you of what J.F. Kennedy once said about facing a crisis:

‘When written in Chinese, the word “crisis” is composed of two characters – one represents danger and the other represents opportunity.’

This Lessons Learned Workshop will help us to identify opportunities to strengthen our responses, not merely for cyclones, but other catastrophic events. I hardly need to remind you that Vanuatu is ranked as the country with the highest exposure in the world to multiple hazards. Almost 81 per cent of the country’s landmass and 76 per cent of its population are vulnerable to multiple hazards, including:

- Volcanic eruptions;
- Cyclones;
- Earthquakes;
- Tsunamis;
- Storm surges (both cyclonic and non-cyclonic);
- Coastal and river flooding, including flash flooding of small streams, and major flooding from larger rivers;
- Landslides and debris flow;
• Droughts, both short and long-term;
• Climate Change; and
• Sea Level Rises.

The Lessons Learned from Cyclone Pam should allow us to take a multi-hazard approach to future planning and response mechanisms that are pragmatic but culturally appropriate. We are historically a resilient people. Excavations in Vanuatu have proved continuous human habitation in Vanuatu for over 3,000 years. In that time, our people have learned to prepare and respond to disasters. It would be a grave mistake if we do not recognise and build on the traditional knowledge of our people for response, restoration and rehabilitation. A resilience-based approach should be utilised so that community capacity, based on traditional coping mechanisms, are strengthened; not eroded. We want to not just ‘Build Back Better’ but to ‘Build Back Safer.’

There were many ‘firsts’ in our response:
• the first use of the NEOC for a national scale emergency;
• the Shelter Cluster had just been established;
• the Logistics Cluster was only newly set up;
• the Information Management Working Group had been recently formed;
• SOPs were put into ‘real time’ practice;
• the Private Sector was heavily involved in humanitarian and recovery responses;
• VHT was involved in a national response, not in a localised incident;
• international agency teams mobilised on a large scale; and
• it was the first time the UNDAC team mobilised in Vanuatu.

Opportunities presented themselves to utilise the skills of senior officers from other line ministries and to build surge capacity for future emergencies.

With well-established fiduciary governance processes in the Ministry of Finance and in the Prime Minister’s Office planning and monitoring units, developed and supported for two decades by our development partners, response and rehabilitation processes need to be firmly controlled by the Vanuatu Government. Reporting and auditing processes to the government should track aid flows. This in-country capacity needs to be respected while also recognising that the NDMO and NEOC need continued support, restructure and an improved operational budget.

However, it must be remembered that natural disasters are not only the National Disaster Management Office’s business. Natural disasters are everyone’s business.

In conclusion, I would like to extend the sincere thanks of the people of Vanuatu for the assistance, commitment and caring demonstrated in the Cyclone Pam Response effort — donor partners, non-government organisations, chiefs and communities, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations, Ministries and Agencies of the Government of Vanuatu, governments around the region and abroad, FRANZ partners, private individuals, business houses and our volunteers for their selfless support.

We have a saying in Vanuatu – ‘nasi tuan.’ It loosely translates as ‘yumi helpim yumi’ or ‘you help me to help everyone.’ The Lessons Learned Workshop on the crisis presented by Cyclone Pam, with its identification of organisational gaps, challenges and opportunities demonstrated that spirit.
## Annex 1

### Participation list

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<td><a href="mailto:tim.nelson@savethechildren.org.vu">tim.nelson@savethechildren.org.vu</a></td>
<td>5563680</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
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<td>Michael</td>
<td>Mozina</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mozinamichael@hotmail.com">mozinamichael@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Lamberti</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:dprr-vanuatu.frc@croix-rouge.fr">dprr-vanuatu.frc@croix-rouge.fr</a></td>
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<td>Kethy</td>
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<td>Fisher</td>
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<td>Sakarae</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sanmail@vanuatu.gov.vu">sanmail@vanuatu.gov.vu</a></td>
<td>7731228 / 5536713 / 5663924</td>
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<td>Kensly</td>
<td>Micah</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sanmainfo@gmail.com">sanmainfo@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>7771307</td>
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<td>Palen</td>
<td>Ata</td>
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<td>Reginald</td>
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<td>Joseph</td>
<td>Neil</td>
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<td>IFRC Operations Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jNeil.civav@vanuatu.com.vu">jNeil.civav@vanuatu.com.vu</a></td>
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<td>Mathieu</td>
<td>Namali</td>
<td>Lands Dept</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
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<td>Xavier</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>SPC-BZ</td>
<td>Technical Advisor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:SPC-BZ@UNDP.org">SPC-BZ@UNDP.org</a></td>
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<td>Steve</td>
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<td>Telco Vanuatu Ltd</td>
<td>Manager Access Networks</td>
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<td>Senimu</td>
<td>Bell</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:david@vanuatu.gov.vu">david@vanuatu.gov.vu</a></td>
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<td>Wendy</td>
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<td>Mark</td>
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<td>Andrew</td>
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<td>777885</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andrew@vanuatu.gov.vu">andrew@vanuatu.gov.vu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
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<td>Email Address</td>
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<td>Regan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shawn</td>
<td>Charles</td>
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# Annex 2

## Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (2015)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 March</td>
<td>• Cyclone Pam formed and strengthened</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• First early warning issued</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• NEOC activated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Government and Clusters preparedness begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 March</td>
<td>• NEOC fully operational</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• First National Disaster Committee Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• PEOCs activated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Evacuation centres activated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• First situation report issued</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>• TC Pam Cat 4 enters Vanuatu area</td>
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<tr>
<td>13–14 March</td>
<td>• TC Pam strikes Vanuatu [refer to Tracking Map]</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 March</td>
<td>• Initial assessments and relief distributions begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 March</td>
<td>• Evacuation Centre registrations begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 March</td>
<td>• Aerial assessments by ADF</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Bauerfield Airport opens</td>
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<td>• UNDAC team and requested surge support from various agencies begin to arrive</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 March</td>
<td>• State of Emergency declared</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 March</td>
<td>• Initial ADF aerial assessment reports issued</td>
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<td>• Initial assessment teams deployed to get further information from affected areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>• Prime Minister Hon Joe Natuman visits Tanna</td>
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<td>• UN Humanitarian Coordinator arrives</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 March</td>
<td>• Government allocates 96 million vatu to food distribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>• Initial affected site assessments are completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>• Government-led food distribution begins</td>
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<td>• IOM roll out Displacement Tracking Matrix in 25 evacuation centres</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 March</td>
<td>• Australian Foreign Affairs Minister, Julia Bishop visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 March</td>
<td>• Six international emergency health kits arrive</td>
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<td>• Daily who, what where [3W] tracking begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 March</td>
<td>• PM launches US 29.9 million Flash Appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 March</td>
<td>• PM visits Malampa and Penama Provinces</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 March</td>
<td>• Six pm curfew lifted</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 March</td>
<td>• A 10-day UAV aerial survey of affected areas begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 March</td>
<td>• Government-led second phase multi-sector harmonised assessments in Shefa and Tafea</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–15 April</td>
<td>• State of Emergency extended for a further two weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>7–8 April</td>
<td>• Second multi-sector harmonised assessments in Penama and Malampa</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 April</td>
<td>• Assessment Report for Shefa and Tafea</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>• Comprehensive assessment report</td>
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<tr>
<td>17–20 April</td>
<td>• Cluster Leads</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 April</td>
<td>• Post Disaster Needs Assessment [PDNA] report released</td>
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<tr>
<td>20–23 April</td>
<td>• NDMO/VHT and OCHA consolidate HAP for Government Response Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>• 18,000 households reached with emergency shelter support</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>• Successive roll outs of food supported by World Food Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 May</td>
<td>• Shelter assessment completed to inform shelter strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>15–19 June</td>
<td>• Clusters prepare and present Lessons Learned reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 25 June</td>
<td>• Lessons Learned Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 July</td>
<td>• Third Round of food distribution on Efate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 3
Cluster Reports

1. Gender & Protection Cluster Lessons Learned Report
2. Lessons Learned from TC Pam: Health and Nutrition Cluster
3. Emergency Response to Cyclone Pam, National WASH - Lessons Learned, Workshop
4. Vanuatu Education Cluster, Tropical Cyclone Pam Response Lessons Learned
5. Vanuatu Shelter Cluster, Tropical Cyclone Pam, Response Lessons Learned, June 2015
6. Cyclone Pam Vanuatu Logistics Cluster Response

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Gender and Protection Cluster

Tropical Cyclone Pam
Lessons Learned Workshop Report

5 May 2015
Melanesian Hotel, Port Vila
1. Background to the Gender and Protection Cluster and TC Pam

The cluster approach ensures clear leadership, predictability and accountability in international responses to humanitarian emergencies by clarifying the division of labour among organisations and better defining their roles and responsibilities within the different sectors of the response. It aims to make the international humanitarian community better organised and more accountable and professional, so that it can be a better partner for the affected people, host governments, local authorities, local civil society and local resourcing partners.

The Gender & Protection Cluster in Vanuatu was formed on 13 March 2014 and is led by the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS) and co-led by CARE International and Save the Children. The formation of the Gender and Protection Cluster coincided with Tropical Cyclone (TC) Lusi hitting Vanuatu and that response was the first time that gender and protection was considered as part of the assessment and response phases. The Gender and Protection cluster was active in the lead up and response to TC Pam.

TC Pam struck Vanuatu on the evening of 13 March 2015. The category 5 cyclone caused widespread damage across five provinces of the archipelago – 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 were reported. Early warning systems and the provision of evacuation centres by the Government of Vanuatu prevented a higher death toll.

The Second Phase Harmonized Assessment identified protection mainstreaming across all clusters as a critical need as vulnerable groups were not receiving equal access to humanitarian assistance and risks to the safety and dignity of vulnerable groups were identified. The Gender and Protection Cluster worked with other clusters to mainstream protection and gender and promote respect for international protection principles and standards within humanitarian action, as well as supporting adherence to international laws related to human rights in their interventions.

2. Objectives of the Lessons Learned Workshop

A one-day workshop was convened on Tuesday 5th May 2015 at the Melanesian Hotel from 9am to 4pm which was attended by 40 participants (both current and new cluster members) from Government Ministries and Departments, non-government organisations, community and faith based organisations and the United Nations. Of the 40 participants, 72% were female. Please see Annex 1 (Attendance List) and Annex 2 (Workshop Agenda).

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To discuss how the Gender and Protection cluster worked well and what could have been improved in the preparation and response to TC Pam focusing on the areas of: Assessment, Coordination and Reporting
- To make recommendations for to the upcoming NDMO Lessons Learned Workshop

It was important that the lessons learned exercise fed into the NDMO Lessons Learned exercise, which is planned for June/July. A Women’s Forum is also being planned for the first week of June to collect information from women’s groups and community members on the effectiveness of the response. The information collected during this forum will also be valuable in feeding into the NDMO Lessons Learned exercise.

3. Lessons Learned Sessions

Ms Dorosday Kenneth, the Director of the Department of Women’s Affairs (DWA), opened the Lessons Learned workshop. In her opening remarks she stated that it was the decision of the Vanuatu Government to have a specific Gender and Protection cluster, to work to ensure that gender and protection issues are at the forefront of any disaster response. She thanked all of the
organisations for attending the workshop and stated that the aim of the workshop was really to reflect on the work of the cluster during the cyclone response and to move towards the reconstruction of people’s lives. She encouraged all of the participants to come into the meeting with constructive thinking and knowledge and to represent the voices of those who could not be here.

A glossary of terms was developed to ensure there was a common understanding of acronyms associated with TC Pam and put on display during the workshop. The glossary can be found in Annex 3.

**Session 1: Review of the previous Lessons Learned from Cyclone Lusi**

The first session was a presentation by Ms Rebecca Olul from UNICEF on the history of the Gender and Protection cluster in Vanuatu prior to TC Pam, as well as looking at the discussions from the previous lessons learned exercise that was undertaken following TC Lusi in 2014. Achievements from the TC Lusi response included the development of an assessment form, assessment team training, the inclusion of at least one woman on each assessment team, and the development of the HAP ($500,000 budget). It also included a discussion on the list of recommendations presented in the report and the proposed work plan for the cluster moving forward.

It was discussed that in the previous lessons learned many of the recommendations were aimed at the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and since the lessons learned these had not been adequately communicated and followed up to ensure they were integrated into the current response. In addition it was felt that the cluster didn’t have sufficient influence to make changes at the structural level of the NDMO, so therefore it was emphasised that this workshop would focus on practical recommendations for the Gender and Protection cluster rather than focus on the NDMO. A copy of the presentation is attached as Annex 4.

**Session 2: Timeline of the TC Plan Response**

Lucy presented the timeline activity to map the main time periods and activities that the Gender and Protection cluster were involved in before and after TC Pam. The aim of the activity was to orient organisations and agree on the timeline, and then ask individuals to reflect on their involvement as Gender and Protection cluster members at each stage of the response. Once all of the time periods were agreed upon (Pre-Cyclone, Evacuation Centres, Rapid Assessment, Flash Appeal, In-Depth Assessment, Post Disaster Needs Assessment, Monitoring, Humanitarian Action Plan), participants were asked to come up to the front and write the specific activities they were involved in as part of each stage as seen in the photos below.

![Photo 1: Timeline Activity 05.05.2015](image)
As seen in the photos the main activities individuals were involved in were pre-cyclone, evacuation centres, rapid assessment and in-depth assessment, and those that individuals were least involved in were the Flash Appeal and the HAP. This is only a crude analysis as it may have been easier to come up with more variety in activities for those areas which had a higher concentration of post it notes, however it was a useful exercise to undertake in order see general patterns of activities for each stage of the response. See below for all of the activities listed by the headings in each stage of the timeline.

### Pre-Cyclone
- G&P cluster finalised assessment form and translated it into Bislama.
- Prevention of violence against children through development programs with Ministry of Justice.
- CPIE training for Government, NGOs, and CSO partners.
- Include cultural preparation.
- Community mapping in villages.
- Disability desk rang and emailed Provincial Government Disability Committees all of the warnings associated with TC Pam, asking the committees to be aware to move people with disabilities to higher ground.
- Consultations on key messages from cluster stakeholders through the APTC students and CARE.
- Pastors went house to house and checked that households had heard the warnings.
- G&P cluster leads attended inter-cluster coordination meetings to prepare for TC Pam response.
- G&P cluster developed a list of people available for deployment teams.
- Coordinated water for homes.
- Attended CPIE meetings and was part of the team developing the assessment tools.
- Networking with VHT and other cluster members regarding preparedness.
- Communicating cyclone warnings and alerts among CSO networks and the diaspora.

### Evacuation Centres
- Evacuation Centre assessments and reports.
- Evacuation Centres come under G&P cluster after directive.
### Rapid Assessment
- 2 persons for Disability Desk involved in rapid assessments on Mataso island and Buninga island.
- Involved in rapid assessments for Shefa Province (APTC/CARE), Tanna and Paama.
- Coordinated the young people to take statistics and fill up the form from the NDMO.
- Joint assessment with partners highlighting CP issues such as MHPSS and birth registration.
- Child protection emergency training for community.
- Church members not formally included in rapid assessment, but pastors began collecting information on households that had not received tarps, food, water.
- Captured live stories of women/market vendors after TC Pam.
- Detailed form to specify males and females, and by age.
- The rapid assessment form needs to be in clear Bislama so that people from the islands can understand it.
- Coordinating psychosocial support training for CSOs/CBOs.
- Psychosocial support training for ToTs.

### Flash Appeal
- IOM obtained funding to roll out displacement tracking matrix, including the collection of disability data.
- Filled out Flash Appeal Form to include DWA and VCC projects.
- International humanitarian agencies to be coordinated and partner with local CSOs for capacity building and sustainability.
- Contributed to fund raising appeal.
- Designed project on markets around Efate in Flash Appeal under early recovery.

### In-Depth Assessment
- Part of in-depth assessment in central, northeast, northwest and south Epi.
- Part of in-depth assessment in Nguna, Pele, Emau, Makira, Mataso, Bauko, and Torres group.
- Underwent a 2 hour workshop from G&P cluster on the assessment forms in preparation for the in depth assessment.
- Focused on the Shelter Cluster, however the assessment involved questions on gender and protection.
- Women’s tent in Vila, Tanna and Eton – listening and talking about the needs of women, children and people with disabilities.
• Volunteers to participate in assessment teams.
• Assisted G&P team to meet with women’s groups in discussions on the in-depth assessment in Moso, Emau and Pele.
• Healing of stress.
• Case management training for partners in child protection.
• G&P cluster coordinators (surge deployees) selected the assessment teams and they would not use staff from the field, they only used people from Port Vila.
• Coordinated dispatch of G&P advisor to support G&P cluster.
• Birth registration of children and public.

Post-Disaster Needs Assessment

• Women and youth involvement in the post disaster needs assessments.
• Members of the cluster involved in the post disaster needs assessment.
• Monitoring the recovery and rebuilding.
• Coordinated dispatch of Gender Advisor on the humanitarian response and climate change to co-author the gender chapter of the PDNA.
• Follow up on case management framework with Govt., NGO and CSO partners.
• Disability key messages and anecdotal stories included in PDNA report.
• Gender and protection report in to PDNA.
• MHPSS to affected communities with Ministry of Education.
• Assessment on impact of TC Pam on market vendors conducted focus groups and surveys to inform the PDNA.
• 3 persons from disability WG attended the PDNA lessons learnt session.

Monitoring

• Key health messages for rural communities.
• Food distribution monitoring.
• Data entry for food distribution monitoring.
• Appeal for donations.
• Relief supplies and food distribution using existing chiefs, churches, youth and women networks.
• Follow up on impact of interventions.
• Displacement tracking matrix.
• Messaging on G&P during monitoring visits.

Humanitarian Action Plan

• Disability Desk – forwarded activities to Oxfam to include in the HAP.
• Donors working direct with women and youth organisations in the communities/village should have been more transparent.
• Cluster meetings and WGs have input into the HAP.
• Getting the villages and communities to execute their own plans and actions, as they know them better.
• Negotiating and identifying good zones for evacuation centres.
• VCC – didn’t know we needed to submit proposals for funding.
• Develop capacities for CDCs within communities and connect to NDMO.
• Strengthen local community committees and governance.

Following this session there was a question on whether the recommendations from the previous Lessons Learned exercise were taken up by the NDMO. The previous lessons learned had fed into the NDMO TC Lusi lessons learned workshop. However it was difficult for the NDMO to implement the lessons learned as they lack resources. Additionally the Gender & Protection Cluster itself had only been able to follow up on a few due to their lack of resources including funding and dedicated staffing. There was a discussion of how the cluster can move forward with any recommendations in particular for the NDMO and how they can be influenced to undertake them. It was agreed that this
process has to be determined before the cyclone comes rather than trying to implement the recommendations during the response phase.

**Session 3: Coordination of the Gender and Protection Cluster**

At the beginning of the session, Lucy did a short presentation on the humanitarian cluster system (global, regional and country) to give some background for participants particularly for those who haven’t been involved in the cluster, and for those new to the cluster system. The presentation is included in Annex 5.

There were questions about the cluster structure and how it applies to Vanuatu. Participants found it interesting that the global and regional clusters only had Protection in the title rather than Gender and Protection as per the cluster in Vanuatu. There was also some criticism about the way of funding through the clusters as it goes straight to the INGOs and not to the people and organisations on the ground.

Esron (MoJCS) gave feedback about the process and some of the challenges that happened during the response because of the lack of preparation, coordination and participation of the cluster, mainly because they didn’t have enough information to respond quickly. For example, the cluster was involved in the first round of the distribution, but was not involved in the second distribution, as they needed more information and reporting back from members to continue. Organisations were upset about the process surrounding the Flash Appeal as it wasn’t clear, and inputs were required at very short notice. It is hoped that next time the process will be clearer and there can be improvements.

As there was a significant number of new cluster members at the lessons learned workshop the agenda needed to be adjusted slightly to account for those who could not feedback specifically on this response. Therefore for the next activity the group was split into people who were very involved in the cluster and those that were new to the cluster or only attended a few meetings, as the purpose of the lessons learned exercise was for active members to comment and make recommendations for the next response. Groups 1 and 2 were existing/active cluster members and Groups 3 and 4 were new cluster members. The questions were different for the two groups (see below)

**Group 1 and 2 (existing and active cluster members)**
1. What worked well?
2. What could be improved?
3. What were your constraints to participating in the cluster?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What worked well?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Learning Opportunities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learnt from experienced people who could provide advice and guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Flexibility as actors worked outside their normal role</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mix of experience</td>
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<td><strong>2. Meetings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Everyone participated and were welcomed during the meetings with many agencies and individuals heard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Good teamwork, all organisations working together.</td>
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<td>• Collaborative discussions informed decision-making.</td>
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<td>• Good avenue for raising issues with participants voices heard</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regular meetings kept everyone up to date.</td>
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<td>• All minutes were sent out.</td>
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<td>• Strong information sharing and energy and capacity.</td>
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<td><strong>3. Working Groups</strong></td>
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<td>• Working groups met regularly to discuss in depth issues.</td>
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<td>• Disability WG successful at getting disability content into the PDNA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Each one respectful of the WGs.</td>
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</table>
• Building of group capacity.
• Disability advocates attended other clusters to mainstream disability issues.

4. Issues
• Gender was considered in distributions (food, shelter and health)
• Protection clearly identified as a strategic priority in humanitarian plans
• Gender and protection issues addressed well through the gender focal points at the DWA and MoJCS.
• Vanuatu will have concrete data on different sectors (gender, child protection, disability issues all identified).
• Some women chosen as team leaders in different clusters.

5. Cluster Leads and Co-Leads
• Pacific Protection cluster focal point was present to support the coordinator
• Strong leadership and designated alternative clearly communicated to the cluster.
• Strong government gender protection lead.
• Lead and co-lead agencies working together.
• Leader could provide additional support/training on G&P in humanitarian response.
• Cluster well represented in other forums
• Govt Depts working collaboratively with NGO and civil societies.

6. Other Achievements
• Assessment form was translated into Bislama
• Foreign aid and human resources arrived on time
• Good opportunity to learn about other organisations work in Vanuatu
• Information tents were set up to assist with information sharing and assist with gender specific needs.
• Directory developed for services needed.
• Great avenue for raising women’s issues.
• Gender issues taken into consideration in terms of distribution (food, shelter, health).
• Building on group capacity – strengths and energy

What needs to be improved?

1. Capacity of Cluster Members
• Capacity development of new members by experienced members.
• Training national and international members on humanitarian systems and processes (cluster system, Flash Appeal, PDNA etc.) early on and throughout

2. Cluster Staffing
• Consistent staffing in cluster – longer term deployments by surge staff and only if needed for specific skills
• Deployed personnel should support not take over the cluster
• Surge capacity – what kind of skills/tasks do we need to ask for in big disasters?
• Leaders need to demonstrate self care and work-life balance so they are effective and not burnt out / stressed.
• If cluster lead and co-lead are both engaged in response activities then they need to designate temporary leads who can make decisions and communicate to G&P cluster members
• Strengthen province/island membership.

3. Mainstreaming Gender and Protection
• Improve G&P cluster involvement in other clusters – plans, activities, and analysis
• Gender and GBV key messages developed and disseminated earlier
• Focus on gender too – not just protection to understand and support gender issues.
• All clusters should have a child protection policy including code of conduct and consent forms in place include processes for taking photos of children.
• Mainstream gender equality across clusters through training and revising assessments pre-cyclone to ensure assessments capture gender issues.
• Provide gender focal points to other clusters.
4. Contextualising the Work of the Cluster
   - Keep discussions relevant to the Vanuatu context
   - Acknowledgement, use and recognition of existing G&P cluster resources (staff and forms)

5. Assessment
   - Gender balance in assessments and disaster preparedness plans
   - Focus groups inadequate to identify protection uses and vulnerable marginalised people
   - Data entry template needs to capture Bislama data – some info in Bislama not captured/entered.
   - Use international standardised G&P assessments that are adapted to Vanuatu
   - Each assessment team should have cameras
   - Develop 2 assessment forms (1 for rapid assessment, 1 for in-depth assessment)
   - Logistics – timing between sites too short – some islands/villages missed out
   - Improve collection of disability data and needs of people with disabilities.
   - Better training for assessment team members – how to complete the assessment form and capture quality info.
   - Simplified assessment forms
   - Reduce amount of Port Vila deployments for assessments – instead strengthen and support the use of Govt. and NGO field staff
   - Women to interview women on gender sensitive issues.
   - Lack of consistency between data entry form and assessment template
   - Simulated assessments to pilot forms (pre-testing).

6. GBV
   - Strengthen referral pathways for case management for GBV and child abuse
   - Engagement and lead role of national GBV actors.
   - Need national GBV actors to lead

7. Use of Assessment and other Data
   - Follow up on issues reported (voices, needs to be taken care of, not just reported)

8. Other
   - Improve the involvement of the church and youth
   - Strong and clear coordination of Flash Appeal and other fundraising events to fund planned activities.
   - Clear ToR for the cluster needed
   - Punctuality for briefing sessions
   - Strengthen coordination.
   - Discuss everything together before finalisation.
   - Coordination needs to be strengthened.

What were your constraints to participating in the cluster?

1. Resourcing and Data Issues
   - No regular meeting locations
   - Insufficient human resources
   - Unreliable electricity
   - No baseline available (disability)
   - Local contextual issues not clearly identified (politics, religion, islandism)
   - Lack of accommodation
   - Lack of media support
   - Network facility difficulties
   - Needed a notice board for posting information for assessments, participants and logistics.

2. Administrative Issues
   - Not familiar with the forms pre-disaster (in particular 3Ws, appeals)
- Organisation timelines/workplans need to be completed before they can feed into the cluster planning.
- Need time to complete assessments, planning, completing forms/appeals documents.
- Inconsistent email communication of meeting times, not everyone on the mailing list.
- Irregular WG meeting times.
- Briefings not attended by participants resulted in others writing reports

### 3. Strategic Issues
- No clear GBV strategy or direction (written or communicated).
- Roles and leadership and support structure unclear (Where does the protection advisor fit into response?)

### 4. Assessment Issues
- Local Gender and Protection reps should be involved to reflect local context
- Men need to be deployed in the most difficult areas instead of women
- Participants of different clusters should be at focal points or NDMO, not at the wrong pick up points.
- How to strengthen involvement of people with disability in disaster plans and assessments?

### 5. Other constraints
- Language barriers - fly in experts speaking rapidly in English and making Ni-Vanuatu people feel uncomfortable.
- Need to improve coordination with humanitarian workers coming in country to know their ToR and timeline and share so timelines can be coordinated.
- Need to strengthen provincial engagement on Gender and Protection
- Food suitable for children and greens supplements (needs to be addressed).
- Govt limiting input from all actors into PDNA, HAP etc.

---

Photo 4 - Participants Discuss and Provide Feedback 05.05.2015
Group 3 and 4 (new cluster members)

1. What were your expectations of the gender and protection cluster?
2. How can the gender and protection cluster better collaborate with local NGOs?

**What were your expectations of the gender and protection cluster? (2 groups)**

- Cluster should involve representative of all women, girls, children, PLWD, elderly people and youth.
- Should be a quick response (immediate).
- Properly coordinated network and communication channels.
- Work within and strengthen existing systems from national down to community level.
- 100% involvement of women from day 1. It is not a custom to line up for food; they want people to deliver to the house. Women should do the receiving of the food and doing the distribution.
- Information flow before the disaster must be well understood and coordinated.
- More awareness on disaster preparedness.
- Use youth for disaster relief work from the churches and the communities.
- Use existing CBOs/FBOs in communities.
- Mainstreaming across sectors.
- Inclusion in assessments.
- Clear understanding of ToR (roles and responsibilities) of each agency to avoid duplication.
- Clear on cluster lead / role
- Concrete collaboration / working relationships between Govt/agencies/NGOs.
- Use local established chiefs/women/youth/churches throughout the provinces.
- Govt. should work with existing custom governance on the ground (safety nets).
- Handle the issues in context of family, community and church.
- Build sustainability amongst local organisations and projects.

**How can the Gender and Protection cluster better include local organisations? (2 groups)**

- Engage more with churches and youth groups
- Better coordination and clear directives.
- Local organisations to raise awareness of themselves (What to do? How they contribute to the cluster?)
- Cluster has to develop/establish a directory of all services provided including local organisations (mailing list etc.)
- Include them all in meetings and updates, follow up and M&E
- Improving the network.
- Include them in the cluster and gender work plan.
- Acknowledgement of local organisations (context, perspectives, cultures, languages etc.)
- Inclusion in capacity building
- Identifying existing strengths within these local organisations. (sustainability)
- Secure funding for local organisations (for continuation of programs)
- More organised education and awareness at the community level.
- Set up focal points and have a system of properly trained volunteers. INGOS and NDMO hired volunteers but most people didn’t know how to respond at the community level and give ID to them.
- Safety and security of people immediately after a disaster.

**Session 4: Recommendations**
In the final session the groups reviewed the long list of recommendations from the previous session and worked in the following groups to come up with 5 recommendations under each heading:
Assessment; Collaboration with Local Organisations/structures; Capacity Building and Training; Communication and Reporting; and Mainstreaming.

Assessment

1. Training for assessors with some kind of certification to say that people have attended the training, and they can be on standby.
2. The assessment forms must be clear and cover the quality information that is needed.
3. All assessment forms for all clusters should be standardised.
4. Criteria for assessors and team leaders need to be established.
5. Logistics need to be improved for assessments, so that people can get to assessment sites as soon as possible.

Collaboration with local organisations/structures

1. Identify, develop and strengthen the working relationships between key stakeholders: government, chiefs (islands), churches and NGOs using existing systems already in place.
2. Raise awareness on preparedness before, during and after disasters including existing cultural systems.
3. Strengthen media relations and support.
4. Engage professionals to train volunteers.
5. Establish focal points at all levels.

Capacity Building and Training

1. Cluster members to be trained in disaster process, cross sectoral training.
2. Technical advisors to train/support local staff and provide frequent training during the non-disaster period.
3. Training needs to specified, in different areas and in Bislama (PSS, CPIE, GBV, CSG).
4. Identify two participants to attend cluster meetings regularly.
5. Advocacy and awareness about the cluster.
6. Chair leads to be present in each meeting to mentor the team.

Communication and Reporting

1. Reporting and minutes are too long. Keep it simple and action oriented.
2. Use a variety of communication approaches, not just text (images, graphs, tables, talking, story telling).
3. Maintaining contact lists and distribute information to everyone.
5. Clear description of the value of reporting – for example, use of success stories.
7. Establish communication networks/stakeholders.
8. Common report repository.

Mainstreaming

1. Training and capacity building to all G&P cluster members and other cluster members in humanitarian response at the national and provincial level (e.g. cross sectoral training).
2. Identify/designate G&P focal points to other clusters so G&P clusters plans/activities are integrated into the other clusters plans.
3. G&P is captured in assessments and disaster preparedness plans e.g. any disaster related materials with monitoring.
4. Communication and knowledge management should be regularised and mainstreamed. E.g. DWA communication person’s TOR/G&P materials easily accessed.
5. G&P cluster to have a secretariat to improve coordination of the GP cluster. The secretariat would include the Cluster Lead, Co-Lead and IM.
Photo 5: Participants Decide on Key Recommendations
## Annex 1: Attendee list - Gender and Protection Cluster TC Pam Lessons Learned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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Annex 2 – Workshop Agenda

Gender & Protection Cluster - Lessons Learned Agenda
Tuesday 5 May 2014
Melanesian Hotel

Workshop Objectives:
• To discuss how the Gender and Protection cluster worked well and what could have been improved in the preparation and response to Cyclone Pam focusing on the areas of: Assessment, Coordination and Reporting
• To make recommendations for improvement to the upcoming NDMO Lessons Learned Workshop

Workshop Agenda:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00 am</td>
<td>Workshop Opening</td>
<td>Director of the Department of Women’s Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>9:30- 10:00 Session 1: Review of recommendations from the previous Lessons Learned from Cyclone Lusi</td>
<td>Rebecca Olul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>10:00 to 10:45 Session 2: Timeline for the Gender and Protection Cluster Response to Cyclone Pam</td>
<td>Lucy</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45 to 11:00</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>11:00 to 1:00 Session 3: Gender and Protection Cluster Coordination</td>
<td>Lucy and Esron</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>Session 4: Gender &amp; Protection Cluster Assessment and Reporting</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.00 to 4:00</td>
<td>Looking forward:</td>
<td>Esron</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summarise recommendations that were made throughout the day and allow the group to make any further recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recommendations to NDMO for improving mainstreaming of Gender &amp; Protection in future responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Next steps for the Gender &amp; Protection Cluster in the recovery phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Workshop Close</td>
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Annex 3 - Glossary

**CERF** (Central Emergency Response Fund) – Pooled funds from donors set aside for immediate use at the onset of emergencies. Only available to UN agencies, funds, and programs.

**Flash Appeal:** A tool for structuring a coordinated humanitarian response and coordinating fundraising among participating IASC organisations for the first three to six months.

**HAP** (Humanitarian Action Plan) – A strategic plan for humanitarian response in a given country or region.

**IASC:** (Inter Agency standing committee) – Primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance

**PDNA:** (Post Disaster Needs Assessment) – A World Bank report to identify the level of destruction and cost of recovery.

**SAP:** (Strategic Action Plan) – long-term recovery plan of the Government of Vanuatu
Annex 4 – Presentation on Lessons from Cyclone Lusi

Gender & Protection Cluster

Lessons Learnt Workshop
5 May 2015
The Melanesian Hotel

Presentation by Rebecca Olu, N&C Office, UNICEF

What did we do?

- Developed a Gender and Protection Rapid Assessment Form;
- Conducted a small Gender and Protection pre-deployment briefing to rapid assessment teams;
- Ensured that a female team member was assigned to every Cyclone Lusi assessment team;
- Had a team member accompany the (previous) PM on his visit to Cyclone Lusi affected areas;
- Contributed to the NDMD Tropical Cyclone Lusi Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP); and
- Organized a Gender and Protection Cluster Reflection and Learning Workshop;

Tankiu tumas

Background

- Gender Analysis of TC Jasmine response
- Formed on 13 March 2014 as a direct response to TC Lusi
- Led by the Ministry of Justice
- Co-led by CARE International and Save the Children
- Membership at 25 including representatives from World Vision, UNICEF, NDMD, UN Women, ADRA, IOM, Nossal Institute for Global Health at the University of Melbourne, and the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster

Lessons Learnt Workshop – May 2014

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To discuss how Gender and Protection was adopted by the assessment team; approaches, what worked, and what could be improved;
- To discuss generally the experience as a Gender and Protection focal point, and/or the only female on the team as this is new for NDMD Assessment Teams;
- To discuss the Gender and Protection Cluster Assessment Form. what worked, what didn’t, and how the form can be improved;
- To develop some recommendations for the NDMD to incorporate into their TC Lusi Lessons Learnt Workshop;
- To develop an Action Plan for the Gender and Protection Cluster moving forward;
Annex 5 – Presentation on Cluster System

Humanitarian Cluster System

What is the cluster system?
- When emergencies occur coordination is necessary.
- Good coordination means less gaps and overlaps in the assistance delivered by humanitarian organisations.
- Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health and logistics.
- At the global level they are designated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and have clear responsibilities for coordination.

Core Roles of the Clusters
The core functions of a cluster at the country level are:
- Supporting service delivery by providing a platform for agreement on approaches and elimination of duplication
- Informing strategic decision-making for the humanitarian response through coordination of needs assessment and gap analysis and prioritisation
- Planning and strategy development including sectoral plans, adherence to standards and funding needs
- Advocacy to address identified concerns on behalf of cluster participants and the affected population
- Monitoring and reporting on the cluster strategy and results; recommending corrective action where necessary
- Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity building where needed and where capacity exists within the cluster.

What is OCHA’s role?
- OCHA is responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. The aim is to assist people when they most need relief or protection. A key pillar of the OCHA mandate is to “coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors”.
- OCHA works closely with cluster lead agencies and NGOs to develop policies, coordinate inter-cluster issues, disseminate operational guidance and organize field support.
- OCHA helps to ensure coordination between clusters at all phases of the response, including needs assessments, joint planning, and monitoring and evaluation.

What is the Pacific Humanitarian Team?
- The Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) was established by OCHA in 2008 to ensure that regional responders work together to deliver timely and appropriate humanitarian assistance to disaster-affected people across the Pacific.
- The PHT operates under the co-leadership of the United Nations Resident Coordinators in the Pacific, based in Fiji and Samoa, and consists of UN agencies, regional and bilateral organizations, national and international non-government organizations, faith-based and community-based organizations and donor partners.
- The PHT places the host Government at the centre of the response effort, with primary responsibility for organizing humanitarian response in emergency situations.

The Global Cluster System
The Pacific Regional Cluster System

Reporting to the Cluster

Sit Reps
- A situation report (sit rep) captures all of the information on the response from the whole cluster.
- The situation report is usually divided into three categories:
  - Needs
  - Response
  - Gaps
- The Gender and Protection cluster uses the sit rep to report to all of the other clusters, to OCHA, to donors and to external parties on the response and needs.

3Ws
- Who? does what? where?
- The main purpose of a basic 3W is to show the operational presence by sector and location within an emergency. It can enable organisations to help identify potential partners, quickly give a very rough understanding of an ongoing response, and identify potential overlaps or gaps in response.
Annex 6 – Online Survey Responses

The online survey was open from the 7th May 2015 to the 15th of May 2015, and 17 respondents completed it (one respondent was via email). The first two graphs below illustrate the participation of respondents in each stage of the TC Pam response, and their participation in activities coordinated by the cluster at different stages of the response.

Graph 1: Respondent's involvement in each stage of the TC Pam Response

Graph 2: Respondent's involvement in activities coordinated by the Gender and Protection cluster

The below graph shows the overall rating that respondents gave the Gender and Protection cluster response as a whole. Of the 15 respondents who answered the question, 73% gave a rating of good or very good.
Graph 3: Rating of how the Gender and Protection cluster operated in general.

Below are the responses to the qualitative questions asked in the survey.

**Why did you give this rating (related to the above question)?**

- G&P cluster leadership was not obvious at start to coordinate effectively critical human resource to ensure G&P was well represented at all assessment points. Many meetings, lots of talking slow to little action at critical time of assessment.

- I believe there is a lot of room for improvement in terms of advocacy to get the needed buy-in from government.

- Not very involved to give more accurate rating.

- Very engaged both internally and with external stakeholders and other sectors. Participation by members of the cluster was consistent and coordination by national lead was good.

- There was a good flow of information. Pro-active role of the coordinator.

- In the immediate weeks post Pam, there was little clarity regarding how stakeholders should engage with and report to the cluster. It was quite chaotic. Also, there was a lot of pressure put on agencies attending G&P meetings to be reporting on action, when most agencies present were small local organisations or departments with no funds. There was little space for gathering information regarding inclusion of marginalised people being undertaken by bigger, better resourced mainstream agencies. In my view, this was due to limited contextual understanding amongst the early surge capacity cluster leads.

- I was not able to stay on from the flash appeal stage to the HAP so I am not really sure how the cluster performed at these stages.

- International players could have worked better with local NGOs and national staff.
• There were many issues with staffing at the beginning of the response. The first two staff from UN were not suitable and it impacted on the functioning of the cluster, even after they left.

• Communicated with members quickly and provided good guidance on what was expected.

• This is the first disaster that brought together all the Gender and Protection Clusters to meet and put together all that is required for better preparedness. So however, it is now, to me that is a massive improvement and many efforts have been achieved.

**What do you think went well?**

• There was good inclusion of women on assessment teams and protection questions in the original assessment that reflects well on the preparation prior to TC Pam.

• Ability of others like the OHCHR Regional Protection Officer to take charge/multi-task when Vanuatu Government sought her help due to shortage of manpower. Ability of certain sectors Child Protection Working Group under leadership of DG Bebe to action needs. Disability group actioned response to their clientele

• Communication mechanism

• Govt and Non-govt disability stakeholders worked together in a collaborative and open way through the Disability Working Group. IOM was open to including questions regarding disability, as recommended by the G&P cluster, in their demographic form, and this resulted in collection of significant disability data. Oxfam supported disability working group members in their efforts to report their work via the 3Ws by supplying some time from one of their consultants. This was an extremely practical and useful support, and enabled the needs of people with disability to get more strongly on the response agenda. Great to have surge capacity staff who speak Bislama and understand the context - this made coordination smoother.

• I will respond only on the activities I was heavily involved in. The daily meetings and updates and way forwards, the evacuation centre management especially in terms of gender needs that were addressed

• It was fabulous to see the incredible willingness and dedication of cluster members and colleagues from their organisations coming together – often at short notice and for long hours and days – to support the work of the Gender and Protection Cluster. And it’s a credit to Esron that when a request comes from the VHT for as many as 20 people to support an activity, he is able to mobilise people again and again. It was also great to see working groups jump straight on to identifying needs (such as the guidelines for disability inclusion; ways to ensure women had access to info; advocacy on concrete things like being able to resume market selling; info on what protection-related services were operational…) and doing something about them.

• Increase in awareness of programming in Vanuatu, better collaboration among G&P organizations

• Communication with members, inputs into key documents - Flash and HAP, ensured gender and protection were covered in the wider response agenda
• Meeting and getting input from all partners although the actual data from affected sites are slow, the population data of the country is good enough to make some plans for response.

What could have been improved?

• The staff during the first month of the response were inappropriate and did not create a collaborative environment for the cluster which had a long-term impact on the functioning of the cluster.

• Sharing information in a coordinated approach to avoid duplication wastage of time and resources at such a critical time

• Preparation for the technical assessment

• The Gender and Protection cluster could put some mechanisms in place to enable stronger reporting and advocacy regarding inclusion issues. Some ideas include: put disability, CP and gender on the agenda of all G&P meetings, put G&P as a standing agenda item on other cluster agendas. Eventually the former did happen, and working group leads are now invited to report back to every meeting, and this works better. The assessment process was quickly decided by a select group, and changed frequently. This didn’t allow for important G&P considerations to be addressed, and resulted in assessment processes that were more likely to exclude already-marginalised people. EG – if implemented rapidly, as these were, key informant interviews and focus groups tend to gather the perspectives of those with confidence and decision-making power in communities, and these people tend not to be women or people with disability. Assessments, which rapidly use these kinds of methodologies, are unlikely to pick up the concerns of marginalised people, resulting in skewed data and impacting on the contents of resultant action plans. Reporting – the reporting format (3Ws) does not include provision for mainstream agencies to indicate whether their work was gender or disability inclusive, or if it considered child protection. This meant that the G&P “footprint” seemed smaller than it really was, as only the work of G&P cluster meeting attendees was being reported via the 3Ws, and this excluded most mainstream agencies. This could be simply addressed by adding extra columns into the 3Ws template, which enable mainstream agencies to report this information.

• The cluster should have more control and power on who should be sent out in assessments. If it feels that someone strong should be on the team for effective report taking and writing, they should contact directly with heads of institutions to release staff identified.

• Lack of understanding between international humanitarian players and processes from local NGOs. Better communication of the response processes (Flash Appeal, PDNA, rapid assessments) will be necessary in future disasters at the beginning of the relief stage.

• Stronger and more consistent support to government to chair the meetings. The two NGO co-chairs did not fulfil their responsibilities and support had to be provided from other partners.

• Having pre-assigned roles (beyond the leads) for predictable coordination tasks would strengthen the cluster’s performance – key one is IM/reporting/assessment data entry. This was actually flagged prior to the emergency, but the cluster hadn’t identified yet how to move forward with that. The obvious issue of co-leads and expectations in that role/those roles is another one.
• Flash and CERF appeals processes were done with unreasonably short timeframe and there seemed to be a lot of confusion and mixed messages. I don’t think this is something that has to be/can be addressed by the cluster… but having the cluster wants to feed back that the process and lack of clarity made it difficult to participate.

• Better preparedness with NDMO and Disaster Partners.

**What were your constraints to participating in the cluster?**

• None

• Time - since there was also a great demand to start action on the ground

• Time, other commitments

• Had to be held back in order to do planning and programming activities

• Larger focus on protection side meant gender was not as addressed as it maybe should have been.

• Not in country full time

• Shortage of personnel at the office to be in all meetings. That is the main constraint.

**Do you have any recommendations to improve the coordination of the G&P cluster?**

• Staff need to be collaborative. In the assessment forms, there are questions about GBV that are in focus groups and ask community members to identify perpetrators. This needs to be changed. It is not safe for women to publicly identify perpetrators and it will most likely end up that the question does not get answered. Questions about GBV should be in private interview form only.

• Suggest at start never assume everyone attending understand the cluster process. A brief handout, overview helps all to get to the point of roles and responsibilities, share critical information to action, plug the gaps for what action/follow up needed to best represent G&P in rapid assessment, response and monitoring visits including key information for flash appeal to ensure G&P is well covered.

• None

• As per responses to question 6 be cautious with surge capacity - seek people with good contextualised understanding or at least openness to different ways of working.

• Great work done. Better than cyclone Lucy.

• Stronger co-chair. If partners agree to co-chair they should provide the necessary support to do the job effectively.

• A more regular meeting with updated data on Protection measures.
• Recommend making a priority the review of tools/forms from the NDMO/other clusters, to make sure that at least basic disaggregated data and the most critical protection information is collected at the first opportunity and that gender, protection and disability are mainstreamed into the tools. Mainstreaming of these issues into tools could be part of a process to harmonise the various clusters’ assessment tools in particular to avoid duplication. Would recommend as well that at some later point there is a review of the whole inter-cluster assessment methodology, as the current one (even before the logistical challenges of trying to cover such a vast area come into it) was recognised as having limitations in terms of being able to get a picture of the cross-sectoral situation location by location.

• The assessment form that was supplied for the cluster to use in the detailed assessment did not appear to have some of the changes that were made before the cyclone. If they are going to stick with the current form, either Care will need to track down what happened to the final version of the revised form, or there’ll need to be a further revision (my guess is that there will be further revision anyway, so perhaps that is the simplest way to go).

• I think it would be worth the cluster discussing at a later date whether the data they need to collect could feasibly be collected using the mobile data platforms (such as WASH and Shelter had). There’s technical help available regionally if they wanted to go down that route.

• Arranging training for (at least) cluster leads (and ideally cluster member orgs) on how combined appeals processes work would also help ensure all had decent access when next this process takes place.

**Do you have any recommendations to improve the mainstreaming of protection and gender for future responses?**

• Need to target work with other clusters sooner. I would still recommend that the food and livelihoods and the recovery cluster be targeted to improve inclusion in those clusters.

• G&P needs to build capacity to ensure better representation and informed trained personnel are on site at rapid response recovery periods. Otherwise, a crash course on G&P at the start, during rapid assessment/response and recovery if lacking may help to better represent G&P throughout the rapid assessment, implementation and monitoring throughout the response and recovery period.

• Orientation on prevention of sexual abuse for humanitarian workers - could have been integrated as part of the coordination effort.

• Capacity building for mainstream agencies via clusters during "peace time". Development of assessment tools and methodologies that are truly inclusive and capture the voices of marginalised people, during non-disaster time, and find ways to advocate for their use when surge capacity teams arrive with other ideas. Include gender and protection as standing agenda item in all cluster agendas. Include collection of gender and protection related data in 3Ws so that mainstream agencies have to report on it. Have G&P cluster leads attending all cluster meetings and sharing key messages regarding inclusion at an earlier stage.

• Making sure that people who are our in assessment must be trained properly on the gender assessment forms and survey as a whole.
• Provide support to other clusters to inform them on G&P issues. Perhaps one focal point per cluster to attend all meetings, provide support in assessments and reporting, and to report back to G&P on other cluster activities.

• Clear and simple tools such as check list for other clusters that are easy for the clusters to incorporate into their existing work.

• For NDMO to take a strong lead on the Cluster and to follow the guidelines of the government.

Any other comments you would like to share?

• Vanuatu was overwhelmed by the invasion of goodwill, which would have been better staggered. For Small Pacific Island States, cluster process does not appear a practical approach. A briefer version of the same may be more realistic so as not to stun and debilitate a small nation recovery from shock and who have resilience having suffered many disasters in the past. Clusters must align to local government NDMO process.

• Member agencies should have a designated focal point for coordination. It is quite difficult to combine the role in coordination as well as for implementation of response initiative.

• The UNHCR Protection Coordination Officer was fantastic and I would highly recommend her for future cluster work in the Pacific.

• Thank you!

• Work greatly done. Highly comment the team :)

• Government must take the lead.
Lessons Learned from TC Pam: Health and Nutrition Cluster

21 May 2015 | WHO Conference Room

The Health and Nutrition Cluster conducted its Lessons Learned Workshop on 21 May 2015. This was held at the WHO Conference Room, and was attended by partners from the Ministry of Health (MoH), technical agencies (SPC, UNICEF, WHO) and NGOs. The Lessons Learned Workshop was chaired by Mr. Viran Tovu (MoH) as the Health and Nutrition Cluster Lead.

Focal points or representatives from each working group within the cluster presented the Strengths, Weaknesses and Recommendations for three identified timeframes of: Before TC Pam made a landfall, Immediately After (first 72 hours) and Emergency Phase (72 hours – 6 weeks after).

The working groups included:
- Assets and Infrastructure
- Disease Surveillance
- Expanded Program for Immunization (EPI)
- Foreign Medical Teams (FMT)
- Health Cluster Coordination
- Information Education and Communications (IEC)
- Logistics
- Medical Evacuations
- Nutrition
- Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)
- Water and Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Discussions followed the presentation of each working group.

This paper synthesizes the outcome of the Lessons Learned Workshop, with a presentation of thematic points from all the working groups.

I. Strengths

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Group</th>
<th>Before Landfall</th>
<th>Immediately After</th>
<th>Emergency Phase</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets and Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>• Available database of health facilities (HF) excluding Aid Posts. (Community Aid Posts looked after by Save the Children) • Available lists of fixed assets and inventory for every HF</td>
<td>• Established (on credit) agreement with local suppliers • Procurement of construction services from local providers • Maintenance of power supply in VCH; assistance with the connection</td>
<td>• System in place, including budget availability, for emergency procurement activities • Damages estimated based on infrastructure assessments • Integration of Health and Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Group</td>
<td>Before Landfall</td>
<td>Immediately After</td>
<td>Emergency Phase</td>
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| **Expanded Program for Immunizations (EPI)** | • Procurement of water protection measures  
• Updated contact list and established communications plan                                         | • Coordination with FMTs for work to be prioritized                                                        | • Ease to compile damages and losses due to available baseline information          |
|                                           | • Functional National Vaccine Supply and Cold Chain System  
• Existing working relationship with Technical Agencies to strengthen routine immunization activities resulting in good baseline coverage  
• Coverage of Measles immunity gap with SIA campaign and new vaccine introduction (IPV Rubella).  
• Resources available (materials, HR, partners, CCE inventory, etc.) | • No vaccine damages with immediate restoration of power supply  
• Possible causes to damaged stocks were addressed immediately  
• Resources available (materials, HR, partners, inventory, etc.) | • Coordination and support among cluster partners  
• Timely conduct of emergency Measles vaccination campaign with integration of other EPI related activities
• Proper orientation with cold chain and vaccine management  
• Reliable power supply re-established |
| **Foreign Medical Teams (FMT)**           | • Available specialists – local and FMT - on the ground  
• Existing network with FMT  
• Existing policy on registration process for incoming FMT                                                      | • Amendments in registration process  
• Timely arrival of FMT  
• Deployment strategy of FMT  
• Gaps filled to ensure health service delivery                                                                 | • Full implementation of FMT registration and deployment criteria  
• Gaps filled to ensure health service delivery  
• Briefing and debriefing of teams  
• Capacity building for the MoH staff on the ground  
• Donations to the MoH |
| **Health Cluster Coordination (HCC)**      | • Timely information sharing with Health Managers to ensure preparations were done accordingly  
• MoH Disaster Management Plan in place, including EoC activation  
• Appointment of HC Lead and set up of HC EOC                                                                 | • Functioning EOC  
• Partners Commitment to the HC with participation in activities and information sharing  
• Some availability of information on affected areas for stakeholders to plan activities  
• Issuance of situational reports (SitRep) | • Fully functioning EOC  
• Regular HC meetings, with sufficient information sharing  
• Regular issuance of SitRep/HC Bulletin and 3Ws |
| **Information, Education and Communications (IEC)** | • Existing IEC mechanisms in place, including the network of Health Promotion Officers in the provinces; as well as multimedia | • Availability of IEC package  
• Establishment of working groups to develop key health messages  
• Partnerships with other actors | • Development and dissemination of IEC package  
• Involvement of community based networks (Vatu Mauri Consortium) |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communications activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Multimedia (print, radio, websites) activities</td>
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</table>
| Logistics     | • Coordination with other working groups within the health cluster and relevant MoH departments/units  
|               | • Coordination and integration of health cluster logistics with the other relevant clusters  
|               | • Quick re-establishment of CMS after the cyclone  
|               | • Existing CMS facility and stores unaffected.  
|               | • Re-establishment of routine re-supply process within 1 month  
|               | • Ability to rapidly establish a logistics hub in Tanna to support distribution in Tafea Province |
| Medical Evacuations (MedEvac) | • Referral system in place, including choices for mode of transportation (fixed wings, boats or helicopters)  
|               | • Amended referral system to reflect the increased demand (e.g. focal point identified, etc.)  
|               | • Added resources from FMT to meet the increased demand |
|               | • Coordination in place to meet with the increased demand  
|               | • Added resources to manage the increased demand  
|               | • Timely and proper transition to “normal” MedEvac system over time |
| Nutrition     | • Existing capacity of 3 provincial hospitals to manage malnutrition cases  
|               | • Existing capacity of selected HWs in 5 provincial hospitals trained on IYCF, including IFE (infant feeding in emergencies)  
|               | • Availability of added HR to support MoH’s Nutrition program  
|               | • Joint statement on appropriate feeding in emergencies signed by MoH DG and UNICEF Representative  
|               | • Immediate set-up of Nutrition WG (for emergency response)  
|               | • Availability of added HR for TA |
|               | • Procurement of emergency nutrition supplies  
|               | • Strengthened existing capacity of provincial hospitals with provision of emergency nutrition supplies  
|               | • Integration of nutrition related activities (screening, IYCF, etc.) into EPI activities as well as set up of Nutrition surveillance in Efate  
|               | • Strengthened capacity of HFs in Efate with training on MUAC screening and IYCF counseling |
| Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) | • Existing system/network of HFs with RMCH services and centralized supply system  
|               | • Development of RMNCAH work plan between MoH and Technical Agencies  
|               | • Availability of additional resources  
|               | • Coordination with HC partners  
|               | • Coordination with relevant agencies on available resources |
|               | • Set up of RMNCAH working group with coordination of activities which ensured analysis of needs and gaps, and delivery of RMNCAH services in affected areas  
<p>|               | • Effective mobilization of available resources in affected areas |</p>
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<th>Before Landfall</th>
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</table>
| Surveillance and Early Warning System | • Existing disease surveillance system in place in 8 sites covering all 6 provinces  
• Event Based Surveillance set-up since 2012 | • Availability of additional resources from Technical Agencies to scale up disease surveillance (EWARN) | • Establishment of EWARN in 11 more sites within a week; with eventual implementation of 24 sites in affected areas and reporting on 8 syndromes  
• Constant communication with all sites  
• Availability of additional resources |
| Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH) | • Availability of water source in both urban and rural areas | • Rapid assessments to gauge damages in both urban and rural areas  
• Resources from relevant government agencies to ensure water availability  
• Availability of resources to conduct water testing and hygiene promotion activities | • Provision of safe drinking water in both urban and rural areas  
• Coordination among working group partners |
### II. Weaknesses

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<tr>
<th>Working Group</th>
<th>Before Landfall</th>
<th>Immediately After</th>
<th>Emergency Phase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets and Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>• Non disaster resilient measures in place</td>
<td>• Limited available financial resources for rapid procurement</td>
<td>• No ToR for PWD led Infrastructure Working Group and confusion as to how MOH Infrastructure is managed</td>
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<td>• Non availability of alternative means of communication</td>
<td>• Limited staff availability; no contingency plan to contact staff</td>
<td>• Constrained productivity for actual work done due to excessive meetings which continued until 5 weeks afterwards</td>
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<td>• Incorrect available information (GPS coordinates) for mapping</td>
<td>• No contingency or standby facilities to ensure service delivery</td>
<td>• Multiple documentation for Health Facility Assessment (Infrastructure vs Health indicators)</td>
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<td>• Coordination with other working groups took longer than necessary</td>
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<td>• PHM and Hospital Management POCs not properly engaged (National Control issues)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expanded Program for Immunizations (EPI)</strong></td>
<td>• No focal person at national level to oversee cold chain operations</td>
<td>• Power interruption with insufficient fuel supply to maintain cold chain</td>
<td>• Power supply was only reliable after 1 week</td>
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<td>• Weak routine outreach public health service delivery and lack of surveillance for Vaccine Preventable Diseases</td>
<td>• Non-compliance of cold room to standards</td>
<td>• Non disaster resilient solar powered cold chain installed</td>
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<td>• No contingency plan for cold chain operations from local to national levels</td>
<td>• Low HR capacity</td>
<td>• Insufficient HR</td>
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<td>• Inadequate community based outreach services</td>
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<td><strong>Foreign Medical Teams (FMT)</strong></td>
<td>• Lack of information regarding which FMT would be arriving</td>
<td>• Delayed processing of FMT registration</td>
<td>• Lack of proper reporting documentation and debriefing by the FMT</td>
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<td>• No FMT management committee</td>
<td>• Non-compliance with FMT registration</td>
<td>• Lack of proper transition/handover to the local staff</td>
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<td>• Non-cooperation of FMT regarding deployment procedures</td>
<td>• FMT working in isolation and not involving the local staff</td>
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<td>• The capacity of FMT was often mismatched to the needs required in country</td>
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<td>Working Group</td>
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| Health Cluster Coordination (HCC) | • MoH Disaster Management Plan in place does not consider a large scale disaster  
• The Disaster Plan was outdated  
• Lack of knowledge of the MoH Disaster Management Plan  
• No Health cluster meeting Prior to TC PAM | • Insufficient commitment to participate in HC activities  
• Unreliable assessments and information on health delivery services  
• Dual cluster lead structure with two separate health cluster coordination/operations centres (one in the MoH and one in WHO conference room)  
• Communication difficulties between personnel stationed in the two centres leading to issues with coordination of activities  
• Issues with decision making and activity planning between all the different health cluster working groups and NDMO | • Overall coordination of all assistance (materials, financial, HR/FMTs, etc.) available.  
• TORs for emergency response team not shared with relevant persons leading to confusion about roles and responsibilities  
• Ongoing communication issues between cluster leads  
• Limited engagement of MOH managers and executive in coordination activities  
• Multiple assessments leading to confusion and assessment fatigue  
• Issues with assessment form design leading to incorrect or poor information capture |
| Information, Education and Communications (IEC) | • IEC network not in place at national level  
• No IEC clearance procedures in place | • Non-inclusive working group activities | • Lack of sustained engagement of all IEC partners  
• Non acknowledgment of system in place for IEC materials among partners |
| Logistics | • No system established to account for the emergency medical supplies and other items that had been demanded  
• Limited capacity to manage the receipt, storage, and distribution of emergency stores in addition to routine resupply.  
• Limited personnel available to enable emergency stores procured by WHO to be accounted for in CMS accounting system  
• Multiple storage facilities established in Port Vila resulting in operational inefficiencies  
• CMS transport assets in poor condition or unreliable reducing flexibility of operations  
• Only 1 main medical storage location in the country | | |
| Medical Evacuations | • System in place did not consider a large scale disaster  
• Lack of MedEvac criteria during a large scale disaster | • Lack of coordination with the NDMO (logistically) to cope with increased demand  
• Communication break down  
• Unexpected operational expenses | • Communication break down  
• Unexpected operational expenses  
• Lack of knowledge on the referral criteria/system in place and thus, leading to unnecessary MedEvacs  
• MedEvacs based on stories, due to lack of communication, and not on |
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</table>
| Nutrition                                         | • Lack of capacity to operate nutrition programs due to supply shortage, no partners present, etc.  
• No emergency preparedness response plan         | • Lack of partners in NWG  
• No prior experience in the humanitarian response architecture among NWG partners            | • Lack of partners in NWG  
• Constraints related to supply distribution, screening, referrals, and reporting mechanisms        |
| Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) | • Outdated Emergency Preparedness Plan with no preparedness activities  
• Non universal coverage for MCH program  
• Lack of HR  
• Weak PHC programs at the provincial levels  
• Lack of funding for PH programs at national level | • MCH needs not prioritised  
• Stockpile not available for distribution of RH commodities  
• No clear information on damages and needs from affected areas | • Set up of RH/RMNCAH working group delay  
• Ineffective system for the distribution of supplies  
• Lack of HR in affected areas, as well as issues on competencies of staff |
| Surveillance and Early Warning System              | • No identified position for surveillance at both national and provincial levels  
• Case investigation and response (EWARN), including laboratory diagnosis, not possible due to the lack of mechanisms in place  
• Non timely reporting anticipated due to lack of capacity | • Lack of communication and coordination between existing system and emergency response team and FMT  
• Lack of inter cluster coordination, especially to facilitate transportation of staff and materials |                                                                                                         |
| Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion           | • Lack of disaster preparedness plan  
• No Water Safety Plan  
• Lack of toilet facilities in affected areas  
• Unreliable water sources in rural areas | • Unreliable water sources in rural areas  
• Poor hygiene practices observed  
• Dependence on external partners for assistance | • Unreliable water sources in rural areas  
• Poor hygiene practices observed  
• Slow and unequal supply distribution in affected areas |
### III. Recommendations

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<th>Working Group</th>
<th>Before Landfall</th>
<th>Immediately After</th>
<th>Emergency Phase</th>
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</table>
| **Assets and Infrastructure**        | • Based on Provincial Resource Review Information, define facilities in need of disaster resilience measures  
• Establish alternate communications at MOH or NDMO for MOH to draw down.  
• Establishment of alternate power systems or preferred supplier agreement in place to activate on disaster occurrence  
• Preferred supplier agreements in place for goods, services and works which can be activated after a disaster occurrence  
• Role Delineation document to be completed and endorsed  
• Established infrastructure database with assessment report standardisation | • Establishment of a standing imprest system once warning system is activated (500,000 Vatu)  
• Contingency plan for no communications in place  
• Procurement of standby facilities for cold chain and morgue setup or agreements with suppliers in place  
• Clear guidance to other health cluster partners on the cluster system and interactions that should occur  
• Establishment of one centralised and accessible EOC for all partners | • Ability to scale up for routine support to MOH Infrastructure, for assessment and rapid procurement  
• Limit membership from other health partners and ensure support from the MOH on activities undertaken |
| **Expanded Program for Immunizations (EPI)** | • Develop contingency plans for cold chain and vaccine management at all levels  
• Secure sustainable and predictable funding and implement routine community based mobile outreach vaccinations integrating essential population based services  
• Analyse immunization program management by provincial HFIs and map out vulnerable high risk areas | • Follow standards on contingency effective immunization management and planning, and implementation for disasters  
• Update national cold chain inventory according to recent global standards and procure additional equipment  
• Implement measles campaign plan with adequate budgeting during emergencies | • Ensure Cluster Assessment tools include adequate Cold chain variables  
• Ensure quality supervision and monitoring during measles campaign  
• Continue best practices e.g. good partners collaboration, MOH commitments |
| **Foreign Medical Teams (FMT)**     | • Implementation of FMT Registration and Guidelines  
• Set up of a FMT Management Committee within the MoH  
• Sharing of information on MoH website with links, resources and  | • Proper briefing and deployment process | • Proper transition/handover to the local staff  
• FMTs working together with the local staff to build capacity and to work in the country context appropriately  |
<table>
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</table>
| **Health Cluster Coordination (HCC)** | • MoH Disaster Management Plan to include large scale disasters, particularly based on the lessons learned from TC Pam  
• Ensure dissemination and awareness of Disaster Management Plan, including drill exercises  
• Appointment of a full time MoH Disaster Officer  
• Regular HC planning meetings  
• Prepare assessment form templates and other relevant materials for use during emergencies | • Need for communication back up plan at both national and local levels  
• Commitment to participate in HC activities  
• Reliable assessments and information on health delivery services in health affected areas  
• Establish a single, central health cluster operations centre for managing logistics, information management and other key functions  
• Co-locate cluster leads and coordinators, regardless of which agency they represent | • Better coordination of all available assistance among government agencies and within the HC members  
• Clearly identify roles and responsibilities across all HC partners involved in coordination  
• Where possible, co-locate functions performed by other agencies with relevant MOH officers so as to engage MOH fully in activities and make best use of local knowledge |
| **Information, Education and Communications (IEC)** | • Contingency plans in place (IEC materials, agreements with telecommunications companies)  
• Engagement with community based organizations (Vatu Mauri Consortium) and other IEC partners  
• Full utilization of available HR  
• Implementation of the Risk Communications Strategic Plan, including training of current staff | • Policy development on MedEvacs, including referral criteria and contingency fund during a large scale disaster | • Proper coordination with other relevant agencies  
• Other actors and stakeholders to be aware of the referral criteria | • Coordination in place to meet with the increased demand  
• Added resources to manage the increased demand |
| **Logistics** | • Establish reserves of critical equipment for use in future responses  
• Update stockpile of materials to be readily available when needed  
• Develop an operating model for the expansion of CMS and logistic support at provincial level in emergencies to include the integration of emergency response staff from other agencies  
• Recruit staff to enable 2nd (Northern) CMS to be opened so that 2 distribution hubs are established  
• Make improvements to existing CMS storage space and transport fleet  
• Identify facilities and or temporary infrastructure that can be used in emergencies to expand available storage space  
• Establish MoUs with owners to enable these to be used in emergencies  
• Establish MoUs with transport providers to enable the transport fleet to be increased at short notice in emergencies | | |
<p>| <strong>Medical Evacuations</strong> | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>• Nutrition emergency preparedness and response plan (EPRP)</td>
<td>• Inclusion of RMNCAH agenda during assessments</td>
<td>• Timely and proper transition to the existing MoH MedEvac system over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transition from Nutrition Working Group to Nutrition Committee (led by MoH nutrition coordinator) after HAP period.</td>
<td>• Ensure implementation of the MISP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Continued procurement of nutrition supplies (therapeutic milk, amoxicillin, Vitamin A, albendazole, Resomal, Rutf)</td>
<td>• Fully utilize available HR</td>
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<td>• Continuous monitoring and reporting for nutrition programs and action on milk code violations</td>
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<td>• Increase capacity of staff with annual training on nutrition related programs</td>
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<td>Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)</td>
<td>• Develop emergency preparedness plan and review and develop cluster assessment tools</td>
<td>• Inclusion of RMNCAH agenda during assessments</td>
<td>• Strengthen existing supply chain system</td>
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<td>• Preposition essential health kits and commodities, with an updated stockpile</td>
<td>• Ensure implementation of the MISP</td>
<td>• Build capacity on MISP and use of kits, with monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>• Strengthen Public Health System at all levels</td>
<td>• Fully utilize available HR</td>
<td>• Design policy and guidelines to address unmet RH and other MNCAH gaps</td>
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<td>• Ensure the provision of safe drinking water in both urban and rural areas</td>
<td>• Hygiene promotion should be a continuous activity</td>
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<td>• Hygiene promotion should be a continuous activity</td>
<td>• Better coordination and understanding between the health cluster WASH activities and WASH cluster activities</td>
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IV. Thematic Points and Recommendations

The health system in Vanuatu follows existing guidelines and protocols, including a disaster response preparedness plan. However, this document had not been updated for many years and there was a lack of awareness of the plan. Whilst there were less than expected deaths and injuries when TC Pam hit Vanuatu, the impact on the health system was severe. The circumstances facing the health sector before the event, such as appropriate funding for public health programs and lack of human resources, further exacerbated gaps to be able to deliver adequate health services.

The implementation of the cluster system proved to be useful for the health sector. First, this ensured that processes and procedures of the existing system were followed in spite of the sudden influx of partners. Second, the importance of coordination among the different working groups in the cluster, and between the cluster and the other clusters is highlighted to ensure that health services are uninterrupted. Third, collective activities identified the weak points within the health system which were addressed and brought forward to be addressed for longer term planning.

With the Recovery Phase underway, it is appropriate to address the identified weak points within the health system. The health system must be strengthened, with an increased capacity to respond to disasters of any kind. This entails a sufficient allocation of resources, particularly financial and human resources. Disaster Risk Management is a four way cycle of four phases which include; prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Prevention
While addressing infrastructural damages to the health facilities are undertaken, recommended measures to be disaster resilient should be implemented. Human resources is of utmost importance, particularly to preposition and assume more responsibilities as needed. The availability of human resources following a disaster cannot be assured and this becomes even more critical if there are few available at the onset. Contingency plans should be drawn to ensure an uninterrupted delivery of health services.

Preparedness
Strengthening the health system also pertain to increasing the capacity in the provincial level. Every provincial health team should be capable to address health related concerns immediately following any disaster and such capacity could be further supplemented by the resources from the national level later on. This engagement between national and provincial levels can be ascertained if there would be a strong link existing between the two prior to any disaster. Stockpiles of inventory are updated. Coordination among health partners and with other clusters is important. Engagement of external actors can be inevitable in some circumstances. Contextual and information background should be readily available. Adherence to existing guidelines and policies must be reinforced.

Response
The National Disaster Response Plan should be revisited. Operational guidelines should be included, citing practical and doable action points to be undertaken, such as the prepositioning of available human resources and the availability of an emergency fund ready for use. Available human resources must be fully utilized; and the engagement of community based organizations must be undertaken. The engagement between the MoH and the Provincial Health Management teams, ascertained during ‘preparedness’ as cited above, should be ensured during the response phase following any disaster. Provincial Health Management teams should be consulted during assessments and prior to any operational decision to be made. The provincial MoH staff should have been better engaged by the national MoH staff and by the broader cluster. It was noted that the teams going out to the provinces could have better utilised the knowledge of local MoH personnel on the ground.
While the immediate response focuses on life saving activities, the sustainability of such activities must be taken into consideration at the onset. Efforts should be done to ensure that local capacity is increased.

Recovery
Rehabilitation of infrastructure and restoration of interrupted services are the most common association with recovery; but this should also include the restoration of the health system which is the backbone which ensures the delivery of health services. As the health sector is in its recovery phase, there is a window of opportunity to address pre – TC Pam health inequities and for the sector to be “built back better.”
Emergency Response to Cyclone PAM

National WASH - Lessons Learned Workshop

22nd June 2015
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### Introduction

The National WASH I Lessons Learned Workshop was designed to provide a platform for stakeholders to discuss, reflect and learn from the cyclone PAM response. The National workshop was fed by two provincial lessons learned in, Tafea and Shefa provinces. The outcomes of the workshop was to:

- Highlight key activities and results
- Reflection on what worked well
- Challenges observed and improvements that could be made for the next emergency
- Consolidate WASH lessons learned for inputs into a National Response Lessons Learned (NDMO)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Where and When</th>
<th>The Melanesian Hotel Conference Centre, Port Vila.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitators &amp; Speakers</td>
<td>Erickson Sammy (DGMWR), Hilson Taulau (UNICEF), William Fellows (WASH Cluster), Brecht Mommen (UNICEF/DGWMR), Daniel Ervin (WASH Cluster), Mark Chanoo (UNICEF), Viviane Obed (CARE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Provincial Directors from Tafea, Shefa and Malampa, Ministry of Health, DGMWR, Vanuatu Red Cross, Kaleva Yachting Services (KYS), Live and Learn, OXFAM, World Vision International, ADRA, UNICEF, CARE, Save The Children, Political advisor to the minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Breakdown</td>
<td>19 males : 9 female (28 persons)</td>
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</table>

The Lessons Learned workshop comprised of an official opening, which was followed by a number of presentations and group work in the afternoon session. The presentations included the following:

1. Opening speech by the Minister (DGMWR, Annex 1)
2. National WASH Cluster Response (DGMWR, Annex 2)
3. Women in Emergencies Forum Findings (CARE, Annex 3)
4. Provincial WASH Lessons Learned (DGMWR, Annex 4)

The group work sessions were separated into 4 thematic areas: disaster preparedness, disaster response, coordination and information management in relation to the PAM disaster response. Following the following points were identified as the key challenges:

1. **Preparedness** – Lack of contingency planning at all levels, SOPs, emergency stocks and clarified roles for all levels of the response (National, Provincial and community).
2. **Response** – delay to start response, getting materials in country and difficulty accessing remote sites, coordination and confusion between roles and responsibilities, assessment data not well managed
3. **Coordination** – Worked well at the level of cluster, challenges linking with other groups, challenges with roles of area councils, managing huge volumes of information generated from the response.
Preparedness

The Preparedness group was facilitated by Erickson Sammy (DGMWR). Preparedness is defined as the activities in the time period between receiving the first alert/warning and the cyclone event. Workshop participants were asked to work on the following focus questions.

1 – What aspects of the preparation for PAM worked well and what didn’t

Most effective:
- It was generally agreed that the existence of a disaster management policy and the NDMO was effective.
- Use of mobile technology for assessments
- There were emergency supplies available and dispatched immediately during the emergency.
- There was an operational WASH network of professionals in-country.

Least effective:
- No minimum standards for humanitarian response
- No budget allocation for emergency
- There was a lack of emergency protocols and SOPs
- Contingency planning at the national and provincial level
- Mapping and identification of key partners per geographic area
- Coordination with area council secretaries was poor
- Engagement on gender issues – the lack of participation of women in decision making processes in relation to the humanitarian response.
- There was insufficient coordination between provincial and national level
- Logistics and access to remote communities were problematic

2 – What WASH items should be prepositioned and where should they be kept?

Participants generally thought that the following contingency stock should be kept in the national and provincial warehouses:

- Emergency water tanks and bladders
- Pipes and fittings and plumber tool kits
- Water testing kits
- Hygiene and WASH kits with jerry cans, soap, water purification tablets (although there remains a need to agree on what standardized kits should contain)
3 – What systems of preparedness should be put in place or strengthened

This group work question generated a lengthy discussion on all the systems that could have been in place to better prepare for the next cyclone. Groups identified the following:

- Emergency SOPs and WASH minimum standards
- Contingency planning for NDMO, PDC and CDCs
- Trainings and simulations – most participants identified needs for capacity development through additional disaster preparedness and response training and simulation exercises. Participants highlighted the need to develop capacity for CDCs, PDCs, Area Council secretaries and village plumbers.
- Contingency WASH Stocks – participants identified the importance of having contingency WASH supplies at a provincial level. Standard WASH items were listed such as hygiene kits, water tanks, pumps, generators and water purification tablets.
- Community profiles and consistent geographic information – most participants identified the challenge of having correct community profiles and population data, the lack of updated information about communities led to confusion during distributions and some communities missing out.

Response

The group work session on Emergency response to PAM was facilitated by Hilson Toaliu (UNICEF). The group work focused on answering the focus questions below.

1 – In the emergency response to PAM what was the most and least useful activity?

The participants were requested to list all WASH activities in the response and rank them on a scale of very useful and not useful. This was a challenging question, however, participants generally agreed on the following:

**Most effective:**
Rapid distribution of wash supplies and quick water system repair
Communication and information sharing established quickly (within the WASH Cluster)

**Least effective:**
Lots of relationships with provincial areas, and local knowledge not fully utilized.
2 – What items, materials and supplies were most and least useful during the response?

Generally participants listed the following items as most useful during the response:

**Useful:**
- Water tanks, water containers, water filters
- Water containers with taps – higher quality jerry cans.

**Less useful:**
- Aquatabs – as the communities were generally unfamiliar with the technology it was almost impossible to ensure their correct use or adoption during the emergency
- Poor quality jerry cans – that fell apart too easily.
- Some tanks were given without taps, or without proper hardware, without covers and necessary materials
- Items sometimes did not meet needs of children and disabled

3 - Which response activities were on time and effective?

- Water distributions around Efate
- Outer islands distribution of WASH Supplies and water wasn’t sufficient and often arrived too late
- Emergency short term repairs for rain catchment areas was effective
- Working with shelter cluster together for rain catchment solutions – was slow and not effective.

4 - How could gender/ protection issues be better integrated into the response?

- Separate toilet facilities for men and women in public areas
- Empower women to be more involved in the humanitarian response
- Most vulnerable people (children and disabled) should be assisted first

5 - What was the biggest challenge during the response

During this session participants were asked to identify the biggest challenges during the response. The group identified the following:

- Coordination with all the new people/ groups – influx of many new people and groups into the country for the response
- Information management
- Confused assessment processes – meant information was not well utilised
- Governance structures in communities was sometimes unclear so difficult to coordinate relief

6- What skills were required in the emergency response?

During this session participants were asked to identify skill that could have been useful in the emergency response. The group decided to list important skills for the following levels:

- Partnering international experts more strongly with local experts
- Coordination skills – especially in provincial level and how to connect provincial and national
- Planning skills and working with people in CDCs
- Must be able to strengthen existing CDCs
- Community based capacity building on emergency response

These skills and competencies are often quite generic, further discussions are required to identify which skills are most relevant at each level and to target training towards emergency preparedness, response and coordination.

Emergency Coordination

The session on coordination was facilitated by Brecht Mommen (DGMRW/UNICEF)

1 - In the PAM emergency response identify the biggest coordination gaps?

Participants were asked to identify what they thought to be the biggest coordination gaps. The most frequently occurring responses are summarized below:

- Linkages between national – provincial- community
- Geographical and demographical profiles of the provinces not complete
- No (standard) plan available and provincial and community level
- Assessment data – collected irrelevant data- not capturing required data

2- What aspects of the coordination in the response worked well?

Participants were asked to identify the aspects of the coordination that they thought worked well. The majority of the participants identified the following:

National
• Leadership of WASH cluster - chaired by the director and Minister attending
• Consistency in WASH cluster meeting and information management
• Mobile phone data collection during initial assessments was analyzed and used

Province
• Shefa: had access to information and the CDC had capacity
• Shefa & Tafea: Activated the emergency centers with daily meetings
• Had officers on the ground (gov, ngos, and others)

3 - What aspects of the coordination in the response did not work well?

Participants were asked to identify the aspects of the coordination that they thought did not work well. The majority of the participants identified the following:

• HR Capacity constraints at provincial level
• Information overflow
• Linkages with critical clusters:
  – Limited information from Health & Education
  – Shelter was not providing new roofs – how to fix the rainwater harvesting.

4 - How useful were cluster meetings?

Participants generally found that cluster meetings were useful, meetings were often well attended by government, agencies and local representatives. The meetings had clear agendas and minutes were made available.

• Useful for information sharing
• Despite influx of many expats, DGMWR remained in control of the cluster
• Avoid "jargon" to ensure everybody understands
• Avoid photocopying other responses such as the Philippines

5- How can coordination gaps be addressed?

• Strengthen the linkages between national – provincial- community
• Ensure and update Geographical and demographical profiles of the provinces
• Develop and build capacity to implement standard operation procedures at the provincial and community level
• Revisit the assessment form

Information Management

Participants in the Information Management working group were asked to respond to a number of focus questions which will be discussed below. The session was facilitated by Daniel Ervin (WASH Cluster)

1 - How was the information shared from the top to the bottom?

Participant’s perception was that information had no clear direction of flow or legitimacy. It seemed that there was massive amounts of information flows, assessment data, sitreps and other reports.

Both NDMO and OCHA distributed different sitreps with different information

Participants agreed that coordination specific information should be centralized thought the NDMO and that WASH information should be centralized through the WASH Cluster.

2 - Did the assessments inform program activities and how?

Assessment data was not fully utilized – much of the important information was not captured AND the assessment form also capturing information that was not relevant.

Standardized assessment forms for adapted situation (cyclone, earthquake, etcetera) should be developed and used (if possible mobile phone applications to make collection and analysis more streamlined)

3- How could Information management be improved?

Up-to-date statistics, community profiles, and standard place and village names should be maintained
Mapping files – easy to access and common file for marking locations, helicopter sites, warehouses and distribution points.

Standardized assessment tool that can be changed for different situations – agreed methodology and responsibility as to who should conduct and analysis assessment data.

Harmonized reporting between coordination bodies – NDMO, OCHA and Clusters.

Centralized (and maintained) central repository for response information

Final Exercise: What one thing would I have done differently if I had it to do over?

In the final session participants were asked to reflect for a moment on their personal involvement in the response. They were then asked to write on a VIPP card the one thing they would have done differently if they could. The results were as follows:

4 people had comments related to the Assessment including 2 that suggest fully utilizing the Communities/CDC in the assessments, one calling for better use of all decentralized Government structures and one calling for a review of the form to be more specific on WASH and better include gender and protection issues.
3 people would have kept better records of what was happening by keeping a daily diary recording all key decisions so we could look back and better analyze the response.
6 responses were related to the response itself with 3 people say we should have acted faster by planning less and getting lifesaving materials in the country quicker, a faster distribution of water storage followed immediately by water delivery. We should have sent a helicopter to Mataso immediately, and we should have put more emphasis on hygiene and preventive health messages.
4 responses were related to communication with 2 people saying they should have engaged more proactively with the WASH Cluster and 2 saying we should have had better communication from National level through Provinces and Area Councils to the community and vice versa.
3 responses revolved around the reporting with a better indication of where we were working and what we were doing and using this information to hold partners accountable and finally 1 person thought we should have asked for more money.

Recommendations and conclusions

Preparedness – Clarify roles and responsibilities of WASH actors at different levels: National, Provincial and community, strengthen information sharing and communication between National and provincial. Develop clear contingency plans, SOPs, emergency budget and stocks.

Response: Use contingency plans, agreed assessment forms, respond quickly, use existing and local knowledge. Develop coordination and information sharing quickly. Develop links with private sector to access supplies, materials and transport logistics quickly.

Coordination: Focus on the links between National and provincial coordination, ensure participation of women.

Information management: Establish and respect flows of information, having mapping files and common place names available, ensure assessment data is completed quickly, is adapted, processes and utilized.
Annex 1 – Minister’s opening speech

Distinguished members of the diplomatic missions, Directors and others from the Government of Vanuatu, staff of the United Nations, members of non-governmental organizations:

It gives me great pride to, as one of my first public acts address welcome you to this most important lessons learned workshop. On March 13th at approximately 11:00 pm, Cyclone Pam a category 5 hurricane slammed into the country bringing sustained winds of 250 km/hr and with wind gusts of 320 kph. It was in short the most terrifying natural disaster in the country in living memory.

Over the next couple of days as the storm moved south along the country the most damage was done to the provinces of Shefa and Tafea, consequently I am very happy to see the Secretary Generals of those Provinces here with us today. Due to the inherent resilience of the Vanuatu people and the advance warning issued by the NDMO loss of life was limited however there was extensive damage to infrastructure.

88% of all rainwater harvesting systems were damaged, 272 of those community based. 48 direct gravity flow systems and 12 indirect gravity flow systems along with 17 handpumps were damaged making water supply one of the highest priorities of the response. Water was ranked the number one need by the communities in the immediate aftermath of the storm. In addition almost 70% of all sanitation superstructures were damaged in the affected area and only 30% of people reported washing their hands leading to the increased risk of disease outbreak.

The coordinated response of the communities, provinces, national government and international organizations was immediate with the first meeting on cyclone Pam of the WASH Cluster taking place before the storm made landfall. This response fully coordinated by the Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources has managed to immediately start supplying safe drinking water to more than 68,000 people, more than 71,000 people have received emergency lifesaving WASH supplies, more than 21,000 people have had their water supplies systems repaired, hygiene messages have been received by almost 120,000 people and, largely through their own efforts, we believe that the sanitation situations has returned to pre-Pam levels.

On behalf of those people and the entire population of Vanuatu I would like to thank you for your efforts on their behalf. I would also like to particularly thank the Department who through the strong leadership of the Director; Erickson Sammy, has
successfully coordinated this effort. I would like to thank UNICEF for its rapid and unending help to the Department in this coordination. Thanks to DFID and CANADEM for the rapid deployment of a full time coordinator and thanks to DFAT and REDR Australia for supplying a full time information manager. I would like to thank DFID, DFAT, IFRC and CADENA for supplying funds and to World Vision, Oxfam and UNICEF for utilizing their own resources in the response and of course thank to you all who have worked so hard over the last three months to make this response a success.

As we exit the humanitarian phase of the response it becomes clear that while the capacity of the sector when cyclone Pam hit was insufficient to meet all needs created by the storm this capacity but it has grown significantly in the last three months and that with the help of all the partners represented in this room that WASH Cluster has been one of the most successful clusters. It is my sincere hope that as we enter into the reconstruction phase of the recovery this capacity will not be lost and that as we move forward that under the continued leadership of my Ministry we will be able to successfully rebuild Vanuatu.

And with these few words it gives me great pleasure to declare this workshop open.

**Annex 2- Cyclone Pam Department of Water Resources Lessons Learned**
Accompanying file

**Annex 3 – Women in emergencies – preliminary results table**
Accompanying file

**Annex 4 – Pacific Angry Monster: WASH Cluster Shefa and Tafea Findings**
Accompanying file

**Annex 5 – Lessons Learned Workshop Agenda**

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<td>Welcome and Introduction – Hilson Toaliu (UNICEF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:45</td>
<td>Emergency Context of Cyclone PAM and relevance of Lessons Learned – Mark Chanoo (UNICEF)</td>
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<td>10:15</td>
<td>Opening Speech of the Minister – delivered by Erickson Sammy (DGMWR)</td>
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<td>10:30</td>
<td>Break – Morning Tea</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>National WASH Response – Erickson Sammy (DGMWR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>Women in Emergency Response Forum – feedback Vivian Obed (CARE)</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>Provincial Lessons Learned – Shefa and Tafea – Brecht Mommen (UNICEF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Group work introduction – Facilitated by William Fellows</td>
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<td>12:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>13:30</td>
<td>Group Work exercises</td>
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<td>14:00</td>
<td>Group Work Presentations</td>
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<td>15:00</td>
<td>Discussions and other exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:45</td>
<td>Farewell and closure of Lessons Learned Workshop</td>
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Annex 6 – Action planning exercise per focus group

Preparedness

Creation of standard emergency protocols and SOPs

Putting in place contingency planning at national, provincial and community level

Response

Strengthen Existing community networks – Preparedness training

Identify Private sector partnerships

Simulation activities

Streamline assessment procedures

Coordination

Improve the communication between NDMO, Provincial and community level

Improve cluster coordination mechanism between provincial and national level

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<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
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<td>Centralised</td>
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<td>Website</td>
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<td>Review Standard Assessment tools</td>
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Vanuatu Education Cluster

Tropical Cyclone Pam Response
Lessons Learned

(Photo Courtesy: Liku Jimmy, MOET)

Airline Business Hotel, 16th June 2015

Facilitated by: Georgia Noy, Save the Children; Mark Choonoo, UNICEF; Liku Jimmy, MOET
Prepared by:

The Ministry of Education and Training
Save the Children
UNICEF

June 2015
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Specific Objective Statement One: The MoET leads coordination of partners for emergency preparedness
and response prior to the next emergency. ............................................................................................... 7
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to capture the key lessons of the Education Cluster response to Tropical Cyclone Pam. These lessons are intended to inform the broader National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) lessons learned workshop, and the future development of the Education Cluster in Vanuatu.

2. Introduction

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Pam struck Vanuatu on the evening of 13th March at approximately 11p.m. local time. The Category 5 cyclone caused widespread damage across the archipelago. The cyclone’s eye passed close to Efate Island, where the capital Port Vila is located, with winds estimated to have reached 250kmph and gusts peaking at 320kmph.

According to the 2014 VEMIS data, there were 92 schools operating in Tafea province with 436 classrooms catering for an enrolment of 11,007. The cyclone affected the operation of 81 (85%) schools. There are 120 kindies with an enrolment of 2,617 children. 108 have been destroyed. 17 kindies are identified as located within an existing school.

The 2014 VEMIS data also identifies 108 schools operating in Shefa province with 539 classrooms catering for an enrolment of around 16,100. The cyclone affected the operation of 71 (65%) schools. There are 54 teachers’ houses either destroyed or seriously damaged. There are 109 kindies with an enrolment of 3819 children. 60 have been destroyed and 26 have suffered major damage. 16 kindies are identified as located within an existing school.

In Pentecost and Ambae within the Penama Province, they have 1,608 students with 105 classrooms. Six of the classrooms are destroyed, seven with major damages and four with minor damages. 72 staff houses were damaged and WASH for 36 classrooms. The number of kindies destroyed is estimated at 14.

In Malampa Province, on the Island of Paama and Ambrym they have 22 primary and secondary schools altogether with 1,653 students with 53 classrooms. Ten of their classrooms are totally destroyed, ten with major damage and three with minor damage. They also have ten Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Centres that are estimated as destroyed or seriously damaged.

The Education Cluster convened a meeting on the third week of March 2015 after TC Pam struck the country. Due to a shortage of personnel at the NDMO office to assist with the National Emergency Operation Centre, the cluster initially appointed some of the Education officers to help out. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) Officers were then recalled back to the MOET on the third week of the operations to set up the MOET operation centre and also coordinate the Education Cluster meetings. In addition they organised operations to collect damage assessment information from schools and to coordinate the education response.

The main objective of the Education Cluster at that time was to ensure re-opening of schools, including kindies in affected areas; resumption of learning programs for all students in affected schools; and resumption of kindies located within schools. This included:

- bringing classrooms back into use allowing children to attend school;
provision of teaching & learning materials & equipment to allow teachers to teach in learning spaces; and

Provision of funds to assist communities to set up temporary learning spaces for Kindies to start up.

It is believed that the longer the children are kept out of school the more vulnerable they would be to many issues, including protection issues. Therefore, the overall outcome of the response was to ensure that all children were provided with temporary learning spaces and learning materials and were back to school.

3. Summary of Lessons Learned

This report presents the lessons learned from the preparation and response to Tropical Cyclone Pam, by Education Cluster and the MOET, starting from the week of 7th March, and leading on to 13th and 14th March, 2015, when Vanuatu was hit and thereafter to date.

The report provides a snapshot look at the actions and steps that were taken and the important things done at the National level, including things that were done well and can be replicated and recommendations for things to improve on in the future.

In summary, the lessons learned from the workshop included:

- The importance of data collection and having community and school data ready at the provincial level
- Having standards for buildings as well as for distribution
- The importance of traditional technology in terms of safe buildings that can withstand high intensity cyclones
- The importance of having first aid kits and training
- Clearly marked evacuation centres/buildings that were built to standard
- Protection of the practitioners (teachers and ZCAs etc.),
- The need to strengthen decentralised Education Management Information System
- The lack of School Safety Plans in schools and importance of having them
- The need to strengthen Early Warning Systems and Education
- The observed dependency created by aid supply
- Tension created by aid due to unfair distribution
- The need for education cluster to collaboratively work with other sectors e.g. WASH to collect Schools WASH data.
4. What went well

Things that had been done well before TC Pam struck Vanuatu

- The MOET had released preparedness Advisory Messages to the schools via Email and Radio. Communications had been shared well with the National and Provincial education staff and also with some school principals/head teachers and teachers.
- Securing the MOET and DOET offices and buildings.
- UNICEF through their communications officer had put together a video clip with the MOET on some of the activities done in preparedness for TC Pam.
- MOET working together with NDMO to allocate schools to be used as evacuation centres.
- MOET staff were called from their duties to be part of the National Emergency Operation Centre after its activation.
- Education Cluster Lead (MOET) and Co-lead (Save the Children) meeting to discuss preparedness measures before TC Pam Strikes.

Things that had been done well during TC Pam operations response

- The Education Cluster managed to open the school term as planned regardless of the damage to schools. To a large extent most pupils returned and remained in school through the term.
- MOET senior management took the lead role in collecting damage information from schools on the Island of Efate one week after the cyclone and this continued to other schools in other islands as organised by the NDMO and the VHT.
- Collaborative work between all MOET and DOET officers to date.
- Activation of the MOET TC Pam Operation centre at the MOET conference room.
- Weekly Education Cluster meetings to date.
- Collaborative work between MOET and partners to effectively respond with temporary learning spaces to damaged schools, teaching and learning materials, food rations to boarding schools, some WASH supplies to date.
- MOET ECCE Unit, with help from UNICEF, facilitates a training of trainers for Psychosocial workshop and these workshops were then rolled out to all the Islands of Tafea and Shefa Province; similar training carried out in Malampa through Save the Children.
- Continuous submission of 3Ws and HAP report to the NDMO.
- Submission of all important documents requested by Prime Minister’s office, NDMO and Vanuatu Humanitarian Team.
- Joint action between MOET and local communities on Tanna Island was effective in rapid response to distribution activities. The Tafea Provincial government mobilized the schools and local communities to collect transport and set up the tents and supplies brought in by UNICEF. This was completed in hours and showed the commitment of sub national government as well as communities to resolve problems themselves.
- Though not all relevant parties were involved, the sector managed to contribute to and finalise the first FLASH Appeal within days of the response.
- Phase two damage assessment was carried out with speed, accuracy and enabled the sector to represent its damage and loss assessments in the PDNA.
5. Key Recommendations

During the workshop, six strategic objectives were agreed by the Education Cluster for future responses. The following recommendations are made against each objective for both preparedness and during future responses.

**Specific Objective Statement One: The MOET leads coordination of partners for emergency preparedness and response prior to the next emergency.**

*Immediate preparedness actions:*

- Review the exiting Education Cluster Terms Of Reference
- Develop disaster manuals to guide disaster drills
- Coordinate information sharing
- Clear understanding on other education partners approaches and iron this out before cluster
- Establish education sub-cluster group in provinces
- Schools to develop school safety policies, plans and procedures
- MOET to review EIE policy and plan to address lessons learnt from TC Pam
- Develop a Partners guideline in terms of resource mobilization and distribution
- Education Cluster policy should include vetting processes/reg
- Identify other partners and their responsibilities

*Actions during and after next response:*

- Coordinate information sharing
- Schools to implement school safety plans and procedures
- The education partners to appoint leaders or assign officers to coordinate with the MOET in terms of response
- Work in partnership with agreement on responsibilities and assistance with no duplication
- All education distribution and activities must be channelled through the Education Cluster

**Specific Objective Statement Two: IM and dissemination systems must be strengthened to allow the MOET as Cluster Lead to better target and make informed decisions.**

*Immediate preparedness actions:*

- Strengthen the current practices to improve data collection
- Strengthen School VEMIS and introduce the concept of open VEMIS Coordinated distribution of information
- Develop a standardised assessment form to be completed at school level by school
- Develop baseline information on children with disabilities
- Baseline & IM systems must be updated and accurate

*Actions during and after next response:*

- Coordinate distribution of information during and after an emergency
Provide clear definition and clarification on emergency responses within time frame
All schools to keep proper up to date and accurate reporting on responses

**Specific Objective Statement Three:** There is a need for consistency in implementation of standards for quality infrastructure (minimum facilities standard) and learning services prior the next emergency

*Immediate preparedness actions:*

- Establish manual to guide the development of emergency standards
- Develop clear process and procedures for schools to build
- Build traditional community evacuation centres
- Local construction companies to respect accessible universal design
- School building design must captured safety and made accessible to ALL children & teachers taking into account special needs, gender, etc
- Administration and asset management unit at MOET must approve all designs scope of works for new buildings and renovations prior to implementation
- Include the cyclone safety standards into the minimum school standards
- Develop clear structure of MOET disaster committee
- Establish and strengthen provincial disaster committee
- Implement the aid-in-kind guidelines

*Actions during and after next response:*

- Coordination of disaster response activities using the approved structure of work.
- The director to instruct PEO delicate responsibility to officers
- Ensure that schools know and implement standards

**Specific Objective Statement Four:** Clear resource mobilisation and management will be established by the MoET in collaboration with the NDMO and other agencies to ensure appropriate levels of accountability.

*Immediate preparedness actions:*

- Develop a MOET distribution policies
- Develop/establish distribution standard forms and distribute to all provincial Education Clusters
- School principals must be trained in what to do before, during and after devastating disasters
- MOET to locate storage for disaster relief before an emergency
- Include and increase disaster funding for MOET
- Strengthen EIE section in MOET by identifying focal point in EIE at the Provincial Education offices
- Schools to add to plans and their budgets for emergency or maintenance
- Review MOET standards in terms of response to align with the international standards
- Key MOET staff should be trained as Education Cluster Coordinators and be able to lead the preparation, management and reporting of funding mobilisation tools such as the FLASH and HAP

*Actions during and after next response:*
Resource mobilisation to be strictly based on accurate data collection from assessments
Schools to be involved in selection of resources

Specific Objective Statement Five: The MOET has processes in place to ensure mutual accountability with implementing agencies.

Immediate preparedness actions:

- Establish clear processes and standardise forms for who is doing what where and when
- Have a well-established, clear policy on what MOET wants from the development partners
- MOET must guide the development partners and implementing partners on what they need to do for the education and training sector

Actions during and after next response:

- The MOET to be made aware of all the assistance provided to schools by donor partners and funding agencies

Specific Objective Statement Six: The cluster will ensure that all responses are evidence based and designed on verified needs assessments.

Immediate preparedness actions:

- Standardised assessment forms developed and contained inside the disaster manual to be used by all provincial clusters
- Training must be conducted to all MOET personnel and cluster partners on how to use the standardised approved assessment forms
- Strengthen the link of communication from MOET to the provincial education office; to the ZCAs and to the schools for assessment to be conducted accurately and on time
- VEMIS information to be accurately provided within time frame
- Empower the provincial education officers to carry out assessments

Actions during and after next response:

- There needs to be an official letter from the MOET/NDMO director/Cluster to schools outlining purpose of conducting assessments
- Need to involve technical staff from administration and asset management to do in depth assessments for proper costs and recommendation for implementation
- Schools to be involved in assessment with regards to their schools
6. Annexes

I. List of Participant to the Education Cluster Lessons Learn Workshop, Tuesday 16th June 2015.

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II. Report from Lessons learned workshop for Tafea Province, June 11, 2015.

Executive Summary

This report presents the lessons learned from the preparation and response to Tropical Cyclone Pam, by Tafea Provincial Education officers, starting from the week of March 7, and leading on to March 14, 2015, when the province was hit and thereafter to date. The outcomes from this report will feed into the national Education sector lessons learned workshop which will take place in Port Vila on Tuesday, 16 June, 2015.

The report provides a snapshot look at the actions and steps that were taken and the important things done at the provincial level, including things that were done well and can be replicated and recommendations for things to improve on in the future.

Lessons learned from the workshop included importance of data collection and having community and school data at the provincial level, having standards for building as well as for distribution, the importance of traditional technology in terms of safe buildings that can withstand high intensity cyclones, the importance of having first aid kits and training, clearly marked evacuation centres/buildings that were built to standard, protection of the practitioners (teachers and ZCAs etc.), the need to strengthen decentralised Education Management Information System, the lack of School Safety Plans in schools and importance of having them, the need to strengthen Early Warning System and Education, the observed dependency creation by aid supply and tension created by Aid due to unfair distribution.

Information for the report was gathered from a one day workshop and focus group discussion were conducted with the Provincial Education officer, zone curriculum advisors, provincial trainers, TVET manager and some head teachers and teachers. Around 30 participants took part in this exercise.

Tropical Cyclone PAM response

Tafea Province was one of the hard hit provinces in Vanuatu and is still recovering from the aftermath of tropical cyclone PAM. Response and Recovery to schools have taken place with integral assistance from education officials based in the province, and Rehabilitation plans for the province underway, however, with the cyclone season around the corner (November to April), this exercise is to take stock of the actions taken in response to TC PAM and based on that prepare better for the future.
Findings and Recommendations:

1. **Data Collection** – education data at the provincial level is not well established, including that of the communities. Hence after the cyclone additional resources, including education staff were deployed to the community to collect data, both on schools and communities.

**Recommendation:**
Need to strengthen data collection and management of information and information system at the provincial level to limit time and human resource spent on collecting information after the fact.

2. **Standards** – school buildings which were thought be sturdy and rigorous to withstand the cyclone were found to be not. It seems that building standards were not in place, or were not checked (quality assurance lacking) to certify fitness of buildings. Moreover, different agencies responded in different areas resulting in differences in the supplies provided, causing tension between the schools and communities.

**Recommendation:**
Facilities unit at MoET must ensure that all school buildings must adhere to the standards set by them, and there should be certification of the buildings that have built to standard. Moreover, there should be a registration of agencies coming into the province by the provincial Education Cluster so that the cluster can filter supplies and ensure there is fair distribution to all schools, to avoid some schools getting more that other schools, and to manage expectations and morale of teachers and students.

3. **Traditional Technology** – there is a feeling that traditional houses which can withstand cyclones are no longer being built in the communities and are being traded for permanent houses which were not built to standard and are more dangerous during cyclones.

**Recommendation:**
It was observed that people are now starting to rebuild in some communities using traditional technology. Perhaps these houses would be good to have as teachers’ houses.

4. **First Aid – Kits and Training** – kits and training on how to use these kits are non-existent in the schools and the province.

**Recommendation:**
ZCAs express the need for school to have basic first aid kit and all education personals to be trained on how to use these kits and even be trained on how to conduct basic first aid response.

5. **Evacuation centres** – Evacuation centres were not clearly marked (e.g. with big painting or writing saying ‘EVACUATION CENTER’), nor were they identified well and truly beforehand to give the community members enough time to evacuate to it and wait out the cyclone.

**Recommendation:**
A school building that will be used as an evacuation centre should be built to standard and certified and clearly marked with ‘EVACUATION CENTER’) so the surrounding communities and come to shelter in it beforehand, rather than run around looking for an evacuation centre during the cyclone.
6. **Protection the Practitioners** – teachers and education personals who have lost their homes and properties do not have their needs addressed but were expected to bounce back and assist in the response, including returning to school when MoET gave the directions. Some teachers are still living in classrooms, 3 months from when the cyclone struck.

**Recommendation:**
Important for MoET and other agencies to look at teachers conditions and address them as well, especially shelters, and not only focus on students returning to school.

7. **Strengthen decentralised EMIS** – this information is very weak and lacking in this emergency. Information sent to the central level were also not shared with the provincial office, for example, assessment information sent to the central level were not sent back to the province to inform them of what the responses will be. Moreover, assessments at schools were mainly done by officers sent from the central level with little or no input from the provincial level.

**Recommendation:**
School data and information needs to be strengthened not only at the provincial level but even at the school level as well. Assessments at the school level needed to be led by the provincial education officers, as opposed to fly in missions that bypass the provincial officers and systems. Information from central level needs to be sent back to the province so they will be able to see and comprehend how the data are being used and what the responses are or should be. Basically it will also the provincial office to be part of decision making in the response to their schools.

8. **Include School Safety Plans** – it seems that schools do not have any school safety plans, nor do they carry out any drills, including preparation drills for TC PAM.

**Recommendations:**
School safety plans must be included as part of school based management plan for schools. In order to have schools seriously include it in their plans and school documents, suggest that SSP and safety drills be included as a criteria for receiving school grants, so schools will actually develop SSPs and regularly carry out safety drills in schools.

9. **Early Warning Education** – the early warnings for PAM were received by many but not they were not clear or did not make much sense to the communities as they were used to being hit by cyclones that they though that this is just another one like others in the past.

**Recommendations:**
Need to have a really good system of warning in laypeople’s language. The term ‘category 5’ means nothing to them. It is important to highlight the types of destruction that a Cat. 5 can do. For example, one can use the description “this kind of cyclone can lift and turn nabanga’s over”, or “it can flatten a brick building that does not have enough steel rods” etc. School children would be good medians in taking these messages through to parents. For events like these, it is important to do a thorough warning system, including going through the phases and explaining what needs to be done for each phase.
10. **Dependency Creation** – according to a good number of people’s observance, the aid providence and supply in response to this cyclone seem to create a dependency on aid. It seems that people are now waiting on aid and not proactive in starting up for themselves.

**Recommendations:**
To discuss with other clusters

11. **Aid created tension - unfair distribution** – since many of the education staff were involved in the provincial governments response, they observed the differences in the distribution based on certain agency’s area of development work, and other factors, creating tension between communities. In terms of schools, since UNICEF is the only major agency which responded, the supplies are uniform.

**Recommendations:**
To discuss with other clusters

12. **Education Cluster** – there was no Education Cluster at the provincial level and education officials were directed to work at the provincial government office in one of the 3 clusters which were operated by members of the provincial disaster committee. As such responses to schools were not prioritised as education resources were also held up at the provincial government to assist the government’s response.

**Recommendations:**
It is recommended that a provincial cluster is formed that reflects the central makeup to give the education office some form of authority to act in behalf of schools and school children during an emergency.
III. Tasks in the Terms of Reference for the Education Cluster, how it was done for TC PAM and how it can be improved (detailed notes from session):

The Education Cluster Terms of Reference are summarised as:
1. Bringing partners together
2. Setting standards
3. Leading assessments
4. Setting priorities
5. Defining how the resources are to be used (Who must do what where and when)
6. Keeping implementers accountable
7. Accountability to affected population
8. Link with other sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>TOR</th>
<th>Pre-Cyclone Preparedness</th>
<th>How was this carried out in Response</th>
<th>What recommendations for the future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bringing Partners together</td>
<td>• TOR for Education Cluster group</td>
<td>• Reminder of preparedness in media (emails to PEO)</td>
<td>• MOET managers met &amp; planned responses on Monday 16th March 2015</td>
<td>• MOET to appoint proper cluster team with cleared TOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• MOET leading agency</td>
<td>• DRR Workshop</td>
<td>• 17th March met with DG and Minister</td>
<td>• Review current TOR for Education Cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Save the Children Co-lead</td>
<td>• Carry out safety measures at MOET head offices – shutters and plastic covers for MOET equipment</td>
<td>• Appointment of taskforce members on 17.03.15</td>
<td>• TAs need to be on ground for a minimum of 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limited representation</td>
<td>• No Education Cluster meetings before TC PAM strikes.</td>
<td>• Visits to all schools on Efate began on 17.03.15</td>
<td>• Need workshop of cluster and risk management issues &amp; responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local ownership at MOET is limited</td>
<td>• MOET has an existing Education Cluster which needs review of its cluster membership.</td>
<td>• The Education Cluster activates its meetings on the third week of emergency after TC Pam Strikes.</td>
<td>• Set up the cluster committee before any disaster happens with allocated responsibilities – empowering the committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• MOET and members of Education Cluster had worked with the 6 province</td>
<td>• The response from the partners was good/supportive.</td>
<td>• Establishment of provincial disaster committee – with clear reporting structure</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cluster meetings daily or weekly</td>
<td>• Timing for coordination meetings should be agreed as quickly as possible</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 3 ws</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Telecommunications</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
to develop their provincial contingency plans and had also worked with schools in Penama, Torba and some in Shefa, Malampa and Tafea to develop their School disaster Management Plan.
- Education in emergency group meetings every 2 months.
- No TC Pam specific activity to bring partners together before TC Pam.
- Nothing in place
- Zero/nating

- Partners in Education are Save the Children, Red Cross, World Vision, Samaritan’s purse, UNICEF, WFP, Solidarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raising Resources</th>
<th>No clear TOR for appropriate resources</th>
<th>No budget for disaster response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Lack of clear processes of immediate responses</td>
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<td>Limited copies of flash Appeal</td>
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<td>Within 48hrs after disaster Education Cluster lead must come up with a response plan</td>
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<td>Schools to budget for disaster</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review traditional knowledge &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication contact listing (clear TOR and Strategic System.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Response Teams (Logistics, operations, data, planning and communications) with clear TOR and strategic system. Well written policy and adequate disaster management Plan at all level of education sector.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information between NDMO and MOET must flow.</td>
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- Pre cyclone meeting would be useful.
- Need up to date contact list for all agencies.
- Set up registration desk at MOET to register all external agencies, individuals to obtain contact information and record their intention to help with coordination.
- Clear coordination/mechanism policy directive
- E.g. who are the partners for cluster?
- MOET Disaster Response.
- Work in partnership with agreement on responsibilities and assistance with no duplication
- All weather proof storage room to be built in all schools
- Within 48hrs after disaster Education Cluster lead must come up with a response plan
- Schools to budget for disaster
- Review traditional knowledge & Resources

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- Work in partnership with agreement on responsibilities and assistance with no duplication
- All weather proof storage room to be built in all schools
- Within 48hrs after disaster Education Cluster lead must come up with a response plan
- Schools to budget for disaster
- Review traditional knowledge & Resources
| Setting standards | MOET Disaster Manual must set standards for disaster response | Use existing policy & practices  
Legislation/standards existed but there was no implementation plan and no pretested template.  
Draft Emergency Policy/plan.  
NDMO act 2006 Cap. 26 7  
Emergency communication Tree  
Not well communicated | No standard in place  
Do not know the roles and responsibilities of Education Cluster  
MOET officers collaborate in meetings and committed to carry out plans  
Develop template to collect data & train officers on how to use the template  
Bring Provincial Education Officers to help plan to collect data in the province.  
There were inconsistent/changing instructions from NDMO.  
Received conflicting info from the field  
Distribution, shelter packages needs to be improved.  
Check if standards are correct for implementation and are shared. | Set common standard between donor partners & implementing partners (provincial, community & school)  
Recording and reporting standards  
Establish emergency contacts  
NDMO must make sure that communication is available 48hrs after disaster  
Building standards to be developed  
Materials donated overseas must meet the building codes  
Provide training  
Need to make recommendations to NDMO about importance of consistent information request.  
Need to agree and test templates for assessment before using it.  
Quick response shelters have to be categorised. (clear definition of different phases)  
Awareness across all sectors in education.  
Security and safety assets monitored. (drills)  
Update DRR package at Teachers |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Priorities</th>
<th>Leading Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Clear TOR for setting priorities using current data | • No standardised template  
• Not enough assessment personnel capacity. |
| • MOET must have up-to-date data i.e. VEMIS data  
• Accurate/proper data  
• Annual Budget MOET  
• No proper meetings to setup priority goals  
• No priority setting | • Briefing of assessment teams before sent out for assessment.  
• Physical limited capacity  
• Pressure on few officers only  
• There was assessment but no reasons why assessments took place  
• No funds for assessment  
• Vila based officers did assessments/No PEO  
• Rich information were collected.  
• There is no one at the provincial level to lead the assessments. All |
| • VEMIS were not submitted so operation centre have to contact provinces or schools to get data  
• MOET came up with shopping list for short term and long term  
• Setting up of EOC at MOET with clear functions & roles  
• Resources concentrated on pre-school and primary levels  
• Affect/delay in the Overall response. | • Provide funding for assessment  
• VEMIS data should be accessible and updated (standby generator)  
• Standard assessment form to capture relevant data  
• Identify specific team leaders for each province  
• The rapid assessment should be organized with other clusters  
• In-depth Assessment is the MOET business only (Ministry of Provinces)  
• Strengthen structure between National and provincial to ensure devolution of power. |
| • Need training for cluster members on how to prioritise needs  
• Need to know national priority needs to align with them  
• Schools must submit reliable data to MOET  
• Community must be proactive to clear up schools after disaster and not to wait for the government to response.  
• Need to prioritize certain activities for immediate response, short term and long term priorities.  
• Fair distribution at all levels of schools and provinces based on assessments carried out.  
• Centralise data system  
• Budget allocation for disaster  
• Establishment EMS for MOET  
• Sectorial Establishment. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keeping Implementers Accountable</th>
<th>• There is work to be done but there are no responsible persons to implement the responsibilities.</th>
<th>• Information Collected @ cluster meetings and through 3 W forms.</th>
<th>• Set up registration desk at MOET to record all information on implementers. • Update 3 W to include “when” and status and keep monitoring it. • Ensure implementers advice MOET of their current contact point at all times. • Have to be driven by the sectoral coordinator. • Clear policy guideline for the 3 W • Delegate responsibilities to the chosen implementers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability to affected population</td>
<td>• All teachers took responsibilities to; make reports on school and communities, and the office sees the problems faced by the communities. • Teachers and Education officers collect information and submit to Provincial Disaster Committee • Feedback report is very weak</td>
<td>• Keep updates on school based information that includes communities • Strengthen accountability by providing accurate information • Need to provide a reporting format to the province. • Need to share 3 Ws and 4 Ws with the provincial Education Cluster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link with other sectors</td>
<td>• Link with other sectors is weak</td>
<td>• There is links but there is also difficulty because other sectors do not work along with the education to know what it needs to be done.</td>
<td>• Cluster set up priority needs of the sector so they can work on. • Strengthen accountability by providing accurate information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Timeline summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparedness (activities before cyclone)</th>
<th>Rapid assessment (activities immediately after the cyclone) Wk.1</th>
<th>Assessments &amp; Data mgt (activities from Mar 22 – 31) Wk. 2</th>
<th>Data mgt, meetings &amp; coordination. First 2 weeks April. Wk 3 &amp; 4</th>
<th>Data mgt, meetings &amp; coordination. Last 2 weeks April. Wk 5 &amp; 6</th>
<th>Data mgt, meetings &amp; coordination. Month of May Wk 7, 8, 9, 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster</td>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As cluster we did not meet</td>
<td>• Cluster meetings</td>
<td>• Attend VHT meetings</td>
<td>• Chairing cluster meeting</td>
<td>• Cluster meetings (NDMO, PMO)</td>
<td>• Cluster meetings (NDMO, PMO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct/ attend Education Cluster meeting</td>
<td>• Decision making on next steps for MoET</td>
<td>• Attend cluster meetings</td>
<td>• Attending cluster meeting</td>
<td>• In depth survey of damaged buildings, from schools</td>
<td>• In depth survey of damaged buildings, from schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Update MoET cluster list and email to NDMO</td>
<td>• Damage assessment at schools</td>
<td>• Flash appeal</td>
<td>• Assessment</td>
<td>• 3Ws data collection and communication</td>
<td>• Prioritisation of schools in to categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness activities</td>
<td>• Data collection</td>
<td>• Start to prepare PDNA and the HAP</td>
<td>• Joint intercluster in depth assessment</td>
<td>• Identifications of gaps</td>
<td>• Identification of gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prepared office materials to be safe</td>
<td>• Assesment</td>
<td>• Compile 2nd assessment report</td>
<td>• Data management</td>
<td>• Communication paper from MoET regarding school fee exemption</td>
<td>• Communication paper from MoET regarding school fee exemption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prepare MoET office, premises to be safe</td>
<td>• Continue assessments</td>
<td>• In-depth assessments</td>
<td>• Coordinating 3Ws and submitting to VHT</td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check my team is safe and prepared</td>
<td>• Coordinating 3Ws</td>
<td>• Communication within MoET</td>
<td>• Development of draft government recovery plan</td>
<td>• Setting up tarpaulins in schools</td>
<td>• Distribution of food and tents (logistics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advisory messages to schools re: cyclone preparedness</td>
<td>• Contact provinces to get information</td>
<td>• Data entry</td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
<td>• Relief distribution</td>
<td>• Relief coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Send students and teachers home to be prepare their homes</td>
<td>• Early clear up of debris for access to school</td>
<td>• Clearing &amp; cleaning the MoET office</td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
<td>• Development and training of psychosocial training</td>
<td>• Psychosocial workshop training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Normal work</td>
<td>• Developing psychosocial materials for children/ communities</td>
<td>• Sending tents and tarpaulins to schools</td>
<td>• Data analysis &amp; decisions</td>
<td>• Setting up tarpaulins in schools</td>
<td>• Distribution of food and tents (logistics)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Setting up temporary learning spaces</td>
<td>• Reviewing recovery tasks and refocusing team back to normal activities</td>
<td>• Prioritisation of schools in to categories</td>
<td>• Relief distribution</td>
<td>• Relief coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visit schools and give support to principals</td>
<td>• Implementation</td>
<td>• Identification of gaps</td>
<td>• Development and training of psychosocial training</td>
<td>• Psychosocial workshop training</td>
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<td>• Distribution of tarpaulins and teaching materials</td>
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Vanuatu Shelter Cluster

Tropical Cyclone Pam Response Lessons Learned, June 2015

(Video Courtesy Maria Moita)
In Vanuatu, the Shelter Cluster is led by the Government of the Vanuatu Public Works Department and co-led by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

This report was prepared by IFRC and reflects Lessons Learned process and workshop organised end of May 2015.
1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to capture the key lessons of the shelter cluster response to Tropical Cyclone Pam. These lessons are intended to inform the broader National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) lessons learned workshop, and the future development of the shelter cluster in Vanuatu.

2. **Introduction**

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Pam struck Vanuatu from the 12 -14 March 2015. The category 5 cyclone caused widespread damage across the archipelago. The cyclone’s eye passed close to Efate Island, where the capital Port Vila is located, with winds estimated to have reached 250kmph and gusts peaking at 320kmph.

An estimated 188,000 people have been affected by the cyclone – approximately 50 per cent of the country’s population. In excess of 20,000 houses were damaged / destroyed, whilst on some islands (Tongaia, Emae and Erromango) more than 90% of houses were reported as damaged. Thousands of people were temporarily displaced to makeshift evacuation centres such as schools, churches and community buildings.

There was no shelter cluster in Vanuatu prior to TC Pam, although the NDMO had requested IFRC support to establish one some two weeks prior to the event. Following TC Pam, the shelter cluster was immediately established within the existing NDMO cluster framework as a "working group" of the logistics cluster.

However, the shelter cluster quickly became autonomous from the logistics cluster and for all intents and purposes operated as standalone cluster throughout the response. However, there was no operational Government of Vanuatu (GoV) lead agency for the shelter cluster until after the immediate emergency response phase1. Until this time, IFRC undertook all shelter co-ordination activities, with support from various shelter cluster partners. The key findings and recommendations derived from the lessons learned exercise highlight the importance of having an established GoV authority as operational lead agency for the shelter cluster.

The shelter cluster comprises over 35 partner organisations including the GoV, IFRC, UN agencies, Vanuatu Red Cross, international and local non-government organisations and faith based organisations.

The objective of the shelter cluster is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the shelter response by co-ordinating the numerous partners whom collectively form the shelter cluster, and also liaising with the GoV, UN Agencies and other clusters. Such co-ordination involves developing and disseminating shelter polices, standards, information management, agency areas of activity etc., with respect to the shelter response to TC Pam.

3. **Lessons Learned Methodology**

The lessons learned of the shelter cluster following TC Pam were captured at a half day workshop conducted at the Public Works Department (PWD) in Port Vila on the 28th of 2015.

The workshop was attended by 24 persons representing 17 organisations (Appendix A).

Workshop participants examined the following questions:

---

1 The publication of the Humanitarian Action Plan in May 2015 designated the Public Works Department as Shelter Cluster lead, with IFRC as cluster co-lead.
• What has the shelter cluster achieved in response to TC Pam?
• What has worked well with respect to the shelter cluster response to TC Pam?
• What could be improved with respect to the shelter cluster response to TC Pam, and how could this be achieved?

From this the key findings and recommendations were identified and prioritised.

Whilst the workshop has identified and prioritised key findings and recommendations, the methodology is limited due to the lack of explicit provincial and community level input.

4. What has the shelter cluster achieved in response to TC Pam?

In response to TC Pam, shelter cluster partner agencies have distributed the following major emergency shelter and shelter related non-food items:

• Tarpaulins – 21,931.
• Shelter Tool kits – 8,747.
• Kitchen Sets – 8,867.
• Blankets – 14,427.

The Humanitarian Action Plan targets 18,000 households to receive some form of emergency shelter assistance. Notwithstanding some gaps emerging, the shelter cluster has (or will) largely achieve this target.

In addition, the shelter cluster has and / or is undertaken the following activities:

• Deployed an IFRC coordination team to support the Shelter Cluster comprising one Coordinator and an Information Manager.
• Held tri-weekly then weekly cluster meetings in Port Vila.
• Held two regional cluster meetings in Lenakel (Tanna).
• Developed and maintained the 3W (who, what, where) matrix to map shelter activities progress and identify gaps / duplications.
• Developed a strategic advisory group and technical working groups as required (e.g. timber, milling, fixing kits, safe shelter awareness training).
• Conducted a Shelter & Settlement vulnerability assessment (REACH).
• Undertaken Shelter recovery activities planning, mapping and implementation.
• Ongoing development of the shelter cluster recovery strategy.
• Co-ordinated with other clusters (e.g. education, WASH, protection).
• Worked closely with the NDMO and PWD to secure the sustainability of Vanuatu Shelter Cluster beyond the TC Pam response.
5. **What has worked well with respect to the Shelter Cluster response to TC Pam?**

a) Quick establishment of the shelter cluster, starting from scratch, and placing it clearly within the NDMO cluster system.

b) Whilst the establishment of an official shelter cluster was new to Vanuatu, its operation was assisted greatly (albeit indirectly) at Provincial and community level through well organised and managed Provincial and community disaster committees (CDC). In addition, communities themselves commenced reconstruction of emergency shelter / housing immediately. This is a key strength of the Vanuatu humanitarian response mechanism and needs to be leveraged off by the shelter cluster to ensure efficient use of resources and avoid duplication. However, it was also noted that CDC’s were not present in every community prior to TC Pam and further work is required to identify gaps and ensure trained CDC’s are in place.

c) Clear and early division of geographical working areas to Agencies (notwithstanding some gaps in Port Vila) and also evacuation centres provided clarity and supported planning at Agency level.

d) Good level of co-operation, openness, sharing of resources and flexibility between different cluster partners such as GoV, donors, NGO’s who were considered to be “solution orientated”. This was evidenced by the generally successful distributions of emergency shelter and NFIs, and also following the “protest” at NDMO.

e) Information management. The 3W’s and allied mapping enabled identification of duplications and gaps, resulting in positive collective action taken by cluster partners to resolve issues. Information is consistently updated and shared, (although there were some concerns raised regarding the accuracy of the maps, leading to isolated instances of people being sent to the wrong NGO).

f) Consistency of shelter cluster meetings (time and location), and low “churn” of shelter cluster personnel, made for a predictability of the operations of the shelter cluster.

g) Good link between the shelter cluster and camp management working group who collaborated (in association with other clusters) to facilitate the prompt, proper and orderly closure of evacuation centres.

h) Basic shelter trainings conducted at community level in safe shelter awareness (although this has not been implemented widely as yet).

i) Commenced establishment of a regional shelter cluster in Tanna.
6. **What could be improved with respect to the shelter cluster response to TC Pam, and how could this be achieved? –**

**Key Findings and Recommendations**

The key findings and recommendations are identified and prioritised from the lessons learned workshop. They are also categorised against the NDMO key themes provided separately. The key findings are not mutually exclusive, and adoption of the recommendations will identify overlaps to aid the efficiency of implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>NDMO Theme</th>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Coordination / Surge Capacity Mechanism.</td>
<td>The shelter cluster was characterised by expatriate personnel with a noticeable shortage of Ni-Vanuatu input and participation. This is not conducive to “two-way” knowledge transfer, or in-country knowledge retention due to the temporary nature of international staff.</td>
<td>Shelter cluster to increase Ni-Vanuatu presence, supported by associated training and peer exchanges. This be further strengthened by recruitment within PWD of a local permanent shelter cluster officer. IFRC to provide shelter cluster training, and facilitate peer exchange where possible.</td>
<td>PWD, IFRC.</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Preparedness.</td>
<td>Shelter cluster partners experienced delays and subsequent experience of importing relief items. This ultimately reduced the efficiency of the emergency shelter response.</td>
<td>Shelter cluster to develop an emergency response contingency plan, in support of NDMO wide contingency planning, including a pre-positioning strategy for key items such as tools, tarpaulins, rope and nails.</td>
<td>PWD, IFRC.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Preparedness.</td>
<td>There is a need for awareness raising and / or training with respect to the integration of building codes with traditional construction methods and the use of local materials for shelter.</td>
<td>Shelter cluster to develop technical shelter guidelines which identifies and integrates relevant provisions of the building code, traditional and modern safe shelter awareness messaging and mapping of various housing typologies. Such guidelines to be informed by experiences from other Pacific countries.</td>
<td>PWD, IFRC.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Information Management.</td>
<td>Information Management sources and requirements of the shelter cluster were exemplified by out of date census information that misinformed the initial assessments, and too many expensive and unnecessary assessments, particularly given that assessment data was largely available from PDCs / CDCs.</td>
<td>Shelter cluster to develop (in conjunction with NDMO) and maintain an information management methodology including baseline national demographics at island / village level, (as collected through the PDCs and CDCs). Further, develop systems (in conjunction with NDMO) to ensure that assessment data collected by PDCs / NDCs is accessed in a timely manner.</td>
<td>PWD, IFRC, NDMO.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Coordination.</td>
<td>The initial lack of a Government of Vanuatu lead Agency for the Shelter cluster diminished the link between shelter activities and existing projects –e.g. the GoV</td>
<td>PWD to mainstream shelter cluster activities within its operations and identify opportunities for integration with broader GoV priorities.</td>
<td>PWD.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Operations of the National Cluster System.</td>
<td>The governance structure of the Shelter cluster needs to be clarified / rationalised between the emergency phase and the recovery phases. There are a number of GoV Ministries / Departments involved in housing beyond emergency response, but it is not clear how they come together.</td>
<td><strong>Shelter cluster develop a clear ToR as to extent of its remit and who leads / is involved at each stage of the disaster management cycle (preparedness, response and recovery), and how this interfaces with longer term development planning in Vanuatu.</strong></td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Operations of the National Cluster System.</td>
<td>There is a need to enhance to evacuation centre preparedness in terms of identification of centres, physical standards and management training. There is a need for a functioning camp coordination and camp management cluster with clear delineation from the shelter cluster.</td>
<td><strong>Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster to be formalised and tasked to take overall responsibility for evacuation centres. CCCM cluster develop standards / guidelines for physical assessment and management of evacuation centres, and list of approved centres. Conduct evacuation centre management training.</strong></td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Preparedness.</td>
<td>Generally households commenced rebuilding their houses immediately after TC Pam. This highlighted that shelter early recovery needs should be included in shelter cluster discussions much earlier in the response.</td>
<td><strong>Shelter cluster to develop a shelter early recovery guidance strategy that can be quickly and easily adapted, modified and accepted by shelter cluster partner agencies for implementation.</strong></td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Gender and Protection.</td>
<td>The gender sensitivity of the shelter cluster should be formalised.</td>
<td><strong>Shelter cluster to ensure gender considerations are articulated in the shelter strategy.</strong></td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Coordination.</td>
<td>Earlier in the response there were too many shelter co-ordination meetings (three per week) with unclear objectives. Allied to this, the shelter cluster demand for Agency information was onerous early in the response.</td>
<td><strong>Shelter cluster to review meeting and information management objectives. Standard operation procedure to be developed to the balance need for meetings / information, and the practicality of attending / providing same.</strong></td>
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7. **Appendix A - Workshop Attendees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Department/Organisation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Xavier Genot</td>
<td>Vanuatu Shelter Cluster Co. Lead</td>
<td>IFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Subesh Prasad</td>
<td>Regional shelter programme Officer</td>
<td>IFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Peter Lawther</td>
<td>Regional Shelter Coordinator</td>
<td>IFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rebecca Webb</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>IFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dick Abel</td>
<td>Principal Architect</td>
<td>PWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Astrid Vachette</td>
<td>Phd candidate</td>
<td>JCU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Alberto Preaso</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>IOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Troy Dooley</td>
<td>PO</td>
<td>IOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Andrew Peacock</td>
<td>Shelter Ad</td>
<td>CARE INTERNATIONAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Brad Watson</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>SALVATION ARMY</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Jone Roqare</td>
<td>Deputy Director</td>
<td>PWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Jocelyn Longhman</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>ADRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Siobhan Talty</td>
<td>AVID Volunteers</td>
<td>CARE INTERNATIONAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Damian Farrel</td>
<td>Disability Desk</td>
<td>M.JCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Augustine G</td>
<td>DMO</td>
<td>VRCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Joel J</td>
<td></td>
<td>NZHC</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Jean D.Dragon</td>
<td></td>
<td>UN HABITAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Kylie Mullins</td>
<td>Disaster Programs</td>
<td>ACT OF PEACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Muchael Garoe</td>
<td>Project Co-ord.</td>
<td>NDMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Adam Kalopсидоис</td>
<td></td>
<td>SAVE THE CHILDREN</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Jimmy Hapman</td>
<td></td>
<td>PWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Peter Korisa</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>NDMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Julien Lamberti</td>
<td>DRR Project Manag.</td>
<td>French Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Jamon Hahwa</td>
<td>Principal Engineer</td>
<td>PWD</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Cyclone PAM Vanuatu Logistics Cluster Response

VLC Lessons Learned Report & WFP Recommendation for Vanuatu NDMO

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I. Glossary of acronyms:

DFAT  (Australian) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organization
IASC  Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IM  Information Management
JPOC  Joint Planning Operation Center
LCA  Logistics Capacity Assessment
LCP  Logistics Contingency Plan
NDC  National Disaster Committee
NDMO  National Disaster Management Office
NEOC  National Emergency Operation Center
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA  Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PDC  Provincial Disaster Committee
PHT  Pacific Humanitarian Team
SOP  Standard Operating Procedure
VHT  Vanuatu Humanitarian Team
VLC  Vanuatu Logistics Cluster
VMF  Vanuatu Military Forces
WFP  World food Programme
WHO  World Health Organization
II. Logistics Presentation

A. Background: Roles and responsibilities (review of the existing references)

1. Objective of the Vanuatu Logistics Cluster
(Source: Vanuatu Logistics Contingency Plan – 2.1: OBJECTIVE)

“The VLC strives to build up inter-agency interaction and collaboration to enhance predictability, timeliness and efficiency of the logistics response and meet beneficiaries’ needs. (The) VLC identifies and addresses logistics gaps, bottlenecks and duplication in humanitarian operations and ensures that they are appropriately addressed.”

2. The Cluster Lead role
(Source: NDMO SOP - 8.11: Cluster Lead and support Agencies)

“The government of Vanuatu has taken the UN Humanitarian approach to assist the NDMO in preparing and responding to disasters. Five clusters have been developed to represent Vanuatu. All clusters are led by government departments with the assistance from NGO or civil society partners.”

3. The IASC Cluster approach
(Source: Logcluster.org/about)

“The Cluster Approach (one element of the Humanitarian Reform) was designed to facilitate the formation of groups of organizations, organized by sector, which would work together to improve humanitarian response. Originally there were nine Clusters; WASH, Protection, Nutrition, Education, Early Recovery, Emergency Shelter, Camp Management, Health, Emergency Telecommunications and Logistics. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) also agreed to designate global ‘cluster lead organizations’ to ensure that essential aspects of emergency response were properly coordinated, monitored, and that specific organizations could be held accountable for the activity in particular sectors of an emergency response. WFP, due to its expertise and vast field capacity, was mandated by the IASC to be the global lead of the Logistics Cluster (GLC).”

4. The NDMO Logistics role & responsibilities under EOC
(Source: NDMO SOP – 9.2.6 Logistics)

“Reports to Operations
Provides Operation with periodic updates
Ensures communication systems are operational
Orders of all resources
Provides to finance officer a list of all supplies required during the emergency.
Provides immediate transport
Utilizes requisition forms
Arranges both helicopter and light aircraft to be on standby for aerial surveillance.
Arranges for transport to be on standby for the potential deployment of rapid assessments teams
Updates the Logistics capacity Assessments (added: collaborates with VLC)
Liaises with VHT on existing resources in country and potential evacuation centres (Added: Logistics Cluster meetings)
Arranges with JPOC/Franz boat for the potential use during the deployment of relief supplies
Arranges with shipping companies on potential deployment of relief supplies
Arranges with information collector to develop a distribution plan
Ensures all documents for delivery and receiving of stock occurs in a timely and accountable manner
Works with Media Liaison to inform the public on evacuation centres that are operational
Does not liaise with donors without the approval of the Director or Controller”

5. NEOC – Organizational Structures
(Source: NDMO SOP - 2.2: Response and Recovery under the national Disaster Committee (NDC)

![Organizational Structure Diagram]
6. National Disaster Organizational Structure
(Source: NDMO SOP - 2.2: Response and Recovery under the national Disaster Committee (NDC)

National Disaster Organizational Structure:

Council of Ministers

NDC

NDMO

NEOC

JPOC

FIRE

Maritime

VMF

Other Emergency Service

VHT

CLUSTERS:

-WASH

-Education

-Agriculture

-Logistics

-Health

B. General Overview of the Cyclone PAM Response Operation

1. Main Logistics Cluster Achievements
   - Coordination of military assets (for transport) provided by 6 different countries
   - VLC processed more than 160 service requests for more than 20 organisations.

2. Key interventions:
   - Storage facility installed in Port Vila airport (moved to NDMO)
   - 3 Logistics hubs established (Port Vila, Tanna and Santo)
   - Information services established in Port Vila (IM function)
   - More than 40 organizations have been using the Logistics Cluster Information and Coordination services
   - Logistics consultants were deployed to support the government-led logistics operations

3. Main constrains:
   - Difficulty to access the shore
Lack of vehicles on land
Lack of existing storage facilities
Uncontrolled flow of unsolicited donated items

4. Map of VLC Cyclone PAM concept of operation

C. Review of Logistics Services Provided

1. Equipment deployed to support the operation
   Six Mobile Storage Units
   3 generators
   One 3MT forklift
   Telecommunication equipment

2. Air Assets coordinated by the VLC
   2 C130’s
   6 military helicopters
   1 passenger plane
   1 Vanuatu helicopter (private sector contribution)

Note: Air transport services were stopped in the early stages of the emergency response
3. Road Transport
Road transport facilitated by government and local council in Efate for evacuations, food aid and water trucking and by the provincial disaster committee in Tanna for food and shelter distribution.
Challenges for partners:
   The logistics cluster did not provide road transport services
   Limited number of trucks on Efate and Tanna
   Most rented trucks were limited to 3MT and 5MT

4. Sea Transport
Commercial sector covered most of the needs (resumed services a week after the cyclone).
Assets available for free transport:
   The Toruroa (Vanuatu Police Patrol boat)
   Auki (Solomon Island Patrol boat)
   Neiafu (Tonga Island Patrol boat)
   HMAS Tubruk (Australia)
   HMNZ Canterbury (New Zealand)
   Rainbow Warrior

Strategy for the use of “volunteer boats”:
1) For remote locations only (gaps)
2) VLC encouraged partners to use the commercial operators

5. Coordination & Information sharing elements
   2 coordinators (NDMO/UNICEF-Red-R & WFP)
   2 IM officers (DFAT/WFP)
   Bi-weekly and Weekly meetings (initially)
   IMs published SITREPs, meeting minutes and vessel movement information
III. Logistics consolidated lessons learned and recommendations:

A. Methodology leading to the below analysis and set of recommendations:

After a short logistics presentation (above), a series of themes and VLC operational activities were submitted to the attendees to orientate the discussions. These themes were discussed and reviewed by the workshop attendants which included 19 participants representing NDMO, Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Trade, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO, Vanuatu red Cross, IFRC, OXFAM and New Zealand Aid and New Zealand High Commission.

The participants then worked in sub-groups to exchange ideas and give feedback in an effort to reach a consensus. Feedback was then shared in a plenary session. The issues and solutions were presented by the attendees and recorded by the VLC coordination.

It is to be noted that most participants were VLC service users and there were very few logistics technicians present. Consequently many of the attendees lacked understanding of the VLC mandate and work that it would normally undertake. Despite this, the group did represent a cross section of the VLC partners and significant recommendations were produced through this forum.

B. VLC consolidated lessons learned:

Sources:
VLC emergency coordination reports and data analysis (WFP/GLC consultants)
VLC Lessons Learned Workshop (VLC Forum/group representation)

1. Coordination

Roles & Responsibilities: The necessity to define and inform.

- It is still unclear to most Logistics actors and VLC users in Vanuatu what differentiates the Vanuatu Logistics Cluster (VLC), the NDMO logistics department and WFP Logistics Cluster. Their respective mandates, their relations and their roles are not well known or understood. Though the existing documents (Vanuatu Logistics Contingency Plan (LCP), National Disaster Act and the NDMO Standard of Operations (NDMO SOPs) clearly state the differences and the roles and the relations between those entities, these documents, developed as part of emergency preparedness were not necessarily used as reference during the emergency response and post emergency activities.
• The emergency response stakeholders (National and international Ministries, Government agencies and military forces) and the different bodies of coordination involved in this operation may also have misunderstood the nature of the different mandates, the reasons for the mechanisms and the purpose of the processes. As a result, the partners of the VLC did not always understand the differences between these logistics entities and their roles. This resulted in a decrease in efficiency, particularly during the post-emergency phase (a month after the Cyclone).

• The NDMO Logistics Department and the Vanuatu Logistics Cluster (VLC) must remain distinct entities. Though they work in partnership, ad hoc systems must not duplicate or replace the planned standards of operations (SOPs) which must be defined, communicated and enforced.

• The VLC coordination must represent the forum of the VLC members. The members of the VLC should be (logistics officers or relevant logistics actors/users/donors) representatives of organizations involved in the emergency/humanitarian preparedness and response.

• NDMO as a potential resource for its (VLC) partners is amongst the key members of the VLC, just like WFP. NDMO, as the VLC appointed Leader, should provide a dedicated national logistics officer to coordinate the VLC.

• By mandate, the VLC coordinator (in his terms of References) should not be in charge of or report to NDMO logistics, but rather coordinate with the NDMO logistics officer in order for NDMO to support or receive support from the VLC members.

• It is feasible for one individual to carry the responsibility of both the Coordination of the VLC and a member’s organization logistics department, but doing so efficiently and without bias takes understanding and experience. For the time being, the NDMO logistics team does not have this capacity.

Key Recommendations:

1. Ensure there is a clear understanding of the distinction between the VLC and the NDMO Logistics Department. This could include training to help educate the response community of the distinct role of the VLC as opposed to the NDMO logistics function. Additionally simulations could be used to help familiarize stakeholders with the various response documents i.e.: Vanuatu Logistics Contingency Plan (LCP), National Disaster Act and the NDMO Standard of Operations (NDMO SOPs).

2. Clearly define the role and the responsibilities of the VLC coordinator and the distinction between VLC coordination and NDMO Logistics coordination for the NDMO organization itself and the VLC forum. Establish a clear chain of communication (reporting) for the VLC coordination to NDMO direction, and ensure that NDMO provides a dedicated coordinator to lead the VLC (or at least a national counterpart to deployed international consultant).
NDMO, the NDC and the VLC will have to address the Co-Lead task and ensure that one organization will assume the responsibility. The LCP (2011) states that Oxfam/UNICEF are officially Co-lead; JPOC was assigned with the responsibility on this operation but it was WFP that finally took the task without being officially endorsed. NDMO should officially request WFP to take this task on future emergency operations given WFP’s extensive experience, capacity and know-how in the Logistics operation and Logistics Cluster coordination.

Coordination, leadership and communication:

• The VLC co-leadership, as initially planned in the reference documents (LCP and NDMO SOPs), was to be taken by the Joint Planning Operation Centre (JPOC) and the Vanuatu Red Cross society. Due to lack of capacity and other functional reasons this was not referred to in the first phase of the operation. Rather, the WFP Logistics Cluster deployed in Vanuatu, in response to a direct request by Director General and Chairman of the Vanuatu NDMO to WFP Regional Bureau of Bangkok, assumed active co-leadership of the VLC.

• The chain of communication during the operation has to reflect the plan. The VLC lead position must be assumed by an organization with the capacity to do so (strong logistics department), the proper understanding of its role and responsibility (clearly defined and communicated) with an established network of partnerships based on expertise and trust. The co-lead position must also be clearly established. The Co-lead organization must be able to assume leadership with the same degree of capacity and understanding as NDMO, or the appointed lead organization. In both cases, coordinators (lead and co-lead) must be both dedicated (by terms of reference) to the task. VLC lead and co-lead should be familiar with the IASC Global Logistics Cluster guidance and use this as a resource until well established.

• Coordination meetings are meant to allow the VLC members to meet and discuss issues that are relevant to them and their operations. Coordination efforts and Information sharing should be guided by the needs of the partners. The VLC coordination can only identify the direction to be taken by its effort if it knows the needs of its partners. In general, the gaps can be anticipated before a disaster occurs because the context is already known (Updated National Logistics Capacity Assessment). During the operation, partners faced problems that may not have been anticipated. It is crucial for the VLC coordinators to know their partners (the individual logistics officers or contacts) and their operations (i.e. The active organizations’ operational needs). Most of the VLC coordination work involves networking which means spending a considerable amount of time meeting with partners (individually) in order to identify their needs and develop solutions for all, while rationalizing the use of the available means to do so. To achieve this, the VLC coordination must be mobile and have efficient means of communication. Like a contractor, the Logistics Cluster coordinator provides services to its members, including coordination and information sharing (free of charge) and storage and/or transport services (sometimes for free, sometimes on cost recovery basis depending on funds and assets available).

• Meetings should be proactive, dynamic and produce a benefit for the participants. Besides identifying an agenda that will stimulate interest and produce benefit, the VLC coordination will have to ensure that the organizations will send someone competent to represent them at the
meeting. Logistics personnel are always very busy and their time is precious. They will make themselves available only if the meetings present a real benefit and makes a real difference. Failing to ensure so would result in drops in meeting attendance and contacts, would discredit the VLC as a relevant entity and defeat the purpose of the Logistics Cluster.

**Key recommendations:**

1. VLC coordinators to make regular individual appointments with VLC partners (Program and logistics officers) and build a consistent understanding of the partners’ needs for information, coordination and logistics services. Constantly update the contact lists and anticipate the turnover amongst organizations representatives. Be personally known and systematically reinforce the VLC network.

2. Use the resources created by the WFP Logistics Cluster to help strengthen the VLC including relevant guidance, tools and strategic and operational trainings. This can include technical trainings as well as ‘soft’ skills such as running logistics cluster meetings.

3. Strengthen the specifics VLC mechanisms through regular VLC meetings so as to plan and implement key preparedness activities and ensure the group is ready to respond to future emergencies.

**2. Common Logistics Services (Service Request Process and formats)**

**Request channels and VLC terms of reference:**

- As a basic principle, the Common services are only meant to exist when there is a gap. ISAC has clearly defined the concept of “last resort” that should rule the implementation of logistics services by NDMO for its VLC partners (like WFP). When requesting services from NDMO (or WFP, or any VLC member with capacity to offer services to other partners) the Service Request Form (SRF) is the document that allows the VLC to coordinate the flow of requests, facilitate the planning and tasking within the VLC forum, screen the request in agreement with the requirements of the service providers (NDMO, WFP or other VLC member) and track cargo.

- Planning of services must be primarily defined by the service providers but it is the role of the VLC to coordinate the VLC members’ requests for commons services such as transport and cargo storage. VLC transport priorities should be agreed by the National Disaster Committee (NDC) and the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC). The VLC common service planning has to be made according to the service provider’s capacity and it is understood that the service provider’s schedule and priorities may change to the detriment of the service requester. However, in no cases should the service provider (E.g.: NDMO, WFP) use the VLC/SRF
coordination/system to substitute their own logistics unit. Such practice is contrary to the NDMO SOPs and the VLC planned role. I.e.: NDMO logistics operations and management should not absorb the VLC coordination functions and the VLC systems to benefit their operation and (subsequently) override the VLC coordination planning process. Rather, NDMO should build and develop their own operational systems, ensure their capacity and then support the VLC by offering services when a gap is identified. Such is the lead function and responsibility for NDMO in the VLC.

Processes transparency, control and operational feedback:

- Although the waybills were introduced for NDMO transport to accompany the cargo movements there has been no efficient cargo tracking system implemented. There is no centralized data base with archived and updated dispatch information, transport documents and cargo specifications. Additionally there was no transport superintendent dispatched to control deliveries to consignees. As a result no signed waybills were returned to the warehouses and no confirmation of delivery were provided to the NDMO logistics archives. At this stage NDMO does not have an efficient accounting system and is still not able to track its deliveries to the field. I.e.: A thorough control of the transport and delivery process (internal or external audit) could not be successfully conducted within NDMO logistics files.

- As NDMO Logistics is working at strengthening its operational systems and aims to formalize and standardize its warehousing and transport procedures, it must develop the capacity of its implementing partners within the government and the provincial committees. This is needed to ensure the smooth flow of communication and streamline all processes at national and provincial levels. NDMO will have to create an Evaluation & Monitoring function (define the tasks and assign personnel) to assess the quality of its operations, enforce standards, control the performances based on the set objectives and collect field data during disaster responses for post operation analysis.

Key recommendation:

1. Strengthen NDMO/VCLs ability to adequately trace and document the movement of cargo from loading to delivery in an emergency and certify completion of service: Detailed waybills (or transport letter accompanied with detailed packing lists) should be sent with all transported cargo and signed copy should be returned to NDMO logistics and the VLC coordination. NDMO will have to create templates for the cargo movement tracking database, the reporting process and train its staff on referencing and ordered archiving.

2. Create an Evaluation & Monitoring function to assess the quality of its operations, enforce standards, control the performances based on the set objectives and collect field data during disaster responses for post operation analysis.

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1 Documents that have been archived have not been organized in a central bank of archive in NDMO and, since the logistics department has remained un-structured and the VLC has not been appointed with a counterpart, there is no guaranty that these files will be given any use.
Common services Standard of Operating Procedures (SOPs):

- NDMO is now committed to developing an operational and efficient logistics department. During this operation, despite the clear directions of the NDMO SOPs the NDMO logistics and the VLC structures followed ad hoc systems of communication for service requests. The standards for operations, systems and the logistics disaster response structure necessary to maintain control still seem to be unclear to the users.

- The VLC was created as a Vanuatu governmental lead entity; separate from the WFP Logistics Cluster. The terms of references and supporting documents (LCP, NDMO SOPs) state that the NDMO leads the VLC. In this response WFP provided consultant advisors to support the NDMO-led VLC and help build the capacity of its coordinators. WFP acted as the Co-Lead agency and initially the WFP Logistics Cluster systems and tools were used to implement common service provision. This helped facilitate the movement of cargo at first for emergency air and sea transport on military assets and later for sea transport on boats provided free-of-charge.

- NDMO should develop and start using its own formats and documents of reference, for the VLC and also for the NDMO logistics itself. For example, a (NDMO) VLC SRF format is necessary to formalize service requests and compile all the information necessary to complete the requested service (transport or storage) if/when offered to the users. Such a format, once endorsed must be supported by a set of instructions (on how to use, fill in, etc). The provided services (by the VLC) must be ruled by a given and clearly communicated set of SOPs. Since the purpose of the VLC and the WFP Logistics Cluster are identical, these NDMO/VLC documents may mimic the WFP systems and should be designed so that they are compatible with the international community approach (stated by IASC). During the emergency response, it is the responsibility of the VLC coordinators to make sure that the community of users is consistently educated on the existing systems, the processes and required documentation in order to ensure control, consistency in the processes and the capacity of the VLC to plan, inform and report.

- Although the WFP Logistics Cluster SRFs were effectively used to cover the gap in VLC documentation, no formal (VLC) SOPs were defined, implemented and communicated to the forum. The VLC users were not consistently instructed on Service Request Form (SRF) use and the coordination was unable to control the flow of request and/or ensure that standards be maintained (mainly because of multiple SRF validation systems within NDMO and the numerous personnel rotations within the community). This resulted in incomplete shipping documents (SRF without consignees’ contacts, weights or volumes) that had to be returned to the sender, bottlenecks at the port during loading operations, last minute changes in the cargo priorities, over-riding orders coming from NDMO direction (and beyond), lack of feedback on SRFs (accepted or declined) and partners facing difficulties in planning. As key players the NDMO and the VLC must develop stable systems and procedures that harmonize both logistics operations (NDMO’s and the VLC’s) and make them both reliable to the community of organization they are trying to support.
• Logistics Services SOPs must be developed to give references to the users about what to do and how to do it and they should clearly establish the communication process for the request submission and clearance. Once the SOPs are defined, endorsed and communicated, they need to be enforced and respected by all the users, starting with NDMO and/or Ministries leadership. NDMO logistics operations must be conducted so that they can provide solutions to the VLC users rather than absorbing the VLC resources and imposing last minute changes. Therefore, to ensure adequate leadership of the VLC, NDMO must develop a strong logistics department to support the VLC. This should include clearly defined and endorsed SOPs for logistics and communication activities.

**Key recommendation:**

1. NDMO to create and develop an autonomous and efficient NDMO logistics unit using its own systems and SOPs so that that NDMO (Logistics) can take part in the VLC as an operational partner able to provide services without using the VLC system.

2. Implement a NDMO format for VLC Service Request Form, with associated SOPs and ensure cluster members understand the process for requesting common services such as transport and storage.

### 3. Information Management:

• Information management has been a new function in NDMO operations. Consequently there was little capacity for the collection and dissemination of information within NDMO. Two consultants (WFP and DFAT) were deployed during the emergency response to provide information management support to the NDMO as VLC-lead. Both IM officers were utilized by the NDMO logistics operations and/or other administrative functions within the NDMO. This was understood to be a reallocation of resource based on the NDMO needs, however it brings to light some gaps within the basic organization and structure (ie: lack of trained personnel and confusion in the terms of references).

• During disaster responses, a national counterpart should be appointed (to any VLC coordinator or IM consultant) so that the position and the function can be successfully transferred when the consultant departs. As the VLC remains active in “non-emergency” times, the IM function (Information Sharing) should be maintained by the national counterpart as an essential function.

• As an essential information resource and tool, the Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) must be kept up to date. The IM counterpart, mentioned above, should be dedicated to maintain and update the contact lists of service providers, the government agencies, and the other logistics key actors, (re)assess their capacity on regular basis and record the details of their activity for the record. The LCA is designed for and should be referred to by local, national and international
organizations. If deemed relevant, the format should be translated in the national language (Bislama) and published along with the English version. As suggested by the LCP, the Vanuatu LCA (WFP format available on Logcluster.org could be reviewed in a simpler format for a Bislama translation. In order to avoid duplication, the VLC (national IM counterpart) should work in close collaboration with the WFP Logistics Cluster IM department to maintain the Vanuatu LCA updated. Note that the IM function in NDMO could also facilitate the exchange of data between the Vanuatu Land Department and the WFP GIS department to develop relevant mapping in collaboration with other Vanuatu Clusters and according to the needs in both emergency times and non-emergency times.

- As the VLC should work at constantly maintaining a network of partners, the contact lists should be under VLC control (not under the form of a google-group where members are free to sign themselves in and out and the list grows out of control). Contact lists should be defined in degrees of confidentiality and purpose. E.g.: The core logistics working group receiving contact numbers and potentially sensitive information should only include logistics officers and selected service users; Wide publication groups on the other hand should allow any organization or individual to access already “processed and cleared” information. As the VLC exist independently from the WFP Logistics Cluster, it should develop its own website or web page. There is also a Pacific Logistics Cluster page that can be used to store and access resources - http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/pacific-region/logistics.

**Key recommendations:**

1. Priority for NDMO is to establish an information management officer for the VLC. This should include defining a ToR, outlining key activities (during non-emergency and emergency response operations) as well as providing adequate training to support the role.

2. Update the Logistics Capacity Assessment annually to ensure that information is up to date in the event of an emergency. This should be coordinated with the WFP Logistics Cluster so as to build upon the work they have done in this area.

3. The VLC should maintain an up to date list of key contacts in defined contact lists.

4. Create a dedicated web page for sharing and storing relevant VLC information.

**4. Reporting and Commodity Tracking:**

- The NDMO faced increasing difficulty controlling its inventory and reporting on stocks after operations entered the post emergency phase (after the 4th week). An ad hoc system was put in place and the VLC was used as a reference for other Vanuatu Clusters to collect information on the NDMO stocks (essentially because NDMO centralized the flow of in-kind donations and NFIs). The tendency has been to view the VLC as a (NDMO) logistics function for all the
humanitarian actors involved in the disaster response. It has even been suggested to NDMO that all government agencies and affiliated organizations use the VLC as a central logistics coordination service for all, in order to fill a general gap of logistics resource and know-how that appeared once the emergency phase was over (the gap was precipitated by the sudden “HR drain” due to the Nepal earthquake emergency). This suggestion does not take in account the facts that NDMO does not have global logistics support capacity and that the VLC mandate is to support the active organizations with specific TORs (Information sharing, coordination and common services) rather than substitute for agencies logistics departments. Each cluster, sector and organization involved in programmes have the responsibility of developing their own logistics capacity to conduct successfully their operations, as efficiently as possible. The VLC (as in the logistics Cluster function in the general UN humanitarian approach) is mainly there to “facilitate the formation” of a logistics groups of organizations, “which would work together to improve humanitarian response”.

• The VLC should be able to help its partners to develop their own reporting tools, if needed, to build capacity. As the NDMO does not have this expertise they can call on the support of the WFP Logistics Cluster to consolidate its own stock reports and re-enforce warehouse SOPs.

• In future disaster response, should storage become an issue for partners and NDMO would like to provide temporary storage, NDMO logistics will have to demonstrate the capacity to be accountable for the control and be able to secure the VLC partners’ stocks. The VLC will have to be able to track and report on the VLC partner’s stock stored with NDMO logistics. Commodity tracking systems demand qualified and trained officers and may be consolidated through the use of adapted and specific software.

• In the best case scenario, once NDMO has successfully structured its logistics department/unit and this cargo movement tracking function is created to monitor the NDMO logistics receipt, storage and dispatch, it may provide an adapted report service to the VLC coordination and its users.

• As previously mentioned, there is neither a centralized (Logistics or VLC) database in NDMO and (since the Logistics department is yet to be structured) nor an organized and formal filing system for archives. Many document were produced during this operation, many of which may become obsolete unless captured by the NDMO for future use. There is a need for the VLC to develop a way of storing and maintaining these templates and tools for future use. The IM function has not yet been able to organize these documents, and since no national counterpart has been appointed to the VLC, there is a risk that these documents will be lost (i.e.: SRFs, Transport Authorizations, Contact Lists, Situation Reports, Meeting Minutes, etc). These banks of data should be organized and updated from the start of the operations, follow a rational organization systems and be handed over from one IM officer to another. The database should be provided with a summary of content guiding anyone accessing the files for general or specific information or for audit purposes. Should the IM officer be replaced by another, there should not be any loss nor any need to (re)organize the files.
Key Recommendations:

1. The VLC can call on the support of the WFP Logistic Cluster to implement warehouse management systems and SOP’s. This should include training for warehouse staff and implementation of supporting templates and documents.

2. NDMO Logistics should ensure that its logistics department/unit has the systems, tools and training to track all its cargo movements and monitor accurately its inventory and all inter-agency stocks (in case a common storage service would be provided).

3. An archive or database with key documents, tools and templates should be created and maintained.

5. Operational human resources

- It is legitimate for the Vanuatu government and the NDMO to retain the control over the humanitarian efforts to relieve its populations in the aftermath of a disaster such as the Tropical cyclone PAM, but assuming the leadership of a Logistics Cluster (in line with the IASC humanitarian approach) presupposes that the NDMO logistics is positioned as an expert in logistics and has the means to support the partners who are in need. The first condition is to have the human resources to do so. The minimum is for the logistics cluster coordinators (here provided by UNICEF / Red-R and WFP) to have a dedicated national counterpart from the start. According to the NDMO SOPs, this national counterpart could have been the NDMO Operational Manager (OM). In practice, the NDMO OM did not have the experience, the training or the time to take this responsibility. The lack of such counterpart is still an obstacle and will prevent the NDMO and the VLC from retaining most of the experience and know-how that was compiled during to this operation.

- The NDMO needs to establish an operational national logistics team trained for disaster responses (Logistics officer, transport & shipping officer, cargo tracking officer, warehouse manager, and storekeepers). This represents a priority project to be implemented (by recommendation) with the WFP Logistics Cluster in the frame of regional emergency preparedness support.

- Once the operational logistics capacity is secure in NDMO, the efforts for capacity building should be directed to the PDCs in order to ensure that the chain of logistics responsibilities is covered at national and provincial level.

Key Recommendation:
1. NDMO should provide a national counterpart for any consultant deployed in support to their operations and hence, ensure continuity on the processes that are initiated and capitalize on the imported experience and know-how.

2. Ensure that the NDMO logistics department/unit is adequately resourced with trained staff to undertake preparedness and response activities.

6. **Emergency preparedness - Immediate actions and contingency asset management**

   - The 7th Regional Pacific Humanitarian Team meeting recommended actions to address national shortfalls in disaster management and logistics capacities, including the establishment of a WFP technical advisory presence in the region, technical logistics training and simulation exercises.

   - As the WFP Logistics and Pacific Island Country Governments will be looking at a regional emergency preparedness support and capacity building project, WFP and NDMO have to decide and agree on how to best utilize the assets that were deployed by WFP during this emergency.

   - The present VLC coordination submits that these assets (6 MSUs) be dismantled, and stored for emergency preparedness with basic warehouse management equipment per mobile storage unit (1 assembly tool kit, 200 Pallets, 1 platform scale (100Kg), 12 tarpaulins (4m x 6m), 4 shovels and 4 picks, 20 pairs of protection gloves, 1 first aid kit). Location should be agreed between NDMO and WFP but the recommendation is to use the leave the dismantled unit conditioned for storage (in containers) in Tanna/Lenakel (2 units), Santo/Luganville (1 unit), Efate/Port Vila (2 units) all under the watch of NDMO and the PDCs.

   - The NDMO MSU (presently a loan from WFP) could be used by NDMO for the same training general purposes as the WFP LRT exercise in Brindisi (but with adapted specific objectives). As the (NDMO) VLC may continue and develop capacity building activities, NDMO Port Vila could host a VLC training program in line with the WFP Emergency Response Regional Support Project.

**Key Recommendation:**

1. All WFP MSU units must be disassembled (they cannot sustain long term weather exposure) and should then be stored along with essential warehouse equipment in strategical locations in Vanuatu as contingency assets ready to be deployed as logistics hubs for the VLC first disaster response.

2. NDMO Logistics Unit and VLC IM officer to participate in WFP Logistics Cluster training to be implemented by the WFP Emergency Response Regional Support Project and use the WFP assets left after the TC PAM emergency response to develop local warehousing training exercises with WFP Logistics Cluster guidance and support.
7. Way forward: Reminder on the 7th Humanitarian Team Pacific Team Analysis and recommendations on overcoming logistics challenges:

Key gaps in logistics capacity
- No permanent presence of WFP in region
- Transportation particularly between islands
- Legal framework for preparedness
- Inventory control and Supply chain management
- Logistics training
- Community connections
- Communication of logistics information by VLC to and from PDC’s
- Private sector engagement
- Dedicated regional coordinator
- Pre-positioned stock at country level
- Telecommunications

Solutions to build logistics capacity
- Develop a logistics strategy with corresponding long-term funding
- Establish MOUs with private sector, military and maritime industries
- Strengthen regional coordination through WFP presence
- Advocate logistic needs and capacity through the PHT
- Identify policy and framework gaps
- Establish a forum for data sharing at the national and regional level
- Develop standby arrangements
- Secure political commitment

How to ensure capacity building is sustainable for countries to manage their own logistics preparedness/response activities?
- Training of Trainers (ToT)
- Establish legal frameworks
- Integrate trainings in existing institutions
- Liaise with private sector
- Build on existing supply chains including with the private sector
- Establish SOPs and conduct regular simulation exercises to test procedures and personnel
- Share experiences of what effective logistics looks like including saving lives and money
- Provide ownership to trained logisticians
- Strengthen links between government departments, private sector and academia
- Involve churches and utilize their distribution systems. Provide ToT.
- Local governments need to stay committed and prioritize Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and DRM
IV. Summary of key recommendations for NDMO logistics and the VLC (reorganized in order of priority)

Coordination (P.10)

1. Ensure there is a clear understanding of the distinction between the VLC and the NDMO Logistics Department. This could include training to help educate the response community of the distinct role of the VLC as opposed to the NDMO logistics function. Additionally simulations could be used to help familiarize stakeholders with the various response documents i.e.: Vanuatu Logistics Contingency Plan (LCP), National Disaster Act and the NDMO Standard of Operations (NDMO SOPs).

2. Clearly define the role and the responsibilities of the VLC coordinator and the distinction between VLC coordination and MNDMO Logistics coordination for the NDMO organization itself and the VLC forum. Establish a clear chain of communication (reporting) for the VLC coordination to NDMO direction, and ensure that NDMO provides a dedicated coordinator to lead the VLC (or at least a national counterpart to deployed international consultant).

3. NDMO, the NDC and the VLC will have to address the Co-Lead task and ensure that one organization will assume the responsibility. The LCP (2011) states that Oxfam/UNICEF are officially Co-lead; JPOC was assigned with the responsibility on this operation but it was WFP that finally took the task without being officially endorsed. NDMO should officially request WFP to take this task on future emergency operations given WFP’s extensive experience, capacity and know-how in the Logistics operation and Logistics Cluster coordination. Baptiste – this is the same thing I mentioned above re the VRC or Oxfam leading given their long term presence.

4. VLC coordinators to make regular individual appointments with VLC partners (Program and logistics officers) and build a consistent understanding of the partners’ needs for information, coordination and logistics services. Constantly update the contact lists and anticipate the turnover amongst organizations representatives. Be personally known and systematically reinforce the VLC network.

5. Use the resources created by the WFP Logistics Cluster to help strengthen the VLC including relevant guidance, tools and strategic and operational trainings. This can include technical trainings as well as ‘soft’ skills such as running logistics cluster meetings.

6. Strengthen the specifics VLC mechanisms through regular VLC meetings so as to plan and implement key preparedness activities and ensure the group is ready to respond to future emergencies.
**Common Logistics Services (P.13 & 15)**

1. NDMO to create and develop an autonomous and efficient NDMO logistics unit using its own systems and SOPs so that NDMO (Logistics) can take part in the VLC as an operational partner able to provide services without using the VLC system.

2. Ensure that the NDMO logistics department/unit is adequately resourced with trained staff to undertake preparedness and response activities.

3. Implement a NDMO format for VLC Service Request Form, with associated SOPs and ensure cluster members understand the process for requesting common services such as transport and storage.

4. Strengthen NDMO/VCLs ability to adequately trace and document the movement of cargo from loading to delivery in an emergency and certify completion of service: Detailed waybills (or transport letter accompanied with detailed packing lists) should be sent with all transported cargo and signed copy should be returned to NDMO logistics and the VLC coordination. NDMO will have to create templates for the cargo movement tracking database, the reporting process and train its staff on referencing and ordered archiving.

5. Create an Evaluation & Monitoring function to assess the quality of its operations, enforce standards, control the performances based on the set objectives and collect field data during disaster responses for post operation analysis.

**Information Management (P.16)**

1. Priority for NDMO is to establish an information management officer for the VLC. This should include defining a ToR, outlining key activities (during non-emergency and emergency response operations) as well as providing adequate training to support the role.

2. Update the Logistics Capacity Assessment annually to ensure that information is up to date in the event of an emergency. This should be coordinated with the WFP Logistics Cluster so as to build upon the work they have done in this area.

3. The VLC should maintain an up to date list of key contacts in defined contact lists.

4. NDMO to create a dedicated web page for sharing and storing relevant VLC information.

**Reporting and Commodity Tracking (P.17)**
1. The VLC can call on the support of the WFP Logistic Cluster to implement warehouse management systems and SOP’s. This should include training for warehouse staff and implementation of supporting templates and documents.

2. NDMO Logistics should ensure that its logistics department/unit has the systems, tools and training to track all its cargo movements and monitor accurately its inventory and all inter-agency stocks (in case a common storage service would be provided).

3. An archive or database with key documents, tools and templates should be created and maintained.

**Operational Human Resources (P.18)**

1. NDMO should provide a national counterpart for any consultant deployed in support to their operations and hence, ensure continuity on the processes that are initiated and capitalize on the imported experience and know-how.

2. Ensure that the NDMO logistics department/unit is adequately resourced with trained staff to undertake preparedness and response activities.

**Emergency Preparedness - Immediate actions and contingency assets management (P.19)**

1. All WFP MSU units must be disassembled (they cannot sustain long term weather exposure) and should then be stored along with essential warehouse equipment in strategical locations in Vanuatu as contingency assets ready to be deployed as logistics hubs for the VLC first disaster response.

2. NDMO Logistics Unit and VLC IM officer to participate in WFP Logistics Cluster training to be implemented by the WFP Emergency Response Regional Support Project and use the WFP assets left after the TC PAM emergency response to develop local warehousing training exercises with WFP Logistics Cluster guidance and support.

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