

FAST FACTS

United Nations Development Programme



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Resilient nation:

Waste Management and Livelihoods Recovery Initiative in Vanuatu

On 13 March 2015, Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Pam wreaked havoc over Vanuatu affecting about 188,000 people and left 11 dead out of an estimated total population of 272,000 on 23 islands. On March 15, Vanuatu's President appealed for international support to respond to the nation's "unprecedented damages".

The low figure of fatalities at 11, hides the severe damages and losses suffered by people, not only to their housing and community buildings but also to their livelihoods. The Cyclone has also brought significant short- and longer-term socio-economic impacts, particularly for women, who are among the most affected having lost most of their income generating capacities.

UNDP's Response:

1. Waste Management

In collaboration with the Port Vila and Lenakel Municipal Councils, UNDP launched an emergency employment scheme on 20 April in Port Vila and Lenakel on Tanna Island. Debris removal was the first and most essential stage of early recovery. Safe waste removal and recycling prevents sanitation and water-borne related diseases. Debris removal also enables communities to make room to eventually rebuild or repair damaged infrastructure, businesses, trading ports, buildings and boats.

The most vulnerable men and women were selected to clear debris, recover and recycle waste. The jobs provided the affected communities with much needed cash and tools to help restore their livelihoods.

MATTERS OF FACT

- Over 2,000 direct beneficiaries (members of participating community groups), including 60 percent of women.
- Over 1,100 women provided with *pandanus* leaves
- 714 farmers provided with support to clear 94.5 hectares of coffee plantations.
- Over 400 cubic meters of timber produced, enough to reconstruct 700 to 800 houses.
- Six community buildings being rebuilt.

In total, 129 person (including 69 women) have been temporarily employed for a total number of 1,920 working days. It is estimated that over 2,465 cubic meters of debris have been removed. The two municipalities also received heavy equipment (including garbage trucks) to improve their waste management efforts.



Clearing debris at the Korman temporary landfill site (Photo: UNDP).

Recycling Fallen Trees

Partnering with Camp Shining Light, a local non-governmental organization in Vanuatu, a Sawmill operation was set up in Tanna Island to reclaim the fallen trees and transform them into useable timber which the communities and individual households can

use to rebuild their homes. In total, it is expected that more than 400 cubic meters of timber will be produced, enough to rebuild 700 to 800 houses.



Christopher Nipo and his family with timber to rebuild their home destroyed by Cyclone Pam (Photo: Peter Moran).

Reviving the Coffee Industry

Cyclone Pam almost completely destroyed all the coffee plantations in Tanna Island. While in a normal year, the island would produce around 80 tonnes of coffee beans, it is expected that as a result of the Cyclone, the production will fall to only five tonnes in 2015. In partnership with the Tanna Coffee Development Company, UNDP has equipped and deployed four mobile teams to assist more than 700 farmers to clean and prune their coffee plantations.



One of the four mobile teams clearing coffee plantations.

2. Support to Livelihoods Restoration in the islands of the Shepherd Group

Enabling Women to start Weaving again

The islands of the Shepherd Group experienced significant levels of destruction during Cyclone Pam. Some of these islands, such as Mataso or Makira have been completely stripped of all vegetation, thus rendering impossible for women to continue to weave mats and baskets, the main source of income. To address this issue, UNDP, in partnership with the local association ACTIV, has imported around four tonnes of *pandanus* leaves from non-affected

islands and subsequently distributed them to over 1,100 women across the six targeted Islands.



Women presenting a mat produced with the *pandanus* leaves imported by UNDP (Photo: UNDP).

Rehabilitating Community Infrastructures

All the community infrastructures on Shepherd Islands have suffered extensive damages, thus depriving communities of a place where they can gather, work or sell their products. In each of the six islands, UNDP in partnership with the Department of Public Works is repairing community buildings, which is being used for income generating purposes (such as central markets or women's club).

Supporting Local Associations

Local associations have been established in most of the communities in the Shepherd Islands. These include farmers associations, women groups and fishermen associations. In order to restore the livelihood of affected populations, UNDP is providing these associations with income generating goods and equipment such as solar freezers, fencing kits, sewing machines or canoe construction kits.

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