

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu – Meeting Notes

Meeting:	Shelter Cluster Vanuatu - Cluster Meeting – Earthquake response		
Date:	26 March 2025	Time:	1600-1700
Meeting Facilitator:	Shelter Cluster Coordinator	Location:	NDMO

Agenda

Attendance: Jerry Talesa (IOM), Marianne Pecnik (IFRC), Terry Lancashire (UNDP), Elisabeth Araujo (IOM), Vanesa Organo (IOM), Mark Vaughan (DUAP)

Agenda

Last meeting's action items:

- Updates from Shelter Cluster partners
- Technical working group update
- Technical updates
- AoB

Action	Owner	Result or status
Efate EQ Recovery plan	DUAP	Efate Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan
Efate EQ Housing Sector Recovery Plan (update)	DUAP	Housing-Sector-Recovery-Plan Summary Update
Shelter Building materials	SCV	Shelter Cluster Market Assessment Study
Shelter Guidance Note EQ Recovery	SCV	SCV-Guidance-Note-EQ-24-Recovery-DRAFT
HBDA report	DUAP	Household Building Damage Assessment
Visual documentation: Modern concrete house exhibiting substandard construction practices	SCV	Modern-Konrit-House-Poor-Construction
Root Cause Analysis of Structural Failures in Vanuatu Contemporary Permanent Residential Shelters Due to the Recent Earthquake	UNDP	Root Cause Analysis

Agenda item 1: SC minutes No comments were raised on the previous meeting minutes.

Agenda item 2: Partners updates:

DECM Cluster (IOM): Some families remain displaced, notably in areas like Melamat, where six families are still staying in a church that is itself not in a safe location. There is no confirmed relocation plan yet for these families, though IOM and other actors are exploring options, including engaging technical experts to assess the safety of the site and possibly initiate relocation through durable solutions. Land access remains a challenge—chiefs have indicated limited availability, and in some cases, suggested that families use remittances from seasonal work to buy land, which is not a feasible solution for many.

Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS): has completed relief distributions and is now shifting focus to Shelter cash assistance for earthquake-affected households. Community-level trainings and preparedness messaging. Verification of beneficiaries eligible for support. A transfer value (amount of cash assistance per household) is currently in process. The approach includes using damage data (from HBDA) and household verification to prioritize assistance. Considering a geographic targeting approach and possibly focusing on moderately damaged homes first as a pilot project. Budget constraints mean full reconstruction isn't feasible—so cash is intended for urgent repairs. Discussions emphasize

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transparent communication with communities, especially about why some households receive different amounts (e.g., due to house type or level of damage).

All partners planning shelter-related activities are kindly encouraged to attend the Shelter Cluster coordination meetings or to arrange bilateral discussions. Given the critical importance of shelter interventions, it is essential that partners align their approaches, avoid duplication of efforts, and apply consistent transfer values for cash assistance. Collaborative coordination will help ensure an efficient and equitable response.

Early-Recovery / Recovery activities by partners: Partners are encouraged to provide current shelter activities using this link: <https://forms.gle/mGWq274bX8XfD9X9A>

Agenda item 3: Technical working groups

TwIG 1: The Housing Building Damage Assessment (HBDA) is ready. The Household and Building Damage Assessment (HBDA) in Vanuatu has revealed the extent of structural damage caused by the recent earthquake, along with the slow pace of recovery and urgent challenges in water and sanitation. Many households remain in need of support, and key priorities have emerged: managing debris, providing technical assistance for repairs, and delivering targeted financial aid to the most vulnerable. To move forward, a community-led reconstruction process—supported by both technical guidance and financial assistance—will be essential for building back in a safe, sustainable way. The HBDA has also provided a cost estimate for repairing and rebuilding 163 damaged or destroyed buildings, totalling nearly 491 million VUV (around USD \$4 million). While this figure is a useful planning tool, further consultation with local stakeholders is needed to refine it based on material availability, labor costs, and on-the-ground realities. In the immediate term, structured debris removal and safe demolition efforts will be critical. These should be paired with Cash-for-Work programs to provide income opportunities while restoring affected communities. At the same time, urgent repairs to rainwater harvesting systems and consistent water quality monitoring must be prioritized to ensure access to safe water. Looking ahead, strengthening local construction capacity through vocational training—particularly with partners like the Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP)—and updating building guidelines to include earthquake- and cyclone-resilient techniques will lay the foundation for long-term resilience. Developing clear shelter durability standards and a national Shelter Handbook will further support communities in rebuilding safer, stronger homes.

TwIG 2: IEC shelter material: The Inception Report outlines the strategy for developing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to promote resilient housing practices in Vanuatu, following the December 17, 2024 earthquake. Led by IOM in collaboration with Shelter Cluster Vanuatu and DECM, the initiative responds to widespread structural damage revealed by the HBDA, which highlighted common construction weaknesses in both modern (Konkrit) and hybrid (Kapa) housing types. The objective is to deliver practical, culturally relevant IEC materials—booklets, posters, training guides, and digital content—targeted at communities, builders, and Shelter Cluster partners. The materials will promote safer construction practices, integrate building code awareness, and support low-income households with affordable, resilient solutions. The project includes community consultations, field testing, and capacity building. Outputs will be delivered in English and Bislama through workshops, printed materials, and digital channels. Development is aligned with the Port Vila Earthquake Recovery Plan’s focus on resilience and risk reduction.

Agenda item 4: Technical inputs to follow up.

Debris Management: A significant amount of debris needs to be removed at the community level, with estimates reaching hundreds of truckloads. No immediate solutions or service providers have been identified for large-scale debris clearance. Coordination with relevant authorities is necessary to ensure the safe demolition of unstable buildings outside the CBD.

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Fault Line & Hazard Mapping: Further assessment is needed to evaluate ground cracks and geophysical hazards at the community level. This is essential for determining safe reconstruction zones and providing guidance to displaced communities.

Targeted Technical Assistance: Strengthening collaboration with the Vanuatu Skills Partnership should begin immediately to support safe rebuilding efforts, aligning with the long-term recovery strategy.

Agenda item 5: The Shelter Cluster Guidance Note on Earthquake Recovery and Shelter Assistance is now finalized and attached above. It outlines key focus areas including cash assistance, IEC materials on resilient shelter, skills development and training, and debris management.

Furthermore, you will find several other **relevant documents** developed by our partners over the past few weeks for your reference—for example, a market assessment, a report on substandard construction practices, and a Root Cause Analysis of Structural Failures in Vanuatu’s Contemporary Permanent Residential Shelters following the recent earthquake

AOB:

Reporting (5Ws) and Information Management: Partners are encouraged to report shelter assistance activities related to emergency shelter using the 5Ws format. The NDMO Information Management (IM) team will ensure the data is regularly updated and maintained.

Partners to update VRCS on stock levels and fill in the **Stockholm register**.

Earthquake awareness documents: we would like to draw your attention to the following earthquake related information materials that were prepared previously. We hope these will be informative and useful, until we develop Vanuatu specific materials in relation to earthquake resilient building techniques.

- Earthquake resistant guide to timber design - a good document with good and simple drawings although some constructions are a little sophisticated.
- Promoting earthquake resistant housing – good and easy guide.
- Earthquakes don’t kill people, non-engineered buildings do – good example of one page document on what to do in an earthquake.

Useful links:

- Shelter Cluster Common Operating Picture
- Global Shelter Cluster earthquake compendium of earthquake related documents.
- Shelter Cluster Vanuatu Earthquake page (established for this Earthquake shelter response coordination)
- Shelter Cluster Vanuatu page (standing Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu web page).
- Shelter Cluster Vanuatu technical guidance. This document is drafted in three parts to show (A) the recommendations for responses of the Shelter Cluster to natural hazards in Vanuatu, (B) recommended shelter and non-food items (NFI) technical specifications and (C) case studies and key references.
- 5Ws consolidated data (Live)
- 5Ws Dashboard
- Meeting calendar for all clusters

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- Damage assessment dashboard
- DECM Dashboard (new)
- DECM PowerBI
- All Clusters Coordinators Contact List
- Choice for better shelter

Action Items

Action	Owner	Due Date
1. TWiG meeting – Discussion on Inception Report	SCV/IOM	31.03.2025
2. Coordination meeting IEC material	SCV/IOM	02.04.2025
3.		

Next Meeting

Date:	TBD	Time:	1600 hrs	Location:	NDMO
Comment:	Department of Energy - Conference Room				