

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu

Terms of Reference (ToR)

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I. Introduction

The following Terms of Reference (ToR) have been developed to guide the operations of the Shelter Cluster Vanuatu (SCV) in providing effective and efficient service to the Government and people of Vanuatu to prepare for, respond and recover from disasters by natural hazards. This ToR is intended to be a dynamic tool to inform the operations of the SCV, with regular updates to ensure ongoing relevance.

II. Background

Coordination of humanitarian response during the time of an emergency or disaster is led by the Government of Vanuatu and takes place at national and provincial levels.

At central government level, the National Disaster Council (NDC) is responsible for the development of strategies and policies for the preparations for humanitarian response to disasters. The NDC is to ensure that such strategies and policies are implemented by the NDMO, other government agencies and non-government agencies.

The NDMO is the operational arm of the [National Disaster Risk Management Act 2019](#), and is responsible for implementing NDC strategies, policies and decisions and for the coordination of disaster response. This includes coordination of pre-disaster and post disaster cycle activities.

During the response phase and upon the declaration of a State made by the Head of State on the advice of the Council of Ministers, government resources are made available to the NDMO to coordinate response relief efforts and address the needs of the affected people. Each Ministry is responsible for ensuring that resources are made available for the response, including personnel.

NDMO is tasked with ensuring the formulation and implementation of response plans.

The Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCC) have been established in all six Provinces in the country. In times of emergency, Provincial Emergency Operation Centres are activated under the PDCCC leadership.

The Municipal Disaster and Climate Change Committees (MDCCC) are to be formed in the urban centres of Port Vila, Luganville and Lenakel. The Municipal Town Clerk will assume the role of the Chair of the MDCCC and Municipal Disaster Controller.

Local communities are to form Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCC) using the existing structures of Development Committees and further develop plans to prepare for and respond to disasters that affect their communities or villages. CDCCC are to work together with the Area Council Secretaries. Disaster plans at this level are based on local knowledge and experience with assistance and support from line government agencies, Provincial Councils, NGOs, development partners and the private sector.

III. National Cluster system in Vanuatu

The Vanuatu Government made a decision post TC Pam (2015) to have a standing National cluster system to enable humanitarian agencies and government to develop and implement disaster preparedness activities during peace time.

The Government-led cluster coordination system has been generally adopted by the Government of Vanuatu and is now well established and supported.

Clusters are groups of organizations including national and local authorities, UN, international and national NGOs, Red Cross, Donors, and the private sector working in the main sectors of humanitarian action, such as Logistics; Shelter; Health; Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); Gender and Protection; Education; Emergency Telecommunications; Food Security & Agriculture.

The cluster approach has been adopted to strengthen the effectiveness and coordination of humanitarian assistance during times of emergency and in preparedness.

Clusters have clear responsibilities for sectoral coordination. Clusters provide a point of contact for external actors and are accountable for adequate and appropriate humanitarian assistance. Clusters promote partnerships between national and local authorities, international and local humanitarian actors, the private sector and civil society to ensure good sectoral coordination. Cluster surge support is likely to be requested for response and recovery work in medium- and large-scale events.

While clusters lead the coordination of humanitarian response at the national level, the cluster role at the provincial level is assumed by working groups. At the subnational level, the working groups are represented within the PDCCC. National clusters share information with respective working groups at the sub-national level to ensure regular flow of consistent communication during a humanitarian response.

A Government Agency holds the lead role of the cluster and has primary responsibility for either carrying out or coordinating the implementation of a particular mandated function.

A Co-lead Agency is an international or national non-government or UN agency that supports the Lead Agency in its role and responsibility. The Co-lead Agency may be the one that carries out the task for the Lead Agency; however, the Lead Agency is still accountable for decisions implemented.

The relationships and preparedness activities developed through the National cluster system has proven effective in enhancing communication and response during local lead disasters. The Inter-Custer is the coordinating mechanism for the 11 technical clusters, under Lead of National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

Cluster	Lead agency	Co-Lead agency	Chair
Education Cluster	Ministry of Education (MoET)	Save the Children	DG MoET
Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)	The Prime Minister's Office	The Office of Telecommunication, Radiocommunications	Chief information Officer (oGcro)

		& Broadcasting Regulator	
Transport & Infrastructure	Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities		DG MIPU
Food Security & Agriculture Cluster (FSAC)	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	DG MALFFB
Gender & Protection Cluster	Ministry of Justice and Community Services Department of Women Affairs	Save the Children	DG MJCS
Health & Medical Services Cluster	Ministry of Health	World Health Organization (WHO)	DG MoH
Logistics Cluster (VLC)	NDMO	WFP	Director NDMO
Emergency Shelter Cluster (SCV)	NDMO	Vanuatu Red Cross Society	Director NDMO
Displacement and Evacuation Centre Management	NDMO	International Office for Migration (UNIOM)	Director NDMO
Water Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) Cluster	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MoLNR)	UNICEF	DG MoLNR
Energy Services	Energy Department		Director Energy

According to the National Cyclone Support Plan endorsed after TC Lola, in October 2023, each sector shall prioritize response activities depending on the category of the Cyclone affecting the country:

13.4 Response priority sector activities

Sector	Activity	Cyclone category				
		CAT 1	CAT 2	CAT 3	CAT 4	CAT 5
Logistics	Assessment and immediate response	1	1	1	1	1
	intermediate response	2	2	2	2	2
WASH	Quick fix, water purification, hygiene kits	2	2	1	1	1
	Water supply fix	2	2	2	2	2
Education	Tente, asset distribution, and business continuity	2	2	2	2	2
	Building fixing	2	2	2	2	2
Health & Medical Service	Medivac and business continuity	1	1	1	1	1
	Building fixing	2	2	2	2	2
Food Security & Agriculture	Food distribution	1	1	2	2	2
	Planting material	2	2	2	2	2
Emergency Shelter	NFI distribution	2	2	1	1	1
Gender & Protection	Dignity kit	1	1	1	1	1
Transport and Infrastructure	Airport and wharf clearance	2	2	1	1	1
Emergency Telecommunications	Satellite comms deployment	1	1	1	1	1
	Telecom asset fixing	1	1	1	1	2
Displacement and Evacuation Centre Management	Population displacement and evacuation centre relief response	1	1	1	1	1
	Evacuation centre monitoring and repatriation	2	2	2	2	2

EMERGENCY SHELTER CLUSTER

National Level coordination mechanism

The Shelter Cluster coordinates a coherent and effective humanitarian shelter response following disaster events, as for TC PAM in 2015, TC Donna in 2017, and the Ambae Volcano crises in 2017-2018, TC Harold in 2020, TC Judy & Kevin and TC Lola in 2023. It has as well continued preparedness activities in collaboration with other clusters, government agencies and stakeholders.

National Clusters are tasked with elaborating sectoral response plans which will feed into the National Response plan.

Sub-National level coordination mechanism

Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs) are formed in each of the six provinces in Vanuatu. PDCCCs coordinate disaster preparedness and response at the provincial level and manage

response for small-scale and localized emergencies. The Secretary General of the Province serves as the chair of the PDCCCs and the NDMO Provincial Disaster Officer (PDO) act as the Coordinator of the PDCCCs liaising with sectoral Working Groups, including shelter led by NDMO. While the infrastructure working group is led by PWD.

[Provincial disaster plans](#) (2017) are available on NDMO website for SANMA, TAFEA & TORBA. Clusters roles are reflected through sectorial working groups. The Shelter/NFI working groups are led by NDMO as part of preparedness and supported by Partners.

At the Provincial reference is given to working group and not cluster as it is a replica of the cluster at the provincial level. The role of co-lead at the provincial level is to support PEOC and assist in coordination and implementation of response in their specific area by working with government agency for example issue with WASH then co-lead will work with DoWR.

At the local level, Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) have been established in over 100 communities around Vanuatu, which provides the local coordination structure. The CDCCCs report to the Area Councils and the Area Councils report back to the PDCCCs.

Early Recovery and transition

The Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) in the Prime Minister's Office coordinates and manages recovery efforts. Each national cluster is responsible for preparing their cluster transition plans from response to recovery. These plans are formalized through the inter-cluster process led by the NDMO and passed to DSPPAC.

II. Definitions and foundational principles

Shelter is defined as private and community housing and shelter related essential household items such as clothing, blankets, cooking and eating utensils. Shelter excludes public buildings such as schools, medical centres and public service housing such as teacher, nurse and other public authority housing. These are the responsibility of the education and health clusters.

Definition of household in Vanuatu

The definition of household in Vanuatu does not refer to one nuclear family living under one roof. A household in Vanuatu generally refers to an extended family, i.e., consisting of a number of family members (parents and children) and relatives such as grandparents, aunts or uncles living in a number of buildings in a communal setting. Traditionally, the "house" is not only one building. It is at least two to more constructions with different purpose and design. It includes a garden.

- "The Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) define household as "Those persons who usually eat together and share the work of preparing the food and/or the cost of work of providing it"

The current NDMO definition will give agencies a higher number of beneficiaries and will be the most common definition to work with in time of emergency response.

Assistance to community housing should encourage the self-recovery concept and promote adoption of effective preparedness measures by communities. As a result of their self-sufficiency and resilience, Ni-Vans, after a disaster, wherever possible, start the self-recovery process immediately. Community, urban or rural, can quickly reconstruct shelter with whatever building materials are available. Therefore, shelter response strategies should encourage and support people in their own coping mechanisms, promoting the use of traditional techniques and materials, and with the appropriate provision of

emergency shelter and essential household items, tools, technical assistance and safe shelter awareness, targeting the most-at-risk population within affected communities.

Protection encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e., human rights law, international law, refugee law). This encompasses people's safety and dignity, their right to impartial and non-discriminatory access to assistance based on needs, to be informed and heard, and to meaningfully participate in the design and implementation of assistance activities. An effective humanitarian assistance response must be aware of the differences in vulnerability in times of disaster of people of different sex, ages, abilities and identities, and must take into account their existing coping mechanisms and capacities.

The work of the Shelter Cluster will conform to key protection principles:

- Do no harm
- Non-discrimination
- Identifying the most at-risk and their specific needs with attention to age, gender, disability and other relevant aspects of diversity
- Safe and dignified access to basic services;
- Community participation and empowerment;
- Identifying and strengthening existing positive community protection strategies

III. Cluster lead and co-lead

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is the designated Lead Agency of the Vanuatu Emergency Shelter Cluster. This decision was made by the National Disaster committee to appoint the lead agency and co-lead agency. See DRM Act 23 of 2019 Division 2 no.18.

Vanuatu Red Cross Society is also a member of Shelter Cluster Vanuatu, and as co-lead, provides support to NDMO during preparedness and small and medium scale disaster responses, with the support of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) IFRC, as convener of the Pacific Shelter Cluster (as part of the Pacific Humanitarian Team) is a member of the SCV and will act as co-lead in support of NDMO for large-scale disaster response.

During a disaster response, VRCS through the Global Shelter Cluster Support Team provides [surge coordination capacity](#) as requested by the Lead Agency, to the extent required and possible within available resources.

Responsibilities of Leads and Co-Leads

As the lead agency, NDMO has primary responsibility for coordinating the activities of the emergency shelter cluster during preparedness and response, and should ensure:

1. Development of the preparedness cluster work plan in conjunction with cluster members, and monitor its implementation.
2. Adequate resources and budget are allocated for the provision of coordination services at National and Provincial levels;
3. Appropriate coordination within the Cluster, NDMO and the other technical Clusters, at National and Provincial levels,
4. Gender & protection, disability inclusion and environmental cross-cutting issues are addressed;

5. Effective needs assessment and analysis process within Cluster partners and other relevant coordination bodies for shelter related issues during response;
6. Sectoral National Response plans are developed immediately after a disaster;
7. Shelter Cluster strategy for response is drafted, and is updated and contextualized accordingly to assessments findings and progress;
8. Adequate contingency and preparedness planning is carried out, under NDMO overall coordination;
9. Appropriate standards are in place together with necessary arrangements for monitoring and reporting;
10. Suitable advocacy for the objectives and activities of the Cluster;
11. Arrangements are in place for any necessary resource mobilisation, and;
12. Appropriate training and capacity building is carried out to ensure that Cluster activities are well informed and relevant.

While having a standing Cluster Coordinator nominated, during a disaster response, the Lead Agency will draw on their existing staff to provide 'surge' capacity for response and assessment activities as necessary.

As the co-lead agency, VRCS is to provide active support to NDMO in fulfilling its role for the Cluster. This comprises potential deployment of surge coordination support capacity in case of disaster caused by natural hazards, under request of NDMO or VRCS to IFRC. The Co-lead may carry out tasks for the Lead Agency; however, the Lead Agency remains accountable for decisions implemented.

IV. Cluster members

Member organisations consist of Government agencies, UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent, donors, local and international non-government organisations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, civil society groups and private sector, with expertise, activities, and resources in the area of shelter. Some member organisations only have a presence in Vanuatu during disaster response, but will be kept informed of cluster activities, meetings and decisions electronically and through the [Shelter Cluster Vanuatu webpage](#).

During the TC Judy& Kevin and Tc Lola response (2023), more than 30 partners were involved in the provision of shelter assistance; current active shelter cluster membership includes the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS), CARE International, Save the Children, Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), World Vision Vanuatu, Butterfly Trust, Vanuatu Council of Churches (VCC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Provincial Governments, , and representatives from other clusters.

The Lead agency maintains a contact list for dissemination of information regarding Shelter Cluster activities, that networked over 100 stakeholders during response to TC Judy& Kevin and Tc Lola response (2023),

Responsibilities of Cluster Partners

Partnership of the cluster is voluntary, but entails a level of commitment and accountability. Partner agencies agree that, at a minimum, they will provide a focal point to consistently attend cluster activities, and to assist the cluster to achieve deliverables in the cluster work-plan.

Cluster partners are expected to support the Cluster Lead in facilitating the Cluster objectives and activities, meeting on a regular or ad hoc basis to share information, discuss issues, identify potential solutions, and set priority activities of the Cluster.

Cluster partners should attend meetings when called by the Cluster Lead, especially when they are involved on ongoing preparedness or response activities.

The Cluster Lead may appoint a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), to ensure inclusive governance of the Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu. Its membership should represent key stakeholders for shelter-related issues, to address core issues and make recommendations to the Cluster.

The Cluster Lead may also appoint Technical Working Groups (TWiGs) amongst the Cluster partners to provide guidance on technical matters as required.

V. Objectives of the Shelter Cluster in Vanuatu

The role of the cluster is to support the process of disaster preparedness and response. While the cluster identifies needs and activities, as well the resources available from member agencies, the cluster itself does not provide funds or resources.

The objective of the Shelter Cluster is to plan and implement proportionate, appropriate and timely shelter responses in humanitarian crisis situations which address both the immediate and long-term shelter needs of the vulnerable affected populations, while focussing at the same time on the integration of disaster risk reduction activities. The Shelter Cluster works towards these objectives:

1. Coordinate the shelter related activities and programs among members related to disaster preparedness and response.
2. Ensure that the cluster has the tools and information to implement a coordinated approach to shelter related disaster preparedness and response activities.
3. Ensure that during disaster response, humanitarian shelter needs are identified and a shelter cluster strategy is defined for appropriate advocacy and response
4. Support shelter cluster members to provide timely response and information during emergencies.
5. Facilitate effective sharing of information among shelter cluster members.
6. Liaise and coordinate with the NDMO and other clusters at national level, and with PDCCCs and working groups at provincial level. Work towards joint initiatives during preparedness and response.
7. Advise NDMO on shelter requirements and standards during disaster response, to support joint resource mobilization efforts.
8. Promote and support communities' shelter & settlements self-recovery, building back safer initiatives and traditional coping mechanisms.

VI. Chairing, venue and frequency of meetings

Meetings are chaired by the NDMO, as Cluster Lead, or where necessary, by Co-Leads or other members as agreed. Agenda items will be based on input from members of the Cluster.

During non-disaster periods, the cluster will meet every 3 months or on ad hoc basis, as per request of the Lead agency, to provide updates regarding on-going shelter programs, disaster preparedness and contingency planning activities.

During disaster response periods, shelter cluster meetings will be held as regularly as necessary to fulfil the obligations of the Shelter Cluster.

The meeting venue will normally be the conference room of the VMGD, but this may be varied by agreement of cluster members. Secretariat functions to be performed by NDMO with support from VRCS as co-lead and Cluster members, as required.

VII. Key resources

Technical guidance

- Technical guidelines for shelter preparedness and response to natural hazards in Vanuatu <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/shelter-cluster-vanuatu-technical-guidelines-v31-draft>
- IFRC Shelter Kit Flyer <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/ifrc-shelter-kit-flyer>
- Use, reuse, repair and disposal of tarpaulins <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/use-reuse-repair-and-disposal-tarpaulins-v2-march-2023>
- Besik Konstraksen Hanbuk blong bildim wan sef Selta (2013) <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu-cyclone-pam-2015/documents/shelter-handbook-bislama-2013-vrcs>
- Shelter Cluster Vanuatu Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/vanuatusheltercluster>
- Safe Shelter Awareness IEC 4 Key Messages <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/safe-shelter-awareness-iec-4-key-messages-v2-a4-page-1> and <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/safe-shelter-awareness-iec-4-key-messages-v2-a4-page-2>

Environment

- Environmental Checklist for Shelter Response in Vanuatu <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/introduction-environmental-checklist-shelter-response-vanuatu>

Housing, Land and Property Law in Vanuatu

- <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/vanuatudisasterlawhlpmapping>

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu Recovery Guidance

- <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/scv-recovery-guidance-v1-jul-2020>

Gender, Protection, Inclusion guidance

- Disability Inclusive Communication Guideline <https://sheltercluster.org/pacific/documents/disability-inclusive-communication-guideline>
- Gender and protection: Field Personnel Deployment Pack https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/gender_and_protection_deployment_pack_english_final_04oct18.pdf

- Tipsheet: Protection and Shelter <https://sheltercluster.org/tonga-cyclone-gita-2018/documents/tipsheet-protection-and-shelter-non-food-items>
- IASC Gender Marker Tip Sheet <https://sheltercluster.org/pacific/documents/iasc-gender-marker-tip-sheet-shelter-nfis>
- All Under One Roof: Disability-Inclusive Shelter and Settlements in Emergencies <https://sheltercluster.org/resource/all-under-one-roof>
- Community Voices for Inclusive Shelter Programming in Vanuatu <https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/community-voices-inclusive-shelter-programming-vanuatu>

Humanitarian standards

- The Sphere Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (2018) <https://sheltercluster.org/pacific/documents/sphere-project-humanitarian-charter>
- Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for Older People and People with Disabilities <https://sheltercluster.org/pacific/documents/humanitarian-inclusion-standards-older-people-and-people-disabilities-2018>

Document index (for the full range of guidance documents)

<https://sheltercluster.org/vanuatu/documents/shelter-cluster-vanuatudocumentindexv32>

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu website <https://www.sheltercluster.org/pacific/vanuatu>

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