

Vanuatu

National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action

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Strategic goals 1

Area 1

The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.

Strategic Goal Statement:

Recognize disaster risk management as a sustainable development issue and mainstream all-hazards risk management into all sectors and decision making processes at all levels of government, including national planning and budgetary processes.

Area 2

The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.

Strategic Goal Statement:

Establish a strong governance framework for DRR and DM, with clear policies and legislation, accountable institutional and organizational arrangements and connections across and within levels of government, sectors and communities

Area 3

The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

Strategic Goal Statement:

Empower communities through targeted capacity enhancement to reduce their risks to hazards and prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters; promote knowledge based decision-making, including traditional knowledge and know-how on disaster risk reduction and coping mechanisms in times of disasters.

Priority for action 1

Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.

Core indicator 1

National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralised responsibilities and capacities at all levels.

Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

Description:

Vanuatu has successfully developed a supplementary Priority Area for Action (PAA) to address DRR & DM under the component of 'safety, security and resilience'. The supplementary PAA outlines how to mainstream DRR and DM across the different sectors in Vanuatu. Developed in tandem with the supplementary PAA was the National Action Plan for DRR and DM, 2006 - 2016 (NAP). The PAA is the overarching document that prioritises the strategic areas to be addressed in development and planning for Vanuatu. In 2005, the Vanuatu Government recognized that their PAA, first developed in 2003 and revised for the 2005 - 2007 period, failed to address disaster risk reduction and disaster management or any of its component. Despite the development of NAP's being endorsed by Pacific Leaders, the Vanuatu NAP had to be developed through the processes and policies that govern Vanuatu. Thus, the development of a supplementary PAA to facilitate the national implementation of the Regional Framework for Action through the Vanuatu National Action Plan 2006 - 2016. To date the NAP is in its third year of implementation. The supplementary PAA is poised for another review where the recommendations by the team tasked with its development would be integrated into the PAA. The supplementary PAA outlines how DRM is to be mainstreamed across the sectors in Vanuatu. The NAP overall goal is to promote and ensure a safe, secure and resilient Vanuatu through the reduction of social, economic, and environmental impacts of disasters on the people of Vanuatu and its economy, thereby facilitating the achievement of their national development goals. The NAP also outlines strategies and specific activities for the implementation of DRR and DM in Vanuatu. Sectors are also designated responsibilities for implementation.

Context & Constraints:

The NAP clearly tasks the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management with allocating ministerial budgets for DRR and DM to different ministries and departments that reflect prioritized strategies for DRR and DM. The onus is on the other sectors to reflect the strategies of DRR and DM outlined in the Supplementary PAA and NAP through their sector plans, corporate plans and annual work programmes.

In addition to operationalising the NAP, the legal framework for disaster risk reduction and disaster management is under review to reflect the effective way of managing disaster risks and reducing vulnerability as outlined in the Draft National Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Arrangements 2008. The legislative review and amendment was scheduled for September 2008.

Supporting document:

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/3561_VanuatuSupplementaryPrioritiesandActionAgendaPAA2006.pdf
[PDF 613.06 KB]

Core indicator 2

Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels

Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

Description:

In the budgeting period from 2006 to 2008, the Vanuatu Government approved a total of VT24.7 million towards the mainstreaming of DRR and DM. The allocation was towards:

- a) the organisational restructure (personnel and operations) of the National Disaster Management Office [VT6 million and VT4 million respectively]
- b) supplementary post assessment cost expenditure

c) Relief supplies to the provinces of Tafea and Torba for Tropical Cyclones [VT 20 Million for each province]

Under the organisational restructure, the NDMO becomes an office of its own with sufficient personnel for the operational function of the office.

The budget allocation is also to empower the NDMO in the panning out of the Vanuatu NAP across the sectors. At present, the NDMO is lobbying the Education sector in Vanuatu to integrate DRR and DM into their education policy and plan (Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy 2007 - 2016).

In addition to the financial commitment by the Vanuatu Government, the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network (PDRMPN) is on hand to ensure long term and coordinated technical and financial support is available for the implementation of the NAP.

Context & Constraints:

The NAP is in its 3rd year of implementation. While its intention is to integrate DRR and DM across the sectors as well as provincially and down to the community level, most of the sectors are addressing disaster risk reduction through other plans and with the PDRMPN. One such example is the Integrated Water Resource Management Demonstration Project poised to be implemented in the Sarataka Watershed and executed through the Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources. The plan has specific objectives and outputs to address underlying risks. However, these cross cutting linkages needs to be documented as to show that it fulfills risk reduction activities as committed to by the Vanuatu Government at national level and regionally.

Core indicator 3

Community Participation and decentralisation is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

The overarching policy for this activity as this indicator suggests is the Vanuatu DRR and DM NAP 2006 - 2016, where under thematic area VI and strategy 8, the NDMO is tasked with the collaboration of these various agencies in ensuring that communities do take action to reduce risks and prepare for disasters.

There are a number of non-governmental organisations that are already involved in support of governments disaster response and relief programmes. These are namely:

- a. World Vision
- b. US Peace Corps
- d. ADRA (Seventh Day Adventist)
- e. Vanuatu Red Cross
- f. Caritas Vanuatu
- g. Jean Vancent De' Paul

Of the six listed, the ADRA together with the NDMO is actively training its Youth to venture into the communities and conduct disaster assessment and relief work. Other partners include volunteer organisations/agencies that work with civil society organisations and/or rural communities in the area of disaster relief, preparedness and mitigation. These partners, namely JICA and the Peace Corps are involved on a voluntary basis in this area as their secondary activity with their primary focus being on service delivery and technical assistance type of work right across all the provinces of the 27 islands in

Vanuatu. As much as their presence is right across the provinces and within the community, the emphasis is still largely towards disaster management alone.

Context & Constraints:

However the above situation is to be enhanced with the recent expansion of the Foundations of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), into Vanuatu. FSPI is a network of non-governmental organisations in the South Pacific who will start engaging communities in participatory methods of problem identification, risk analysis and action planning in Vanuatu. The initiative is for the development of people centred early warning system and community based DRR and DRM plans or for safer village plans. These will be documented through participatory research and wide dissemination of the traditional and modern vulnerability reduction methods, social conditions and skills that contributes to community resilience in PICs, including Vanuatu. The objective for such is so that communities are empowered to organise themselves for and manage disasters and to build risk reduction measures into their daily development activities. Further, the projects are intended for improved linkages with key stakeholders at both national and regional levels to promote sustainability of community activities and to spread advocacy for community based vulnerability reduction.

Core indicator 4

A national multi sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.

Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

Description:

Vanuatu has a National Task Force on Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management (NTF on DRR & DM) who was initially responsible for securing cooperation from government Ministries to progress the development of the National Action Plan and the strengthening of the PAA through disaster risk reduction and disaster management. The NTF members are senior officers from ministries and departments from the national and provincial governments of Vanuatu. In collaboration with the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network (PDRMPN) and the National Disaster Management Office, the Vanuatu NAP was crafted with an implementation strategy.

To date there are Working Groups under the National Task Force which is than responsible for the different sectors who facilitate discussions. The working groups are:

- a. Training Advisory Working Group
- b. Preparedness and Awareness Working Group
- c. Risk Reduction and Hazard Mitigation Working Group
- d. Meteo and Awareness Working Group

Context & Constraints:

Since the formation of the National Task Force and subsequent working groups, the implementation of the National Action Plan for DRR & DM is progressing. At this stage, it could be deduced that their national multi sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning. If sectors include disaster risk reduction and disaster management into their budget planning and processes, the working groups should be able to be self-sufficient.

Priority for action 2

Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

Core indicator 1

National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

The Draft Vanuatu National Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Arrangements, 2008 (NDRRDMA) highlight common examples of risk reduction measures. These measures range from the analysis of the hazards, to capacity building, appropriate policies and plans, its application to appropriate early warning systems. The NDRRDMA arrangements charge the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) with the coordination and development of a "risk reduction plan" whose purpose is to identify and monitor priorities for risk reduction and allocate responsibilities to key agencies for the implementation of the mitigation programmes consistent with national policies and priorities endorsed by the National Disaster Risk Management Council and approved by the council of Ministers. The National Risk Reduction Arrangements obligate risk reduction planning process to take note of reducing underlying risks outlined in the Priorities Action Agenda (2005 - 2016), the DRR and DM NAP, appropriate adaptation measures to deal with emerging risks associated with climate change and climate variability, the application of risk management tools such as CHARM and modern technologies such as GIS and remote sensing. In addition to the DRM arrangements, the NAP outlines key actions for sectoral responsibility in incorporating risk reduction measures which already obligates the sectors.

- a. The Ministry of Lands is currently developing a Land-Use management policy for developers to conduct full risk assessments before development is approved. For risk assessments, the Comprehensive Hazards and Risk Management (CHARM) tool is being introduced for use.
- b. The Vanuatu Meteorology Services (VMS) climate change adaptation programmes has assessed for the vulnerable areas around Vanuatu. This has resulted in the current relocation of Tekua community to higher grounds and rainwater catchments for the communities of Pamma, Aniwa and Tongoa. In addition, the VMS has in place assessment tools for El-nino and La Nina.

Context & Constraints:

One of the current limitations on national risk assessment tools such as CHARM, is the lack of capacity to use such. The NDRMO has identified the need to train personal across the sectors in the use and application of CHARM. In addition, under their new disaster risk management arrangements and national action plan, hazards and risk management personnel has been established within the NDRMO.

Core indicator 2

Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

The VMS, have their own systems in place for the monitoring of meteorological hazards, tsunami warnings and watches and the dissemination of it to communities. One of the activities under the NAP is the incorporation of geohazards monitoring under VMS to take effect in 2009.

In addition, the existing GIS based systems which could easily incorporate hazards and vulnerabilities information:

- a. POPGIS - Vanuatu National Statistics Office
- b. PEIN - Pacific Environment Information Network

- c. VANRIS - Vanuatu Natural Resource Inventory System
- d. Vanuatu MapServer

Of relevance is the Population Geographical Information System (POPGIS) of which the Vanuatu National Statistics Office incorporates in its information system. POPGIS are population maps of each of the six provinces of Vanuatu. The system can be expanded to include hazard and risks maps. At the moment, in addition to population maps of the 6 provinces, the system also has water resources and sanitation maps of these provinces. The NAP tasks the Vanuatu National Statistics Office to work with the relevant sector heads for the incorporation of area maps on hazard risks and vulnerability and for this to be made accessible.

The Vanuatu Map Server is also a tool that has been implemented to strengthen integrated development in three key areas of the islands systems (hazards and risk assessment; aggregates for construction; and water and sanitation). The objective of having the map server was to strengthen the availability of accurate and timely data in order to reduce vulnerability through the development of an integrated planning and management system. The data on the Vanuatu map server incorporates portions of the datasets of the Vanuatu Natural Resource Inventory System (VANRIS).

It is envisaged under the NAP, that linkages between these various systems is established to inform an information system for DRR and DM.

Context & Constraints:

With the recent launch of the Pacific Disaster Net, there is potential for it to serve as the disaster risk management information system. However, this is an area that needs to be worked out by the relevant working group.

Related links:

Pacific Disaster Net <http://www.pacificdisaster.net>

Vanuatu Map Server <http://map.lands.gov.vu/tiki/tiki-index.php>

Vanuatu Statistics Office PopGIS <http://www.spc.int/prism/country/vu/stats/Popgis/gisindex.htm>

Core indicator 3

Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

Vanuatu's major natural hazards are: cyclones, volcanic eruptions, floods, earthquakes and tsunamis and droughts. Under the all hazards approach adopted and encompassed in their disaster risk management arrangements, the human induced one includes industrial accidents, fires, vehicle accidents, hazardous materials accidents, marine oil spillage, aircraft accidents, exotic diseases and health epidemics. At present, there are existing early warning systems in place for:

- a. meteorological hazards - real time links with World Meteorological Organisation, Bureau of Meteorological, Fiji Meteorological Services and NIWA
- b. tsunamis from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre.

Current initiatives include the implementation of 2 seismic gauges for early warning of geological hazards. In addition, the e-gov initiative of Vanuatu is being supported by the VMS as this will enable the expansion of RANET at Siviri Village to the other provinces. RANET is an international collaboration

to make weather, climate, and related information more accessible to remote and resource poor populations.

Other than the early warning systems, VMS has a regular awareness programs and articles through Vanuatu's local radio stations and newspapers. There are also awareness groups around the different communities in Vanuatu.

Context & Constraints:

A risk reduction and hazard mitigation working group has just been established in Vanuatu to improve the understanding of hazards, vulnerabilities and communities at risk. The working group has been convening meetings with geology and mines, the water unit and geo-hazard to discuss monitoring arrangements and alerts systems for Vanuatu's key hazards.

Core indicator 4

National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

As part of the Pacific regions plan to strengthen regional cooperation and integration as the main instrument of realising the Pacific Vision, the Melanesian Volcanological Network (MVN), was proposed for greater effectiveness and sustainability of volcanological operations throughout the volcanically active parts of Melanesia through partnerships, resource sharing, common understanding and agreed objectives. The MVN is not to replace Vanuatu's efforts to improve volcanic risk reduction but rather enhance these through the provision of a sub-regional framework that would strengthen the volcano monitoring system, the training of staff in its use and in the public awareness of volcano risks and hazards amongst communities. While the MVN is still in the stages of being formalised, the partnership of the technical agency Geological & Nuclear Science (GNS Science) has involved a detailed review of Vanuatu's instrumentation and network requirements for monitoring volcanic hazards in 2007. The support for this monitoring instrumentation includes seismic monitoring and has been earmarked to be implemented over a period of 3 years. A few sub-regional meetings and workshops has been held to flesh out the design and operations of the MVN.

Context & Constraints:

One of the main hindrances in the establishment of the framework has been the absence of PNG in these meetings, the other key Melanesian within this network. However, this has not deterred national activity in Vanuatu who is in the process of presenting to their Cabinet, a scoping paper / policy paper on the MVN.

Priority for action 3

Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

Core indicator 1

Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems etc)

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

A recent achievement is the availability of the Pacific Disaster Net, a web portal for disaster risk management in the Pacific Region to support Pacific Island Countries to develop and implement their national action plans. The information system is designed to be the largest collection and comprehensive resource to facilitate informed decisions on matters related to DRM and sustainable development. It hosts material and real time information on alerts notification, events, reports, documents and publications, data inventories, audio-visual files on any of the countries in the region including relevant information on disasters for Vanuatu. The PDN is a living collection and growing DRM information resource that supports national action planning, decision making and provides in-country information. PDN is available for use by Pacific Countries and is available in a format for much wider reach into the communities.

Context & Constraints:

While this information system is available for access by everyone in the region, its usability within Vanuatu has already been applauded by the Vanuatu National Disaster Risk Management Office. However its early days to see its effectiveness within communities. While the Vanuatu NAP obligates 'a' information system, it does not single out the PDN as the information system for such.

Related links:

Pacific Disaster Net <http://www.pacificdisaster.net>

Core indicator 2

School curricula , education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

There has been some progress with regards to the inclusion of DRR and recovery concepts and practices into the school curricula. With the partnership of UNESCO under the Education for Natural Disaster Preparedness (ENDP) project, a comprehensive review of the education sector was conducted by the National Disaster Management Office of Vanuatu, on how schools can be made safer, secure and also an environment that promotes a culture of safety and resilience. One of the key activities of the DRR and DM National Action Plan 2006 - 2016 is the integration of DRR & DM principles and concepts into the school curriculum and in training courses offered by other institutions. The overarching plan for the Education Sector is at present, the Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy 2007 - 2016 (VESS). While there has been headway nationally to integrate DRR and DM into the school curricula and that of other training centres, the current VESS fails to address how schools could be made safe, secure and resilient to disasters despite many of the Vanuatu schools being in remote locations and / or some located in high risk areas. In addition, the review discovered that neither of the schools has disaster plans but react on a hazard by hazard basis. While some schools have taken the initiative to develop their own safety within a school guidelines or instructions on how to do so, it is not mandatory for such to be developed. In terms of the curricula, hazards are taught as part of the broader geography course for Grades 5 and 6. There is no specific curriculum to address disaster risk management and teachers are not mandated by their teaching curricula to teach these concepts. However, there is increasing concerns from principals and teachers on the pressing need to address this issue in Vanuatu.

Context & Constraints:

The review of the Education Sector to fulfil the action stipulated in the DRR and DM NAP concluded in July 2008. In the review, the NDMO suggested the Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy 2007 - 2016 needs to reflect the intentions of the NAP. In the review, all aspects of safety and secure schools were looked at from the school buildings and structures, to the inclusion of disaster reduction concepts within the school curricula. The outcome of the review are 17 recommended strategies clustered around 5 themes:

- a. Governance and Policy Context
- b. Mainstreaming of DRR to build safe and secure schools for kids and teachers
- c. Strengthening Disaster Management so that students can respond effectively to any disaster impacts
- d. Information systems and knowledge management as part of curriculum development
- e. Capacity Development

The corresponding strategies to implement these themes are outlined in the document titled "Education on Natural Disaster Preparedness for Sustainable Development: Final Report of the Republic of Vanuatu."

Supporting document:

Education on Natural Disaster Preparedness for Sustainable Development: Final Report of the Republic of Vanuatu (2008)

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/3561_VANUATUFINALREPORTONENDPPROJECT.pdf [PDF 1.78 MB]

Core indicator 3

Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

An initial cost benefit analysis of the economic impact of natural disasters on development in Vanuatu was conducted in 2005. Out of this initial study, an economic assessment tool was developed for sectoral (social, economic and infrastructure) assessments of disaster impacts and guidelines on baseline data collection was developed. The Vanuatu DRR and DM National Action Plan stipulates for adaptation and risk reduction measures to be implemented particularly assessments of potential impacts of particular scale of disaster event on at risk communities for input into sector planning for disaster risk reduction and disaster management and the strengthening of systems for the collection of historical / baseline data on hazards and vulnerabilities. In addition, the NAP outlines for government officials are to be trained in the use of such tools to enable them to conduct multi-risk assessments. The Draft NDRM arrangements also recognise the use of tools and techniques from other countries and regions that may be relevant to Vanuatu.

Context & Constraints:

The first initial study has been the only one since. However the findings of the research is currently being used to highlight at decision-making level of the Finance and Planning Ministry of Vanuatu of the need to incorporate disaster risk reduction and disaster management into national planning and budgetary process.

Core indicator 4

Countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

Various groups and sectors are involved in their own awareness programmes to do with disaster risk reduction and disaster management. Ad hoc public awareness exists across the relevant sectors in Vanuatu, namely with:

- a. National Disaster Risk Management Office
- b. Geo-hazard Unit
- c. Water Unit
- d. Vanuatu Meteorological Services
- e. Agriculture Department
- f. Department of Land
- g. Live Stock Department
- h. Quarantine Department
- i. Department of Public Health
- j. Police Department
- k. Environment Unit
- l. Department of Public Works
- m. Fire Service Section
- n. Department of Cultural Centre

In addition to these initiatives, the World Disaster Risk Reduction Campaign is conducted every October with specific target audiences. In 2007, it was specifically targeted for schools in the Northern region of Vanuatu.

Context & Constraints:

The NDRM arrangements allow for public awareness on disaster risk reduction and disaster management as the individual responsibility of all government departments, provincial and municipal councils and NGOs, in collaboration with the beneficiaries of such and to be supported by the NDRMO and the Training Advisory Working Group for DRR and DM. However a strategy for such an approach has yet to be formulated.

Priority for action 4

Reduce the underlying risk factors

Core indicator 1

Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

The Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002 of Vanuatu provides for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) to be undertaken for all development activities that impact or are likely to

impact on the environment of Vanuatu. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Lands is developing and Land-Use management policy to enable developers to conduct full risk assessment before development can be approved.

Context & Constraints:

The Land Use Policy is currently under development by the Ministry of Lands of Vanuatu, which will incorporate disaster risk reduction measures for land-use. In addition, they have a land degradation programme through which priority hazards are identified with measures to deal with them nationally, provincially and at community level. In terms of climate change adaptation, adaptation projects has been carried out where the Tekua community and rainwater catchments of Pamma, Aniwa and Tongoa has been relocated.

Core indicator 2

Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

It is widely known within Vanuatu that their Women play a vital role in preparing for disaster and transmitting traditional knowledge of coping strategies to the young especially a family unit. They are recognised within communities as the first to provide comfort, assurance, and survival using her traditional knowledge and practices in times of disasters. These skills are informal education systems that are transmitted from an early age. As such the women are already involved in planning preparedness strategies in some strong traditional based communities in the country. In addition to these skills passed on in life, the Department of Culture has an active 'Women's Culture Programme' whereby they establish women field workers who represent an island or community in rural settings. The women programme covers issues of:

- a. Traditional practices on food processing and security
- b. Traditional knowledge and skills in building strong traditional structures houses
- c. Promote traditional healthy food for healthy kids
- d. Protecting and promoting local languages

The women field workers work in collaboration with respective traditional chiefs on a joint consultation basis on issues relating to culture and tradition to sustain value within the country in the future.

The NAP 2006 - 2016 has a specific activity to ensure that appropriate traditional knowledge and practices are documented and integrated into the DRR and DM information system. At present, research on such is ongoing with Futuna Island.

Context & Constraints:

Traditional knowledge of survival and food security and preservation needs to be documented. At present, the NDRMO is collaborating with the Red Cross for the piloting of this documentation of traditional knowledge in a workshop in the province of Torba.

Core indicator 3

Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities

Level of Progress achieved:

1: Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy

Description:

A project has been recently proposed to promote DRR and climate change adaptation within the Tourism Industry. Dialogue is at discussion stage. Traditional coping mechanisms particularly on food security during a time of disaster is being researched and documented for extrapolation into policy.

Context & Constraints:

Economic and productive sectoral vulnerability are known to exist in Vanuatu. Initial studies on the impact of natural disasters on the economic and productive sectors have been conducted. Risk reduction measures do exist. Environmental Impact Assessments are required of all major development projects within Vanuatu. Risk assessments are being promoted for all land-use development. This is being developed under their land-use policy.

Core indicator 4

Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

As previously stated, risk assessments is being advocated and promoted for all land-use development. This is being developed under their land-use planning policy and regulation by the Ministry of Lands. In short, the policy will regulate development license approval, land use planning, resource development and management and building codes as appropriate. The policy is intended to also obligate communities and business sectors to comply with these regulations and to encourage them to develop their own mechanisms to reduce disaster risks.

Context & Constraints:

The land-use policy is being developed. The risk assessment tool to be used is the Comprehensive Hazards and Risk Management (CHARM) tool of which people will need to be trained in its use.

Core indicator 5

Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

A disaster recovery committee (DRC) plans for, coordinates and monitors all disaster recovery activities working closely with NGO's and other support agencies. Under the NDRM arrangements, and in the DRR and DM National Action Plan, one of their functions is to develop a sustainable national financing mechanism for supporting response and recovery activities into communities at times of disasters. The DRC comprises of heads of different sectors:

- a. Ministry of Finance
- b. Department of Strategic Management
- c. Public Works Department
- d. Rural Water Supply
- e. Education

- f. Geology
- g. Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- h. Health Department

In addition to the conventional recovery work, the DRC has also been tasked to identify long term recovery activities and formulate donor submissions for long-term recovery and reconstruction.

Context & Constraints:

The sustainable national financing mechanism is a work in progress by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management. A review of the current disaster recovery process and situation will be undertaken and an options paper developed for presentation to the Council of Ministers.

Core indicator 6

Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

Policy is currently being formulated for risk assessments to be undertaken for all development projects prior to consent approval. In addition, environmental impact assessment procedures stipulate for geological hazards to be assessed on all development work prior to approval, particularly if it were to alter significantly the environment such as coastal dynamics and pollution of water resources.

Context & Constraints:

Land Use policy is being formulated to obligate developers with risk assessments prior to consent approval.

Priority for action 5

Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

Core indicator 1

Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective are in place.

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

The newly established National Disaster Risk Management Arrangements of Vanuatu currently in draft stages replaces the previous National Disaster Emergency Plan of 1987. The arrangements are a conclusive result of the consultation and review of the previous arrangements for disaster management which was primarily focused on disaster preparedness, response and recovery. The new arrangements however have a strong emphasis on disaster risk management and provide a mechanism for the adoption of an all hazards and integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster management, including an outline of the functions of the agencies responsible for such an integrated approach. The arrangements provide a guide for all government departments and sectors, provincial councils, municipal councils, community groups, NGOs, private sectors and donor partners to prepare their own internal

disaster risk reduction and disaster management plans and standard operating procedures. In addition, the arrangements also outline the technical aspects of disaster risk management for the effective coordination of disaster risk reduction and disaster management in Vanuatu. There is a strong emphasis on capacity building of staff and improving of emergency communications systems to strengthen Vanuatu's levels of preparedness and response. In their recovery arrangements, risk reduction measures have also been outlined.

Context & Constraints:

These new arrangements are designed to substantially strengthen the capacity of the National Disaster Risk Management Office in their ability to manage hazards and reduce the risks to the nation. The arrangements was a collaborative effort of all disaster risk management partners, of Vanuatu and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Draft Arrangements are awaiting the approval of the recently elected Vanuatu Government.

Core indicator 2

Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programmes.

Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

Description:

As stated in the earlier section, the new disaster risk management arrangements of Vanuatu provide a guide for all government departments and sectors, provincial councils, municipal councils, community groups, NGOs, private sectors and donor partners to prepare their own internal disaster risk reduction and disaster management plans and standard operating procedures. The arrangements also obligate the National Disaster Management Office for providing technical support in the development and support of exercises to test the disaster support plans of these sectors and departments. This support is to be outreached regionally and provincially.

Context & Constraints:

As previously stated, the arrangements currently await the approval of the recently elected government of Vanuatu. Simultaneously, the National Action Plan for DRR and DM lists the strengthening of disaster management as one of its themes. To date progress includes:

- a. Revised Ministry of Health Disaster Plan
- b. Review of the Standard Operating Procedures
- c. Disaster plans being developed for the Police and Sanma Province
- d. A Task Force member within the Ministry Of Provincial Affairs has been tasked with coordinating DRM within this agency.
- e. Six Provincial Disaster Coordinators has been established within the National Disaster Management Office
- f. Disaster Risk Management Officers have been established within the Vanuatu Meteorological Services and the Ministry of Health.

Core indicator 3

Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.

Level of Progress achieved:

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

Description:

In the budgeting period for 2006 - 2008, the Vanuatu Government committed 40million Vatu to post assessment and relief supplies cost for Tropical Cyclones. The NAP and the Disaster Risk Management arrangements outline and task the ministry of finance and economic management for a long-term financing mechanisms for effective support of response and recovery efforts into communities. The ministry of internal affairs agrees that DRR and DM budget cost need to be reflected in future budget processes of Vanuatu in 2009 and beyond. The establishment of a Trust Fund for response and recovery has been included in the National Arrangements and Legislation.

Context & Constraints:

At present a review is to be undertaken on the current situation of response and recovery efforts and costing in Vanuatu, after which an options paper will be developed and presented before the Council of Ministers.

Core indicator 4

Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews

Level of Progress achieved:

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

Description:

The recovery section of the National Disaster Management Arrangements outline the functions, roles and responsibilities of agencies responsible for recovery. In the arrangements a disaster recovery committee is tasked with a recovery plan and the documentation of recovery programmes.

Context & Constraints:

This can be factored into the information management system for Vanuatu.

Drivers of Progress

a) Multi-hazard integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and development

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Do studies/ reports/ atlases on multi-hazard analyses exist in the country/ for the sub region?:

No

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

The Vanuatu National Action Plan for DRR and DM 2006 - 2016 and the National Disaster Risk Management Arrangements (Draft 2008) reflect an all-hazards approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster management. The NAP is in its third year of implementation. Substantial achievement has been gained in the integration of disaster risk reduction and development, sectorally and provincially as well as down to community levels. To date these sectors are:

a. Ministry of Internal Affairs

- b. Prime Ministers Office
- c. Provincial Affairs
- d. Ministry of Health
- e. Ministry of Education
- f. Department of Lands
- g. Vanuatu Meteorological Services
- h. Non Governmental Organisations
- g. Civil Society Organisations / Community Groups

b) Gender perspectives on risk reduction and recovery adopted and institutionalized

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

The role of women in relief, rehabilitation and recovery is common knowledge in Vanuatu. Their role as disseminators of traditional knowledge and food security is also acknowledged by the community as crucial in the relief and recovery process. As such, this is acknowledged by the National Disaster Risk Management Office and documented in other sectoral reviews on the mainstreaming process for DRR and DM. Gender perspectives are yet to be fully adopted and institutionalised.

c) Capacities for risk reduction and recovery identified and strengthened

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

While some risk reduction measures are known to exist within some of the sectors in Vanuatu, its complete application and full buy in by all key stakeholders are all part of the mainstreaming exercise of DRR and DM in Vanuatu. The capacity constraints / limitations has been acknowledged in the other priority areas for action.

d) Human security and social equity approaches integrated into disaster risk reduction and recovery activities

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

The partnership of non governmental organisations and civil society groups is largely acknowledged by the National Disaster Risk Management Office. Particularly so, because of their outreach to the remote communities of Vanuatu. Technologies for early warnings such as RANET is being advocated for implementation particularly of its capacity and cost effectiveness to reach and operate in the remotest of communities.

e) Engagement and partnerships with non-governmental actors; civil society, private sector, amongst others, have been fostered at all levels

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Vanuatu relies a great deal on the partnership of non-governmental actors, civil societies and other community groups for their relief, rehabilitation and recovery work. These partnership range in the vicinity from immediate relief to rehabilitation and recovery such as the building of homes resilient in the face of disasters. Through the Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centres Association (VRDTCA), OXFAM and their partners Habitat for Humanity have embarked on a community project since 2004 where they train unemployed youths on skills in construction and carpentry while at they same time, providing Vanuatu Communities with earthquake and cyclone resistant houses using concrete interlocking blocks. Course participants are taught how to make this concrete interlocking blocks a revolutionary technology which is used to construct earthquake and cyclone-resistant buildings at a fraction of the cost of other materials and with a third the cement of regular bricks. This technology is vital in a region which is prone to regular earthquakes and cyclones and where substandard housing is a big issue. The course has had 450 graduates since it started in 2004. The FSPI has recently come on board for Vanuatu poised to engage communities in participatory methods of village safety plans and people centred early warning systems.

f) Contextual Drivers of Progress

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

The success of Vanuatu's multi-sectoral, provincial and community approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster management can be attributed to the political will behind Vanuatu's efforts to mainstream DRR and DM. Vanuatu was the first country in the Pacific region whose government committed to developing a National Action Plan on DRR and DM. The commitment is also the results of the efforts of a High Level Advocacy Team together with Vanuatu's National Disaster Risk Management Office that such headway has been gained in Vanuatu. The NAP is a 10 year action plan of which its evaluation for effectiveness is yearly. The results of its effectiveness is encompassed in this report.

Future outlook

Area 1

The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.

Overall Challenges:

The challenge is to maintain the interest and political will regardless of the government of the day. Vanuatu has recently elected a new government as of September 2008.

Future Outlook Statement:

"Disaster is a development issue. There must be a political will to ensure disaster risk considerations are fully integrated into all our policies, plans, budgets, and decision-making processes at all levels of

government and communities and Vanuatu has shown that will and commitment through this process."

Area 2

The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.

Overall Challenges:

Most of the institutional strengthening mechanisms such as the National Disaster Management Arrangements and Legislation hang in the balance as a new government comes into effect. The challenge would be the continuation of the momentum gained in the milestone achievement of mainstreaming DRR and DM in Vanuatu. The new arrangements are holistic and all encompassing with of difference sectors, provinces and community levels. The guidelines through which it is based on has its origins in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 - 2015.

Future Outlook Statement:

"We realise that in this effort to build a safe, secure and resilient Vanuatu, our national resources are limited and thus we need the support of our friends and support from the whole international community. We also need long-term commitment and support from our regional organisations and development partners."

Area 3

The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

Overall Challenges:

The new disaster risk management arrangements of Vanuatu, task's its office with the lead agency for disaster risk reduction initiatives and disaster management. Much headway has been done in the establishment of a framework on DRR and DM, the political will and commitment for such, multi-sectoral approach to risk reduction and the technological capacity enhanced for preparedness, response and recovery programmes. It's implementation requires the National Disaster Risk Management Office to be strengthened and thoroughly equipped for this to be effective.

Future Outlook Statement:

"To put effect to this commitment, we need firm political and financial commitment to see that disaster risk reduction and disaster management is mainstreamed into our national policies, plans, budgetary provisions and decision making across all sectors and all levels of government, and communities and that disaster risk management is the responsibility of the whole country and is everyone's business.