

EARLY RECOVERY SUPPORT FOR TC HAROLD

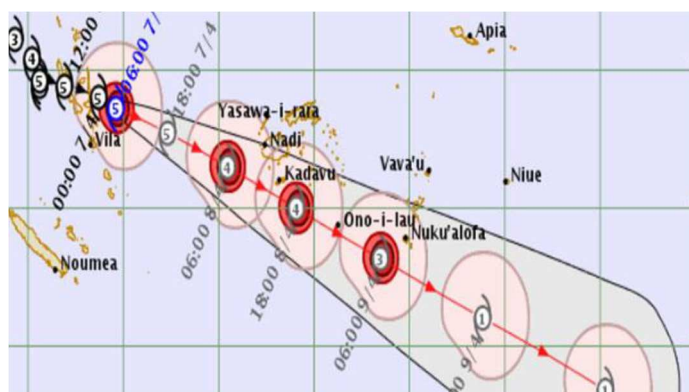
Community Based Emergency Employment (CBEE)

REPORT

1. Introduction

At late night on Tuesday 7th April 2020, Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold started affecting the Fiji group. It finally made landfall in Fiji as a category 4 tropical cyclone on 8th April 2020 after ravaging through Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. After Fiji, TC Harold continued onwards across to Tonga. Classified as the 3rd strongest cyclone to make landfall in the South East Pacific, it passed just south of Viti Levu and right over Kadavu, Vatulele and the Lau Group.

TC Harold caused widespread and significant damages to structures, homes and crops, power and telephone lines, mobile communication networks, including the destruction of entire villages.



On Sunday the 12th April 2020, the Government of Fiji declared areas most affected as areas of Natural Disaster. This further put a strain to government resources as support and investment was still required to respond to the in-crisis COVID-19 pandemic, which government predicted will be worse than TC Winston.

2. Post disaster TC Harold assessment (Preliminary)

As of 9th April, there were about 4,577 evacuees sheltered in 155 evacuation centres across the Western, Eastern and Central Divisions. According to the Ministry of Agriculture assessment while total damages to crops and livestock amounted to F\$20,530,308.53, approximately 50% were in the Eastern division. The same report stated that:

“The livelihood of farmers and the population in general are likely to be affected. In addition is the ripple effect to the economy caused by the shortage of fruits, vegetables, root crops and livestock, feed and infrastructure hence; increase importation/price. The export of fresh produce such as eggplant and pawpaw will be affected and this is anticipated to normalise within three (3) to nine (9) months’ time. The number of stock loss was quite significant and damages recorded on Infrastructures such as Poultry Sheds, Dairy Sheds, Piggeries, Goat and Sheep sheds due to excessive wind.”

On Sunday, 12 April, the Government declared a State of Natural Disaster for areas affected by severe TC Harold. The declaration was for certain parts of the Eastern, Central and Western Divisions of the country. In the Eastern Division, the declaration included Kadavu and the Southern Lau Group that were particularly hard hit. In the Central Division the areas included Tailevu North, Korovou, Nausori, Nakasi, Beqa and Yanuca. For the Western Division, the declaration was made for the districts of Nadarivatu, Vatulele, Mamanuca Group, the Yasawa Group, coastal communities in the Coral Coast along the Sigatoka River in the Nadroga/Navosa Province.

3. Pre disaster baselines on employment, housing activity and economic activity

2.1 Employment

Division	Labour Force			Employed (paid and unpaid)		Unemployed		
	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Eastern	15,836 (65.3%)	83.3%	44.2%	10,863	4,732	1.5%	0.5%	3.7%
Central	151,987 (56.5%)	73.2%	40%	94,289	49,829	5.2%	3.7%	7.8%
Western	136,449 (56.3%)	77.5%	34.7%	91,919	37,629	5.1%	3.1%	9.5%
Northern	52,517 (58.4%)	81.0%	34.6%	36,988	14,490	2.0%	1.0%	4.2%

Source: 2017 census <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/index.php/statistics/2007-census-of-population-and-housing>

3.2 Housing

Province	Number of houses
Kadavu	2,464
Lomaiviti	3,335
Lau	2,349

Source: 2017 census <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/index.php/statistics/2007-census-of-population-and-housing>

4. Early Recovery - Supporting effected rural farmers and communities access income support through social protection

The CBEE is a short term early recovery methodology developed by the ILO Pacific Office and contextualized to the pacific. The methodology engages with the national, local and traditional governance structure of effected communities and works to provide emergency income and social protection support with the view to eventually link up with full recovery programmes.

The CBEE has been piloted in Fiji (Naibita, Nabulini and Manu, in the province of Tailevu) after TC Winston in 2016 and Tonga (Utulau Village) after TC Gita in 2018 with great success. Please find attached letter from the Tongan Government attesting to the success of CBEE. To view the video on CBEE implementation go to: https://www.ilo.org/suva/publicinformation/videos/WCMS_515110/lang--en/index.htm

Specifically, the CBEE includes a basket of programmes with the immediate objective of **supporting food security** and **reducing loss of income** of identified households/communities through a **social protection lens**. The ultimate objective will be to build the resilience of the community and support local economic development including institutionalising the CBEE methodology within government, for future disasters.

The basket of programmes include, but not limited to:



5. Background to CBEE

On the 14th April 2020, a Donor's Coordination Meeting was convened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in partnership with the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO). At this meeting the ILO expressed its 2 areas (Inception Assessment and CBEE) of interest and consulted its focal Ministry – Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPRI).

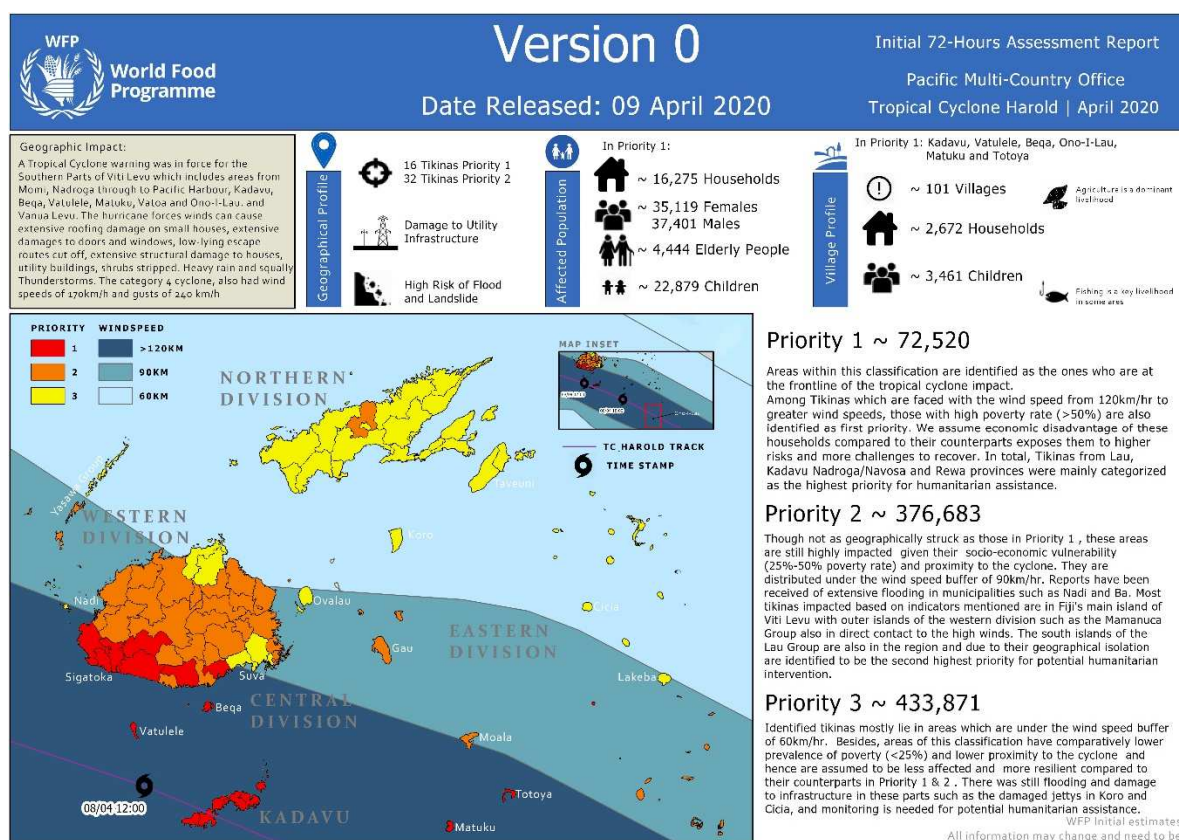
On the 16th April 2020, a meeting was convened between the ILO, National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), MEPIR, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and iTaukei Affairs. The ILO presented the CBEE methodology including its 2016 TC Winston experience in Tailevu (Villages of Naibita, Manu and Naibulini) and TC Gita (2018) in Tonga in the village of Utulau.

There was general appreciation and interest in the support ILO had proposed by the government team.

On the 1st May 2020, NDMO assigned the ILO to the islands of Yasawas to work in close collaboration with Ministries of Rural and Maritime Development, especially the Divisional Commissioner Western's Office and Itaukei Affairs.

On the 19th May 2020, a stakeholders meeting was held between the ILO and Government agencies, namely the Ministry of Itaukei Affairs, NDMO/Commissioner Western, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives/ Integrated Human Resource Development Programme. It was agreed that the CBEE programme would be carried out in the most affected islands of Yasawa which were the southern-most islands of Viwa and Waya. On the island of Viwa, the villages of Naibalebale, Najia and Yakani were identified and on the island of Waya, the villages of Yalobi and Nalauwaki were put forward – altogether 5 villages with a total number of 179 households.

According to the initial 72-hours World Food Programme (WFP) Assessment Report (see below), the Islands of Yasawas are classified under Priority 2.



CBEE Assessment:

It was noted that with the COVID-19 pandemic reaching Fiji in early March, the lock down of Lautoka on the 20th March – 7th April, Suva on the 3rd – 16th April and the suspension of airlines and tourism, TC Harold's arrival on the 7th April worsened the already fragile livelihoods of people in Fiji. When the assessment team visited at the end of May, the resilience of villagers was a major contributing factor to their ability to spring back to near-normalcy. The villages did not suffer any major structural damages but there was flooding from rain and seawater seeping into the village gardens, damages to root crops and trees, and debris that was cleaned up soon after the cyclone by the villagers.

Viwa is an atoll island with not much good land for farming. In addition, seawater seeps into the plantations destroying crops. Waya is a volcanic island with rich soil and is much bigger in size. Viwa and Waya Islands can only be accessed by boat which can be a risk itself. There used to be a regular 'sea bus' but this has stopped due to COVID-19. Other risks include risks associated with sea travel and inter-island commuting which leaves one at the mercy of the weather and high and low tides. Often choppy seas and sudden change of weather can mean it best to defer trips.

All hotels in the Yasawas had closed and as such, most employees who are normally from around the Yasawas have returned home to their villages to farm and fish and cater for their needs. Some of the redundant hotel workers were disappointed in the way they were dismissed and would like to explore joining the hotel union. ILO will take a hotel union executive to hold discussions and perhaps have a member drive.

		Number of households pre-COVID-19	Current	Increase by
1.	Naibalebale	56	56	0
2.	Najia	16	25	9
3.	Yakani	4	4	0
4.	Yalobi	38	51	13
5.	Nalauwaki	65	65	0
		179	201	22

A CBEE assessment was conducted in the villages of Naibalebale, Najia (including Yakani), Yalobi and Nalauwaki on the 26th & 27th May. The assessment team consisted of ILO and representatives from the Ministry of Rural, Maritime Development and Disaster Management which included the Divisional Commissioner Western; the Ministry of Itaukei Affairs which included the Ba Provincial Council and the Roko; the Ministry of Forestry; Ministry of Fisheries; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) which included Occupational Health and Safety, Child Labour Unit, National Employment Centre and Department of Youth; Ministry of Trade, Tourism, Transport which included Cooperatives and the Integrated Human Resource Development Programme (IHRDP); Water Authority of Fiji and Biosecurity Authority of Fiji.

Each Government agency had specific dual roles to play in the assessment team: to advise on the latest government assistance available to villages and to report back on the progress of existing government assistance rendered to the villages.

1. **Divisional Commissioner Western:** Overall logistics, programme and liaison with the Government agencies and ILO. The **Biosecurity Authority of Fiji** provided transportation for the team.
2. **Itaukei Affairs:** The Itaukei Affairs had the specific task of presenting the traditional approaches on behalf of ILO and the assessment team to the villages as well as seeking permission to depart when discussions were over.
3. **Agriculture:** Detailed Damage Assessment of the Ministry of Agriculture released on 5th May 2020 estimated a total of \$28.929 million damage to the Agriculture sector. This included crops and livestock for commercial, semi-commercial and subsistence farmers. Short term needs are the continuation of food rations/cash (if markets re-established) for vulnerable groups until

agricultural output is restored (estimated by MoA to be 4-6 weeks); provision of agro-inputs such as seeds, seedlings including rice, suckers, cuttings and fertilizer as well as feeds and fodder, veterinary support and livestock rehabilitation as well as market rehabilitation; and, land clearance and preparation where required.

4. **Cooperatives and IHDPEP:** Follow-up on existing village cooperatives for women, youth and general co-ops for the whole village and IHRD programmes. Initiate the start of formal associations such as cooperatives where none exist, and propose future programmes such as how to start or improve your business.
5. **Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations (OHS, NEC and Youth):** Health and safety in terms of the use of tools supplied and COVID-19, ensuring that there is no child labour in the village setting, registering of youth for the NEC and seasonal work; conduct the employment survey on the impact of COVID-19.
6. **Fisheries:** Short-term needs is to address the food security situation by restoring the flow of fresh fish products from fisheries and aquaculture as quickly as possible, distribution of fishing equipment kits to both licensed and non-licensed fisheries enterprises and assess and further strengthened disaster resilience and preparedness of impacted fisheries and aquaculture. Fishing licences are also updated to remain valid.
7. **Forestry:** Short-term focus is primarily be on clearing and salvaging fallen trees from plantations. In the medium to long term, the main focus will be on reforestation of plantation and native forests. Starting in the short-term, strengthening nurseries will be required so that replanting programmes can operate smoothly from the medium term onwards.
8. **Water Authority:** Provide expertise on the water sanitation projects in the villages, follow-up one tank per household, revive the village water committees to liaise with WAF and to explore their village water needs.
9. **Youth:** Follow-up on youth projects already started in the villages such as youth-run eco-lodges and explore new initiatives.



The Fiji Government and ILO assessment team at the Lautoka wharf after returning from the Yasawas

Methodology applied:

- i. The target of the CBEE is to work with affected communities and explore areas of work of their own choosing that could complete for the overall good of the community and observing any government advisory specific to COVID19.
- ii. Partnership for this initiative includes the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), MEPIR, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and iTaukei Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant Government agencies and the ILO and its social partners. In addition, the CBEE team will work closely with and report to the Livelihoods and Food Security Cluster and Early Recovery Cluster.

- iii. Traditional customary approach with presentation of kava (sevusevu) by the Itaukei Affairs, food stuff (flour, sugar, rice, biscuits, canned fish & oil), tools (garden forks, spades, knives & files, wheel barrows), vegetable seeds (Ministry of Agriculture) and sandalwood plants (Ministry of Forestry)
- iv. Discussions led by ILO/Western District Officer and Itaukei Affairs with the chief/ turaga-ni-koro with interpretation from English to Fijian provided by Ministry of Youth; village elders of the villages women and men of the villages in the village hall, respecting the social distancing.
- v. Brief presentation by all Government officials present from the Ministries of Agriculture, Bio-Security, Cooperatives, Fisheries, Forestry, Itaukei, National Disaster Management, (Divisional Commissioner Western), Water Authority, MEPIR and Youth in the Assessment to see what can be done collectively.
- vi. Identification of possible CBEE activities to be carried out in half day over 2 weeks i.e. over 10 working days, 01-12 June at 4 hours a day @ \$5 per hour.
- vii. Acceptance of the CBEE work by the village turaga ni koro together with the village elders and villagers present at the meeting. Explanation of the roles of the turaga ni koro and households.
- viii. Itatau ceremony – permission to depart the village.

CBEE Implementation:

1. The ILO allocated a financial contribution of US\$40,000 and 2 work months in total for 2 technical staff, 1 Finance and 1 communication staff. The budget breakdown of the CBEE ensured that the majority of the funds is directly invested in the beneficiaries through a Cash for Work transfer on village activities completed.
2. Each household in each village will send a representative to work in the bigger village collective team in the traditional *solesolevaki*. Each village led by its *turaga ni koro* has agreed on its own programme of work that it will follow, working 4 hours over 10 days. An example could be to support farmers to work with the Ministry of Agriculture to restore food security through clearing land, agro inputs (fertilizers & chemicals)-planting materials, seeds, livestock feed and fencing materials and nursery materials-seed trays, potting mix, shade cloth for nurseries.
3. In the team's discussion at Viwa, farming the land was limited because of the limestone on the Atoll island. The work identified included general village cleaning, cleaning of pig-sty and rubbish disposal areas, clean up the village water catchment, jetty improvement and planting trees such as indigenous trees and the pandanus trees for *voivoi*, for womens' mat weaving, farming where they can and fishing.
4. Yalobi village sought assistance to learn business skills, especially the youth so that they can better manage their village eco-lodge. Nalauwaki on the other hand sought support for their seawall.
5. The villages of Najia and Yalobi have an increased number of households than what was originally given due to the closure of all the hotels in the Yaswas as well as other workers returning to the village from the mainland because of job losses etc due to the impact of COVID-19.
6. Nalauwaki hotel workers returning home because of their closed hotels expressed their desires to join the hotel and catering union because they felt they were not treated well in their redundancy packages. Representatives from the hotel union and employer will join the team on the 15-16 June trip.
7. Learning new skills – With the COVID-19 at hand, many hotel workers have returned home to farm the land and live at home in the village. They bring with them new skills such as hotel chefs, housekeeping and running small canteens. Other skills that need to be learned due to the COVID-19 circumstance is the village barber and hairdressing skills and drying or smoking fish and other business ideas.
8. The ILO and Government team returned to Viwa and Waya Islands on 22-25 June 2020 to review the work that was assigned to be done and pay cash to all households for a job completed.
9. The team discussed potential future collaboration such as support for start/improve your business, support for villages to gradually transition into the formal economy by way of forming associations or co-operatives and consider other projects in partnership with Government so that no one is left behind.

10. The Department of Youth assisted the youths in Yalombi to submit a proposal for the extension of their farm from 2 acres to 5 acres (Vatunareba youth farm) for commercial vegetable farming.
11. Under its **Annual Corporate Plan 2017, Sub Output 5.1 – Undertake Community Forest Development to Improve Livelihood/Create Job Opportunities**, the Ministry of Forestry brought 302 sandalwood seedlings for planting, in addition to the few that were planted by the ILO director and the visiting ILO/Government team.



Above: Yalombi village consultation

Cash for Work Budget:

Villages	Households	hours per day	days	Rate	total
VIWA					
Naibalebale:	56	4	10	5	11,200
Najia:	25	4	10	5	5,000
Yakani:	4	4	10	5	800
WAYA					
Nalauwaki:	65	4	10	5	13,000
Yalobi:	51	4	10	5	10,200
	201				40,200

Below: Farming in Naibalebale



Community work performed in the 5 villages:

Dates	Naibalebale	Najia	Yakani	Yalobi	Nalauwaki
Monday 01 June	Clean-up around the village	Clean-up around the village	Clean-up around the village	Clean-up around the village	Clean-up around the village and finishing up of community hall.
Tuesday 02 June	Attend to rubbish disposal area	Attend to rubbish disposal area	Attend to rubbish disposal area	Clean-up around the village	Attend to rubbish disposal area
Wednesday 03 June	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Cleaning village water tank.	Planting root crops for the villages.	Attend to rubbish disposal area	Planting for the village pastor
Thursday 04 June	Planting rootcrops for the villages.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting root crops for the villages.	Village Keli maintenance	Work on the village water catchment and that for the school
Friday 05 June	Work in the village voivoi gardens.	Planting for the village pastor.	Planting rootcrops for the villages.	Work in the village voivoi gardens	Work in the village pig pens
Monday 08 June	Work in the village pig pens	Work in the village pig pens	Work in the village pig pens	Work in the village pig pens	Work in the village pig pens
Tuesday 09 June	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Move the village pig pens to a new location further from the village	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.
Wednesday 10 June	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Farming for the village church compound	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.
Thursday 11 June	Repairing kitchens and toilets of old age village members.	Planting for the old age people in the community	Planting for the women voivoi plantation.	Farming for the village school	Farming for the village school
Friday 12 June	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.	Work on the village water catchment and that for the school	Planting cassava and kumala to each individual household.



Above: Arriving in Yalombi, Yasawa
 Left: Director Matin Karimli planting a sandalwood tree to mark ILO's assistance to Yalombi after TC Harold
 Below: Conversation with the District Officer and the Roko from the Itaukei Affairs



Good Practices:

1. CBEE is an important methodology for including communities to converge and work together to determine their common destinies that gradually transition them from the informal to the formal economies as they learn and adapt with new skills. Working together in a village setting for a common good builds resilient communities that over time is able to adapt itself to climate change, disasters and epidemics.

2. Ministry of Forestry took the opportunity to evaluate and monitor the planting sites and build the villagers knowledge on their rights as landowners.
3. The National Union for Hospitality, Catering and Tourism Industry Employees (NUHCTIE) representative was able to recruit 54 new members for their union. It was discovered that some hotel employers used the COVID-19 pandemic and the damages from TC Harold as excuses to send employees home. Whilst the NUHCTIE could not do much for their new recruits, they used the opportunity to document the cases for future references.
4. Even though the project was very small, ILO's teaming up with the many Government departments was an important step to getting recognition from its tripartite partners and donors, as well as reinforcing its role in early recovery from disaster, not to mention the gratitude from the villagers.

Maps of the assigned islands of Viwa (villages of Naibalebale, Najia and Yakani) and Waya (villages of Yalobi and Nalauwaki) vis-à-vis the rest of Fiji.

