

# Employers Capacity Strengthening & Project Consultation Workshop

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Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, FIJI

**Disaster Recovery : Lessons & Best Practices**

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# Impact of the disaster

- The extremely destructive category 5 cyclone Pam that struck Vanuatu on March 13, 2015 severely affected the provinces of SHEFA, TAFEA, MALAMPA and PENAMA. Not only did it cause enormous losses and damages to physical assets, but also loss of income and livelihoods.
- The total economic value of the effects caused by Tropical Cyclone Pam is estimated to be approximately VT 48.5 billion (US\$449.4 million) which is equivalent to 64.1% of the GDP of Vanuatu.
- Based upon the ELSP assessment it is estimated that Cyclone Pam has affected directly and indirectly the livelihoods of about 40,800 households or 195,000 people that live across the four disaster-affected provinces. A total of 504,050 work days and of VT 1.6 billion of personal income have been lost.
- For the formal economy, 24,191 work days have been lost mostly in the provinces of SHEFA and TAFEA. This comprises of 17,751 in the manufacturing industry and 6,440 in tourism.
- On commercial farms, agricultural workers are facing reduced demand for their labor, resulting in additional 24,785 lost work days. This equates to a total of VT 46 million in lost wages.

# **Recovery experience** –worked well for business and jobs

- Overall coordination via the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) was effective and integrated and facilitated both with domestic based NGO's and international donor and partner agencies.
- The ILO established a 2 months presence in the Department of Labour (DoL) to provide effective and efficient technical assistance to ILO tripartite partners and contribute efforts towards efforts of the UN and International agencies.
- The ILO also managed to mobilize initial funding from the Japanese funded Social Safety Net Project (SSNP) to support the delivery of labour based technology (LBT) methods to capacitate Island Based Contractors and Public Works staff to increase local decent employment through road construction and maintenance. ILO internal funds were allocated to support the establishment of Employment Services Vanuatu (ESV) to support formal sector workers who had lost jobs to return to the workforce.
- Vanuatu Government completed a Post Disaster National Assessment report focusing more on infrastructure and public sector areas to be rebuilt (core infrastructure)

# **Recovery experience** – did not work well for business and jobs

- Grass roots communications were far less effective and in cases at odds with the overall recovery and support program.
- Most of the local businesses have not received any financial assistance, grants, aid, or concessional loans with low interest rate from the Vanuatu Government and or funding aid partners to assist in the rebuilding of their businesses from 2015 to 2017. 2 credit facilities at low interest rate from the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu available through the 4 commercial banks benefited 10 to 15 businesses only.
- Man made disaster of the Bauerfield International Airport runway after 13 March 2015 affected directly and indirectly all businesses.
- Insurance cover for businesses worked out for small number of businesses which met the requirements, terms and conditions. Many had failed to “read the fine print”.
- In 2018, many businesses were still struggling to recover and rebuild four years after TC Pam. This is continuing to indicate the trend of an economic recession continuing in 2019.

# **Future** –based on your experience, how can the EO's effectively support its members during recovery

- Closer working partnership with ILO
- Employers trained to be better prepared for continuity – importance of business resilience skills
  - Better utilization, awareness and communication from and around the Vanuatu Business Resilience Committee (VBRC)
  - Support from and coordination with the Vanuatu Government, NGO's and Training Institutions to provide increased awareness to grass roots business and assist to provide ongoing training and education post future disasters
- Role of Employers in Vanuatu in working relationships with the Vanuatu Government key agencies NDMO, Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Infrastructure, in preparation, response and recovery from a natural disaster, and any types of disaster(s).