

# VANUATU RECOVERY STRATEGY 2020 - 2023

*TC HAROLD & COVID-19, VANUATU*

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July 2020



Government of Vanuatu



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*Vanuatu Recovery Strategy 2020-2023*

Working together to recover, rebuild and emerge stronger and more resilient from the compound disaster of TC Harold and COVID-19

**Approved by the Council of Ministers Decision 091/2020**

**Version 3.0**

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## Section 1: Vanuatu's Challenge

# A compound disaster

Severe Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold tore across the northern islands of Vanuatu with torrential rain and sustained winds up to 270km per hour. It took lives, destroyed houses, food gardens, businesses and infrastructure, leaving enduring scars on families, communities and the nation.

We have faced the force of cyclones past. They strike, destroy and move on: leaving people to rally, clean up and restore their lives. This time, the path to recovery will be much harder to navigate. COVID-19 is not just a complicating factor, nor a separate threat to be dealt with. It means we face a compound disaster that is unique in the way it is still unravelling, with no clear trajectory or end in sight.

The compound nature of TC Harold and COVID-19 intensifies the scale and broadens the scope of the human, social, economic and environmental impacts. Swift lockdown of international borders provided a precious window to prepare on the health side, but restrictions crippled the economy and hindered the humanitarian response. Competing pressures also exist from managing other events, including the Tanna volcano ash fall and acid rain, Teouma flooding, drought and the ongoing Ambae volcano recovery. Ever looming is the prospect of future disasters.

The enormity of events and the challenge ahead has the potential to considerably change the social contract between people and government. Around the world we have seen the fallout from the pandemic deepen community divisions. Geopolitical tensions are escalating, changing trade relations and threatening peace. Some countries are cautiously reopening under the fear of a second wave of infection. Others have seemingly thrown caution to the wind. Elsewhere the pandemic's first wave has yet to break, and many places least able to cope are yet to be fully tested.

More than any other, this compound disaster has blurred the lines between response, recovery and disaster risk reduction (preparedness and prevention). The immediate danger of TC Harold has ended, yet social pressures and trauma remain, and in some cases are escalating. The concurrent disruptions across sectors exacerbate existing and emerging social risks. Additionally, we are confronted by a number of potential scenarios in relation to COVID-19. These may substantially and rapidly shift focus and the direction of resources as different situations unfold. A critical factor will be whether or not the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 gets into the community. Conversely, risk mitigation, including keeping the borders closed, has already had a detrimental impact on the economy, society and communities. If the coronavirus does enter Vanuatu, the health focus would need to immediately swing from prevention and preparedness to treatment and containment. An internal lockdown would heavily impact private and domestic sector participation in recovery processes, add further stress to the economy and deepen the impact on community coping mechanisms.

Amidst the concern and uncertainty, experience assures us that working together we can and will recover, rebuild and emerge stronger and more resilient.

# Human and social toll

The human and social toll from TC Harold's destructive path across Vanuatu has been extreme. Three people tragically lost their lives during the cyclone with more losses in the immediate aftermath, and 124 injuries reported due to the disaster. The cyclone temporarily displaced over 18,358 people who took shelter in over 272 evacuation centres. At the start of June there were 6,218 people or 1,295 households still residing across 265 evacuation centres (churches, schools or other shelters) or with host families. Among the groups most affected are people with disabilities and female-headed households. Estimates suggest that a total of 26,359 households or 129,029 people have been impacted, which equates to approximately 43 per cent of the population. A total of 21,086 houses were damaged to some extent, with 5,272 completely destroyed.

In terms of essential services, sectoral assessments in Sanma, Penama and Malampa provinces have revealed roughly VUV 1.87 billion worth of damage<sup>1</sup> was inflicted on 81 public health facilities and approximately VUV 6.3 billion in damage to 806 classrooms, 42 dormitories and 427 other education facilities. These figures help us appreciate the scale of destruction and degree of disruption to essential services.

Thankfully, at the time of writing there are still no confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 in Vanuatu. However, the socio-economic cost has taken a huge toll, including increased concerns around child protection, exploitation, gender-based violence, psychosocial stress and substance abuse. The repatriation exercise that commenced at the end of May has seen nearly 1,500 citizens and residents returning home. Reuniting families and easing the financial burden and stresses on people stranded overseas is not without risk, but is the right thing to do. Further repatriations and growing pressures to ease global travel restrictions will continue to increase the probability that the coronavirus may eventually enter the country. Health officials have been busy improving facilities, services and surveillance as best they can in preparation of such an eventuality. Even so, an outbreak would likely overwhelm not only health systems, but all of government.

In the meantime, border restrictions will continue to keep families apart, disrupt overseas education and employment opportunities and hinder the availability and movement of supplies and trade. Resulting economic shocks have the potential to drive many more people out of work, especially in the informal sector, with women and people with disabilities most at risk of being marginalised.

## Compound cost

With the rapid closure of international borders in March, COVID-19 went from a health threat to an economic emergency. Many businesses, especially those reliant on tourism effectively ground to a halt. No tourists and a reduced resident community immediately impacted the hospitality and construction sectors, putting at least 2,000 formal jobs in jeopardy and affecting the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people in the informal sector. Additionally, the nearly 1,400 bus drivers and 140 taxi drivers in Port Vila faced a sharp drop in demand. The 1,000 plus licensed handicraft artisans saw incomes plummet to near-zero. Social distancing precautions majorly disrupted fruit and vegetable market sales.

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<sup>1</sup> Damage is understood as physical affects to infrastructure, buildings and assets as a consequence of TC Harold.

TC Harold decimated agriculture, with initial economic loss<sup>2</sup> estimates reaching VUV 18.1 billion, and caused widespread destruction to private and public property, heaping further pressure on the private sector, both formal and informal. It did, however, provide a boost to some sectors, notably building supplies and construction services. At the end of 2019, the expected economic growth was 3.8%, but after the disasters it has been revised twice. Before TC Harold, the initial assessment of the impact of COVID-19 suggested the economic growth forecast for 2020 be revised down from 3.4 per cent to 1.9 per cent, which has since been revised down further to 0.6 per cent. The economic losses associated with COVID-19 in the private sector has been estimated at VUV 7.58 billion, only for the period March to June 2020.

Assessing the economic consequences of this compound disaster requires not just a tally of the individual components, but consideration of the full compound cost. PDNA estimates put the total loss and damages associated with TC Harold and COVID-19 at around VUV 60.1 billion (excluding Environment and Justice and Community Services damages and losses), which corresponds to approximately 54 per cent of the 2020 gross domestic product (GDP) forecast by the Macroeconomic Committee. Damages by TC Harold to infrastructure and assets are estimated at VUV 27.41 billion, while the economic losses are estimated at VUV 23.55 billion. Regarding COVID-19, conservative estimations of the economic losses are around at VUV 9.13 billion. It is most likely the final figure will reach well beyond that, meaning there will be substantial funding shortfalls. This will entail difficult decisions around financing and setting priorities for limited resources available.

## Impact on the natural and built environment

TC Harold severely damaged the living and built elements of the places it cut a path through, in turn impacting on livelihoods and threatening deep rooted connections with *ples*. The problems created by the cyclone are compounded by the potential impacts of COVID-19 infection and the economic and social impacts of isolation. Restoration of the natural and built environment becomes a priority not only because it supports the usual pattern of life, but because it provides a buffer against the economic, social and health impacts of COVID-19.

The information collected to date gives a sense of the extent, depth and potential impacts of damage to the natural environment. Approximately 2,196 km<sup>2</sup> of tropical forests were affected. Not only land, the sea around our islands has also suffered, including 65.4 km<sup>2</sup> of coral reef, 7.8 km<sup>2</sup> of mangroves and 11.2 km<sup>2</sup> of sea grasses adversely affected.

Additionally, more than 218,000 agricultural plants were destroyed by TC Harold, with the economic cost of the crop losses in the order of VUV 13.65 billion.

The effect on the built environment is also severe and significant in terms of its impacts on people's lives, on businesses and community organisations, and on the government's ability to provide services. The preliminary numbers collected so far indicate the damage cost is relatively low, but

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of economic losses makes reference to the disaster effects of TC Harold and COVID-19 on the economic flows. It includes the decline of output of the productive sectors, lower revenues and sales, as well as the private and public increased expenditures to manage the disasters and new risks associated with them.

that buildings and infrastructure are extensively damaged and have become unsafe and unusable to varying degrees, including:

- damage to 258 community public water systems, household rainwater harvesting and sanitation facilities estimated at around VUV 1.98 billion;
- damage to assessed roads, bridges and airports totaling around VUV 2.83 billion;
- approximately VUV 396 million worth of damage to 130 public and community buildings including churches, nakamals, and other government and municipal buildings;
- damage to private sector infrastructure and assets has been estimated at VUV 1.69 billion, and the economic losses related to TC-Harold estimated at VUV 576 million.

The estimates of damage and loss still require the final sectoral validation and subject to change (see Appendix 3).

## Section 2: Vanuatu's Recovery

### Supporting communities

The aim of the Vanuatu Recovery Strategy is to support communities impacted by TC Harold and COVID-19, by providing a framework to recover, rebuild and emerge stronger and more resilient. It is premised on working together, renewing our traditions and values through our care for one another.

The compound disaster has so far caused substantial suffering. It has also delayed development progress planned under *Vanuatu 2030 | The People's Plan* - the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP). The immediate focus now is to restore essential services and infrastructure, learn from our shared experiences, adapt to new circumstances and create new opportunities. This strategy responds to the social, economic and environmental impacts of the compound disaster to set out the core priorities for the next three years. It provides a bridge to the NSDP, continuing to advance our national development aspirations and not just revert back to how it was before.

Government is primarily responsible for coordinating the recovery, but cannot act alone to repair the damage and set us on a sustainable path for the future. It will work closely with provincial and local authorities, communities, chiefs, churches, private sector, civil society and development partners to facilitate locally-led, people-focused programmes.

### Guiding principles

Successful recovery will contribute to more resilient communities, providing the opportunity to improve the natural and built environments as well as economic and social wellbeing. Community focused recovery recognises disasters deeply impact people's lives and their livelihoods, which means recovery process are challenging and complex. They involve elements of prevention, preparedness, rebuilding and improvement. A key component will be building capacity and enabling the use of traditional knowledge and strengths. In this context, the following principles provide guidance to ensure recovery projects meet our aim of supporting our communities to recover, rebuild and emerge stronger:

- We will ensure our recovery projects are responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of the compound disaster and the changing needs of the communities we are working with.
- We will be responsive and flexible in engaging our communities and using community-led approaches to support them in moving forward.
- We will promote the active inclusion and protection of our vulnerable people and groups with gender, justice and social protection key cross cutting issues to be addressed.

- We will build back better, creating more resilient communities through the inclusion of disaster risk reduction measures to enhance infrastructure, revitalise and strengthen culture, social services, the economy and our environment.

## Assessment of needs

The assessment of needs that informs this strategy comes from the internationally recognised approach to quantifying damage and loss. A Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was initiated in May following the rapid and detailed assessment surveys carried out in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone. Although standardised, a key principle of the PDNA is that it is country-led and tailored to the local circumstances. In this case, travel restrictions elevated national ownership with international participation limited to financial assistance and remote technical support. The compound effect of COVID-19 brings another unique element to what is normally a relatively straightforward, linear assessment. This time, however, we are trying to quantify what is essentially a moving target with the focus of recovery also subject to change as the domestic and global situation evolves.

The use of the PDNA methodology allows us to estimate the effects of the disasters (damages and losses) with the objective to identify recovery needs and to estimate the cost to address those needs. The PDNA, as an agreed estimate of needs, recognises the central importance of financial support from international partners. The cost estimates provide a starting point for funding negotiations rather than an attempt to pinpoint precise needs and costs. This is especially the case given the extraordinary circumstances currently faced, noting that some sectors are better positioned or equipped to more fully measure both needs and costs. More broadly, however, the limitations and competing demands on domestic resources mean assessments and verification will likely be a continuing process. Necessity dictates that this does not hold up the support required to help people through this crisis.

The critical aspect of the needs assessment is that it fully reflects the experiences and needs of the people impacted by TC Harold and COVID-19. Vanuatu is a country in which direct connections between people in government and communities provide a critical source of information on needs and the most appropriate ways to address them. This is a local story-telling approach to needs assessment. Members of Parliament, provincial and municipal councillors, public servants and teams of workers from non-governmental organisations, civil society, the private sector and development partners have witnessed first hand suffering and hardship and heard many accounts of it. The stories that have been heard will continue to inform the narrative of the recovery in many different ways. They will shape policy, influence decision-making and guide implementation. Importantly, it recognises perspectives change over time as people adapt and rebuild their lives, and as the impacts of nationally-led activities become apparent.

# Recovery objectives, strategies and outcomes

The recovery objectives guide the implementation of specific strategies to ensure they remain focused on people's needs. These have been grouped under the familiar arrangement of the social, economic and environment pillars that also frame the national sustainable development goals. The three recovery objectives are to:

- Restore and strengthen essential social services and protections
- Enhance lives and livelihoods
- Repair the natural and built environment.

The tables on the following pages set out the recovery strategies and expected outcomes under each objective. Recovery projects developed under this framework will need to demonstrate how they will achieve the objectives and outcomes. The list of these recovery projects, currently under development by the sectors and Line Ministries, will be included in the Recovery Plan. The desired impacts directly relate to the relevant goals set out in *Vanuatu 2030 | The People's Plan*, the National Sustainable Development Plan.

## Recovery Objective 1: Restore and strengthen essential social services and protections

RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>1.1 Re-establish and strengthen public services to effectively lead and implement the recovery</b>	1.1.1 Community calm and government normalcy restored quickly and demonstrated through leadership and decision-making.	PMO with all	<b>Goal SOC 6 Strong and Effective Institutions:</b> A dynamic public sector with good governance principles and strong institutions delivering the support and services expected by all citizens of Vanuatu.
	1.1.2 Responsive and capable institutions delivering quality public services to all citizens.	PMO with all	
	1.1.3. Recovery led by Government processes and closely coordinated with community authorities, civil society and private sector.	PMO with all	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>1.2 Restore and strengthen health facilities and preventative and curative health care services</b>	1.2.1 All health facilities impacted by TC Harold returned to a resilient, accessible and stronger functioning state, including the Northern Provincial Hospital, the Ministry of Health's Sanma provincial headquarters, aid posts, dispensaries, health centres and private clinics that sustained major damage or were destroyed ensuring the provision of safe storage for medical supplies, medicine, equipment and medical and administrative records.	MOH PMO MIPU	<b>Goal SOC 3 Quality Health Care:</b> A healthy population that enjoys a high quality of physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being.
	1.2.2 Strengthened health systems to deliver improved primary health care services, public health interventions, surveillance activities, and maternal and child health and nutrition services.	MOH	
	1.2.3 Improved storage, supply chain and provincial distribution for pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical items and support emergency contingency planning.	MOH	
	1.2.4 Strengthened capacity through human resource training and specialist preparation for COVID-19 and future pandemics.	MOH MoET	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>1.3 Restore and strengthen water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and practices</b>	1.3.1 Improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in health, education and community facilities to help prevent the transmission of communicable diseases and improve infection control.	MLNR MOH MoET MOIA MIPU	<b>Goal ECO 2 Improve Infrastructure:</b> Sustainable and well-maintained infrastructure and services for all, through inclusive and effective partnerships
	1.3.2 Improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) awareness and practice.	MLNR MOH	
	1.3.3 All community public water systems impacted by TC Harold returned to a stronger functioning state.	MLNR PMO MFEM	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP

1.4 Restore and strengthen education facilities and services	1.4.1 All children safely back to school and learning as soon as possible and all educational facilities impacted by TC Harold returned to a resilient, accessible and stronger functioning state, including early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres, primary schools, secondary schools and post school education and training (PSET) centres that sustained major damage or were destroyed ensuring the provision of safe storage for curriculum materials, books, records, technology and equipment.	MoET PMO MIPU	Goal SOC 2 Quality Education: An inclusive, equitable and quality education system with life-long learning for all.
	1.4.2 Improved hygiene and sanitation facilities and practices in all education facilities to help prevent the transmission of communicable diseases.	MoET MOH MLNR	
	1.4.3 Strengthened and inclusive education and vocational skills training that ensures equitable and quality education is delivered even in times of crisis, including access to psychosocial and home-schooling support.	MoET MOH	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
1.5 Strengthen disaster preparedness, response and recovery mechanisms and structures	1.5.1 Lessons learned from TC Harold and COVID-19 (including scenario planning) inform and strengthen national, provincial and local disaster management planning through the implementation of recommendations endorsed by DCO/COM.	PMO MCCA MFEM MOIA MFAICET MOH MoET MALFFB MTTNVB MIPU MJCS	Goal ENV 3 Climate and Disaster Resilience: A strong and resilient nation in the face of climate change and disaster risks posed by natural and man-made hazards.
	1.5.2 Strengthened data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure better response and recovery planning for future events.		
	1.5.3 Early warning systems re-established and improved, including community preparedness and evacuation procedures, equipment and infrastructure.	MCCA	
Recovery Objective 2: Enhance lives and livelihoods			
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
2.1 Support sustainable self-reliance, including food self-sufficiency	2.1.1 A revived and sustained primary sector together with enhanced processing and preservation capabilities.	MALFFB MTTNVB	Goal ENV 1 Food and Nutrition Security: A nation that ensures our food and nutrition security needs are adequately met for all people through increasing sustainable food production systems and improving household production.
	2.1.2 Strengthened services, operations and awareness reaching more people including farmers, fishers, sellers and consumers resulting in better food production, food security and nutrition.	MALFFB MTTNVB MOH MoET	
	2.1.3 Improved farming practices, use of technology and traditional knowledge, crop choices including climate and disaster resilience, and strategic import substitution.	MALFFB MFAICET	

RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>2.2 Promote economic recovery and strengthening with a focus on getting people back to work and involved in other income generating activities</b>	2.2.1 People made jobless or suffered loss of income supported through the immediate crisis and period of uncertainty with the aim of improving their livelihoods and bringing them back to work.	MFEM MTTNVB MALFFB	<b>ECO 1 Stable and Equitable Growth: A stable and prosperous economy, encouraging trade, investment and providing economic opportunities for all members of society throughout Vanuatu</b>
	2.2.2 Private sector, including primary producers, industry and service providers in both formal and informal sectors supported to keep people in work.	MTTINVB MALFFB VCCI VPPA MFEM	
	2.2.3 Private sector, including primary producers, industry and service providers in both formal and informal sectors supported in adapting to changing circumstances and seeking out new opportunities, including through improved access to finance, business support services, access to markets and land management and equity measures.	MTTINVB VCCI MALFFB MLNR	<b>ECO 3 Strengthen Rural Communities:</b> A strong rural economy that creates opportunities, enables the development of rural communities and increasingly contributes to national prosperity.  <b>ECO 4 Create jobs and business opportunities:</b> An enabling business environment, creating opportunities and employment for entrepreneurs throughout Vanuatu
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>2.3 Support and protect people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups</b>	2.3.1 People displaced by TC Harold supported with finding durable solutions and better prepared for future disasters.	MCCA MOIA MJCS MIPU	<b>Goal SOC 4 Social Inclusion: An inclusive society which upholds human dignity and where the rights of all Ni-Vanuatu including women, youth, the elderly and vulnerable groups are supported, protected and promoted in our legislation and institutions.</b>
	2.3.2 Youth development and social protection issues that have emerged or heightened as a result of COVID-19 and TC Harold mitigated.	MOYSD MJCS MOIA	
	2.3.3 Improved standards of living and cyclone-resilience for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly and people living in peri-urban communities.	MCCA MIPU MJCS MOYSD	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
<b>2.4 Promote and support cultural revival</b>	2.4.1 All cultural and community assets including nakamals, churches, cultural centres, youth centres, handicraft buildings, cultural sites and custom schools facilities impacted by TC Harold returned to a resilient, accessible and stronger functioning state.	PMO MJCS MOYSD	<b>Goal SOC 1 Vibrant cultural identity: A nation based on traditional governance and Christian principles,</b>

	2.4.2 Strengthened cultural values, custom governance and customs relating to cyclone resilience drawing on the experiences and stories of people impacted by the disaster.	PMO with all	which underpin our culture and continue to bestow life skills and knowledge to future generations.
	2.4.3 Enhanced traditional knowledge and skills in disaster preparedness and post disaster action, especially in the area of food preservation techniques, and the distribution of traditional planting materials, including those for building and roofing materials.	MJCS MoET MALFFB MNCC MOIA MCCA	
Recovery Objective 3: Repair the natural and built environment			
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
3.1 Repair, upgrade and construct public infrastructure	3.1.1 Based on detailed assessments and in accordance with approved priorities all public buildings impacted by TC Harold returned to a resilient, accessible and stronger functioning state and where possible / appropriate upgraded to standards that will allow them to serve as evacuation centres for future disasters.	PMO MIPU MFEM	ECO 2 Improve Infrastructure: Sustainable and well-maintained infrastructure and services for all, through inclusive and effective partnerships.
	3.1.2 Based on detailed assessments and in accordance with approved priorities all public transport infrastructure including roads, bridges, wharves, jetties, airports and airstrips impacted by TC Harold returned to a resilient, accessible and stronger functioning state.	PMO MIPU MFEM	
	3.1.3 New infrastructure projects prioritised and programmed in accordance with recovery needs, including the equitable sharing of stimulus and employment effects.	PMO MIPU MFEM	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
3.2 Support the rebuilding, repair and upgrade of private housing and infrastructure	3.2.1 Communities impacted by TC Harold supported in accessing high standard, cost effective building materials and services, including traditional building and roofing materials.	MOIA, MIPU MTTCINVBD MALFFB	ECO 2 Improve Infrastructure: Sustainable and well-maintained infrastructure and services for all, through inclusive and effective partnerships
	3.2.2 Revival of traditional architecture with emphasis on structural integrity using local materials as a safe alternative to makeshift dwellings using mixed materials.	MJCS MIPU	
	3.2.3 Enhanced design standards and building approaches contextualised to rural, urban and peri-urban settings.	MOIA MIPU	
RECOVERY STRATEGY	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	LEAD AGENCIES	DESIRED IMPACT FROM THE NSDP
3.3 Strengthen environmental	3.3.1 Environmental goods and services impacted by TC Harold returned to a functioning state, including physical barriers removed and access to hunting and harvesting areas restored.	MCCA MLNR	ENV 5 Ecosystems and Biodiversity: A nation committed to ensuring the

services and resilience.	3.3.2 Environmental governance and protections including enhanced and/or expanded resource restrictions and traditional tabu areas.	MCCA MLNR MALFFB MJCS	conservation and sustainable management of our biodiversity and ecosystems
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## Section 3: Means of Implementation

### Coordination

The national recovery will be coordinated through the Prime Minister's Office. The National Recovery Committee, which is chaired by the Director General of the Ministry of the Prime Minister, will exercise governance oversight and quality assurance over recovery project delivery and spending, and report progress to the Council of Ministers and other stakeholders. The composition and broad responsibilities of the National Recovery Committee were established under the *Government Act Order No. 154 of 2018*. The Committee has endorsed an interim structure to guide recovery coordination and communication (see Appendix 4), with the view to confirming institutional arrangements through development of a National Disaster Recovery Framework. One implication of dealing with a compound disaster is the need to be able to shift focus very quickly in response to changing circumstances, for example if COVID-19 infections are detected. To ensure speedy and effective action, the Committee's oversight will need to carefully navigate the dynamic state of the compound disaster and its recovery arrangements.

The Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) serves as the secretariat to the National Recovery Committee. DSPPAC is also coordinating the process of developing the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The framework will coordinate recovery efforts across the whole of government and improve risk-informed development planning. It will delineate institutional accountabilities to ensure recovery strategies are both consistent with development needs and priorities to enable communities to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. This will enhance coordination and reflect institutional and stakeholder responsibilities at national and sub-national levels, build on traditional and international best practice, and ensure consistency with long-term development objectives.

Bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental development partners will also prioritise their valuable contributions through this strategy. Specific roles and interactions will be determined through the course of implementation and in the context of the National Disaster Recovery Framework. Implementation arrangements will be based on the primary principle that Government leads and manages all stages of the process. This means working through and strengthening existing systems and reporting all recovery activities through the National Recovery Committee.

### Implementation

Recovery projects and actions will be led and managed by government ministries and will need to demonstrate alignment with this strategy. More specifically, they will need to be based on an assessment of people's needs and priorities, as they have articulated them. Activities will need to be directed to supporting people in the most direct way possible, making sure they are useful and

administrative overheads are minimised. DSPPAC is working with sectors to analyze and prioritize the projects that will be incorporated in the Recovery Plan. DSPPAC will also support ministries with the formulation of new recovery projects in line with this strategy, and as a consequence, with the National Sustainable Development Plan. DSPPAC will develop and distribute guidelines to help government agencies and partners with the process of initiating recovery projects, which will be circulated at the end of August 2020. Sector Analysts will also support the preparation of new policy proposals to be funded through the National Budget, and will provide a recommendation to the Ministerial Budget Committee for approval. For projects to be funded through donor partners, Sector Analysts will support and appraise the of Government Investment Projects (GIP) process.

## Funding

The PDNA estimates the quantum of funding required to fully implement the recovery strategy to be VUV 36.43 billion (approximately 32.77 percent of the 2020 GDP forecast by the Macroeconomic Committee). The table below provides a breakdown of this estimate by recovery objective (see Appendix 3 for the sectoral recovery needs).

Recovery objective	Short term (VUV billion)	Medium term (VUV billion)	Total (VUV billion)
Restore and strengthen essential social services and protections	3.30	11.85	15.15
Enhance lives and livelihoods	4.81	4.59	9.40
Repair the natural and built environment.	6.33	5.55	11.88
<b>TOTAL (VUV billion)</b>	<b>14.44</b>	<b>21.99</b>	<b>36.43</b>

Funding can come from a number of sources, including: the private domestic sector, donors, non-government organisations and the Vanuatu Government. The Vanuatu Government funding will come from either existing appropriations or new appropriations, as approved by the Ministerial Budget Committee, comprising:

- Supplementary appropriations funded from general revenue;
- General and tied budget support from donor partners;
- Other donor support.

Estimates for these various components of funding are being revised and will be included in the final version of this strategy. At this stage it is expected the total amount of funding available from all sources will be well short of the amount required to fully implement the recovery strategy. It will be essential then to use funds as efficiently (meaning spending delivers goods and services) and effectively (meaning spending produces results) as possible. Project proposals will need to include robust costings, and be assessed with an eye on the benefits expected from the proposed expenditure.

The support of donor partners is essential and welcome. The most effective and efficient use of the funds will come about if they can be pooled and managed under one set of arrangements to the greatest extent possible. The Government's strong preference is for assistance to be provided through general or tied budget support, but if this is not possible in full or in part, the Government is able to collaborate with donors to use other modalities.

DSPPAC will coordinate engagement between all donors and the National Recovery Committee. In line with the Aid Management Policy, bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental development partners and agencies must report any activities undertaken outside of the Government financial management system to the Committee.

## Monitoring

The Vanuatu Recovery Strategy will ensure recovery, reconstruction and rebuilding is completed and community connections, preparedness and resilience are enhanced. It will not only get us back on track, but prepare us better for future challenges. Together, we will emerge stronger and more resilient. Our success will be measured using agreed metrics within a results-oriented monitoring framework. Within this framework there will be a particular focus on ensuring individual projects remain on budget and are delivering the expected goods, services and benefits as well as on achievement of desired outcomes.

DSPPAC M&E Unit will work closely over the coming two months with each sector to populate a recovery M&E Framework - sectors will be supported to come up with targets and indicators for their recovery strategies/outcomes. These will be developed in line with the NSDP M&E Framework to ensure consistency in both monitoring and reporting - so while we will be able to report on recovery progress that will also inform the Annual Development Report. The M&E Framework for the Vanuatu Recovery Strategy will be finalised and distributed by end of October.

The projects which ministries will carry out will occur at the same time, alongside and sometimes formally linked up with community led and private sector actions. The monitoring strategy will also include provision for observing the progress of these activities, focusing on the implications for Government led action and collecting information about the contribution they make to recovery.

The National Recovery Committee will receive regular monitoring reporting, highlighting any constraints and implementation bottlenecks.

## Communications

DSPPAC will need to be adequately resourced and supported to coordinate an overall communications plan focused on enhancing advocacy and accountability. A key aspect of this plan will be *storian* - open and accessible discussion and flow of information between all interested people.

Project proposals developed under this strategy will require detailed performance and financial monitoring targets, and reporting against these should be publicly available. It must be clear to people how money allocated in the name of Vanuatu's recovery has been spent.

Ensuring there is clear, up to date information will help government and its partners to advocate for continued support on the international stage - drawing on our diplomatic missions and high-profile attendance at important regional and international forums. It will be essential to maintain momentum, especially in the current climate with so many competing global demands.

## Section 4: Working together

The recovery process begins and ends with the people of Vanuatu.

To be successful it requires effective collaboration and support across all avenues of government:

- Members of Parliament
- Provincial Councillors
- Municipal Councillors
- Political advisors and support staff
- Public servants across each line ministry
- Provincial, municipal and area council administrators.

Government leads every aspect of the recovery process, but cannot achieve the aim and objectives of this strategy in isolation. It will need to work in close partnership with community-based and non-governmental organisations, private sector businesses, associations and groupings, and with its bilateral and multilateral development partners. All partners need to be working in close consultation and cooperation with impacted people and communities.

Our frontline officials have exceptionally challenging roles in keeping us safe, including our health and education workers, justice and community services officers, police, VMF and customs officers, NDMO and MAFFLB field workers, and the many community, government and private sector volunteers. This is not an exhaustive list, and all frontline workers are valued and require sufficient resourcing and support to be able to do the jobs we expect of them. They also need our respect and appreciation.

Behind the scenes there are teams of tireless administrators, organisers, analysts and managers making sure things run as smoothly as possible.

We are facing an extraordinary challenge with this compound disaster. The COVID-19 pandemic has people and governments around the world operating in uncharted waters. Understandably many are fearful for what the future holds. Unity and cooperation are the strongest foundations to defend our nation from the coronavirus, and to prepare us to cope with it if and when it does arrive. We must be vigilant in our planning and be ready to act swiftly if circumstances change.

It is the spirit of ni-Vanuatu people that infuses and guides how we work together. Our Melanesian values make us resilient in hard times and willing to do all that is necessary to secure our own and our children's futures. We can rely on each other for help to a greater extent than many, our family and community structures are strong and supportive.

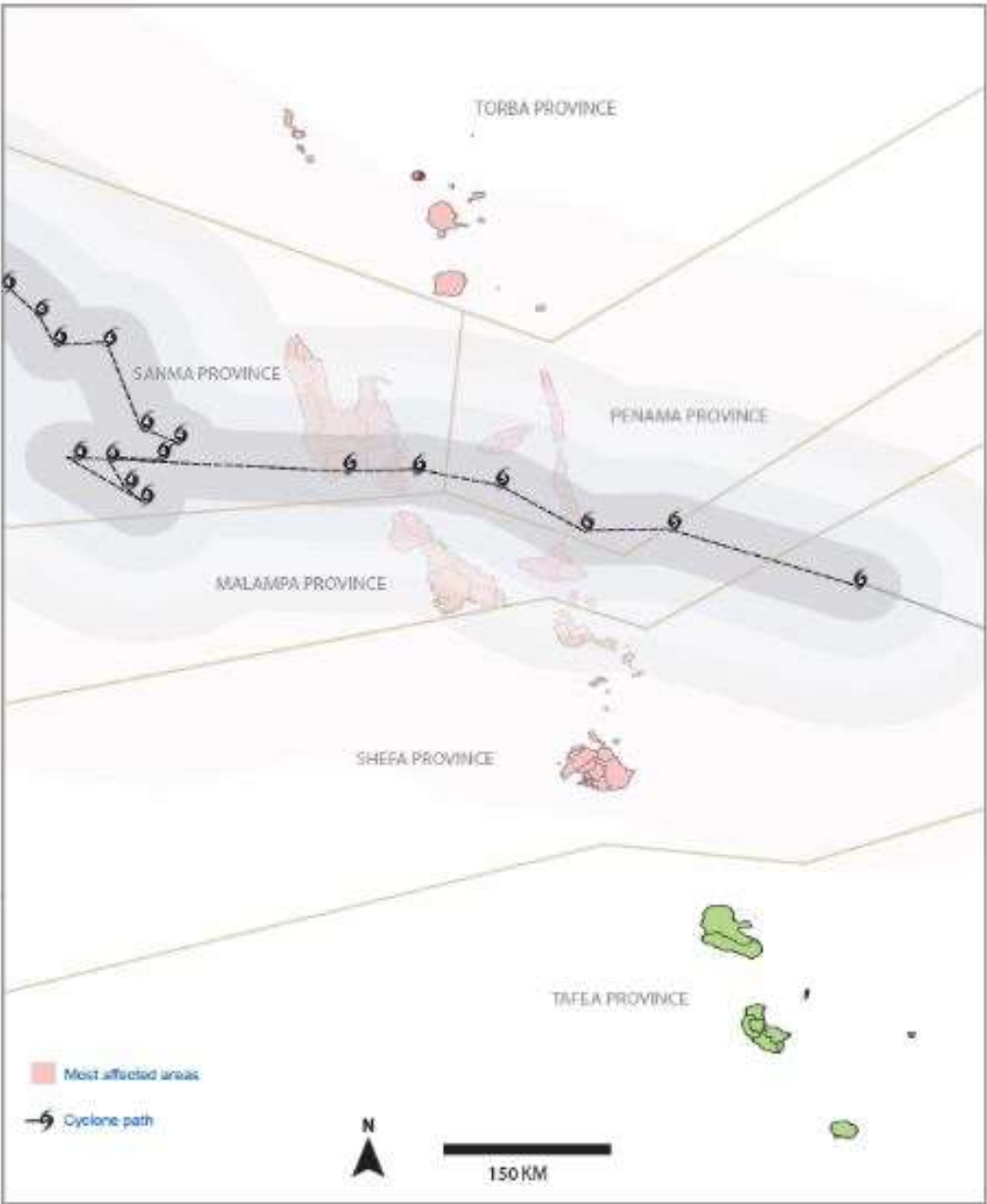
Everyone has a vital and valued role to play. Together we can and will recover, rebuild and emerge even stronger. Working together we can ensure our great nation of Vanuatu will again stand up, realising the benefits of our connection with land and offering new opportunities.

The journey has already begun.

## Appendix 1: Disaster Timeline



# Appendix 2: TC Harold Path



Source: Government of Vanuatu Ministry of Health

## Appendix 3: Preliminary Disaster Effects and Recovery Needs

Estimation of TC Harold and COVID-19 disaster effects <sup>/1</sup> (VUV)				
Sector	Damages	COVID-19 Losses	TC Harold Losses	Total effects
<b>Social Sectors</b>				
Housing	10,000,797,679	N/A	342,215,226	10,343,012,906
Education	6,258,660,704	824,395,660	28,655,821	7,111,712,185
Health and Nutrition	1,869,925,682	72,697,596	255,877,172	2,198,500,450
Culture	435,966,750	N/A	N/A	435,966,750
<b>Productive Sectors</b>				
Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries	1,158,371,149	265,653,320	18,130,783,993	19,554,808,462
Trade, Tourism, Cooperatives, Industry and Ni-Van Businesses <sup>/2</sup>	1,685,687,060	7,578,886,057	576,251,538	9,840,824,655
<b>Infrastructure Sectors</b>				
Public Buildings	395,641,241	3,000,000	10,200,000	408,841,241
Transport	2,826,840,500	315,686,191	81,200,000	3,223,726,691
Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene <sup>/3</sup>	1,984,329,962	29,290,386	319,164,119	2,332,784,467
Energy	168,094,432	N/A	10,000,000	178,094,432
Communication	597,150,000	35,237,617	821,354,000	1,453,741,617
<b>Cross-Cutting Sectors</b>				
Disaster Risk Management	32,266,219	10,086,672	2,978,150,200	3,020,503,091
<b>TOTAL<sup>/4</sup></b>	<b>27,413,731,378</b>	<b>9,134,933,499</b>	<b>23,553,852,069</b>	<b>60,102,516,947</b>

<sup>/1</sup> Sectoral assessments are still subject to sectoral validation. The values presented are preliminary.

<sup>/2</sup> Economic losses for COVID-19 are estimated for the period March-June 2020.

<sup>/3</sup> Includes Damages and losses in education and health facilities.

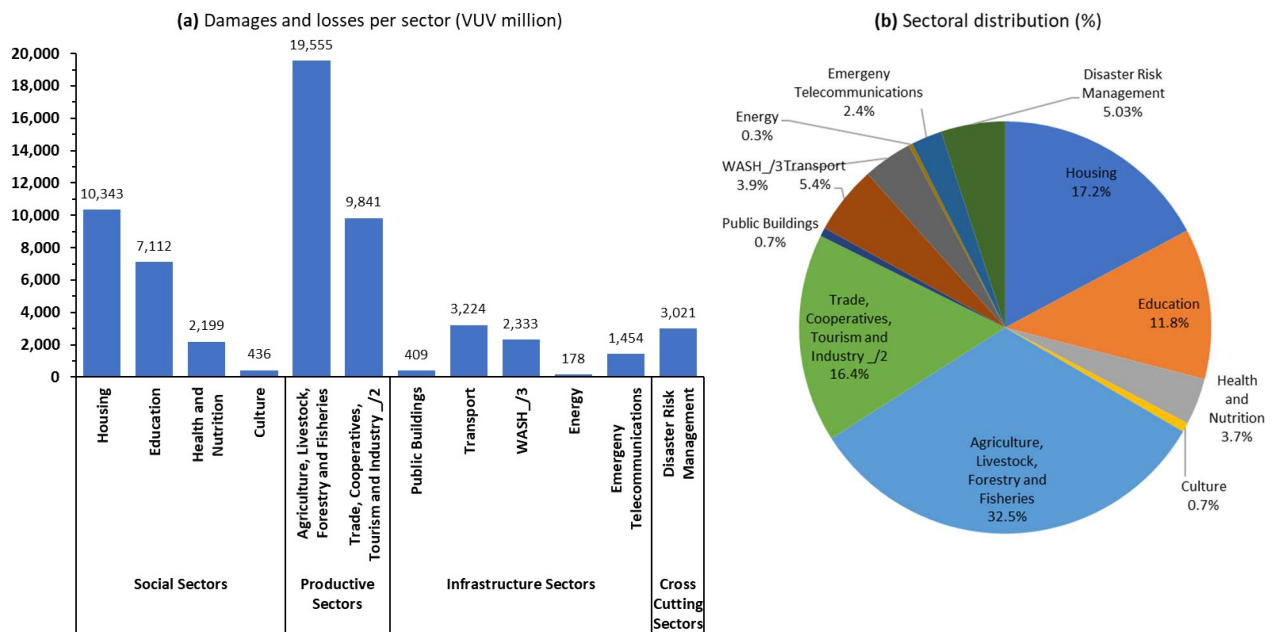
<sup>/4</sup> Total figures on damages and losses not include Environment and Justice and Community Services sectors.

Sectoral Recovery Needs <sup>/1</sup> (VUV)				
Recovery Objective	Sector	Short-term	Mid-term	Sub-total Sector
<b>Social Sectors</b>				
3	Housing	1,765,973,216	909,440,080	2,675,413,296
1	Education	3,023,648,210	8,758,990,400	11,782,638,610
1	Health and Nutrition		2,934,121,640	2,934,121,640
2	Culture	346,964,500	160,032,250	506,996,750
<b>Productive Sectors</b>				
2	Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries	2,951,666,667	2,158,333,333	5,110,000,000
2	Trade, Tourism, Cooperatives, Industry and Ni-Van Businesses	565,000,000	939,950,000	1,504,950,000
<b>Infrastructure Sectors</b>				
3	Public Buildings	457,910,712	23,190,087	481,100,799
3	Transport	1,038,373,497	2,497,200,000	3,535,573,497
3	Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene <sup>/2</sup>	1,534,087,335	309,260,359	1,843,347,694
3	Energy	10,000,000	800,000,000	810,000,000
3	Communication	1,523,404,000	13,000,000	1,536,404,000
<b>Cross-Cutting Sectors</b>				
3	Environment		1,000,408,261	1,000,408,261
2	Justice and Community Services	947,086,020	1,330,238,000	2,277,324,020
1	Disaster Risk Management	272,177,552	157,151,545	429,329,097
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14,436,291,708</b>	<b>21,991,315,955</b>	<b>36,427,607,663</b>

<sup>/1</sup> Recovery interventions are still subject to sectoral validation. The values presented are preliminary.

<sup>/2</sup> Includes recovery needs for WASH in education and health facilities .

## TC Harold and COVID-19 disaster effects<sup>1</sup>

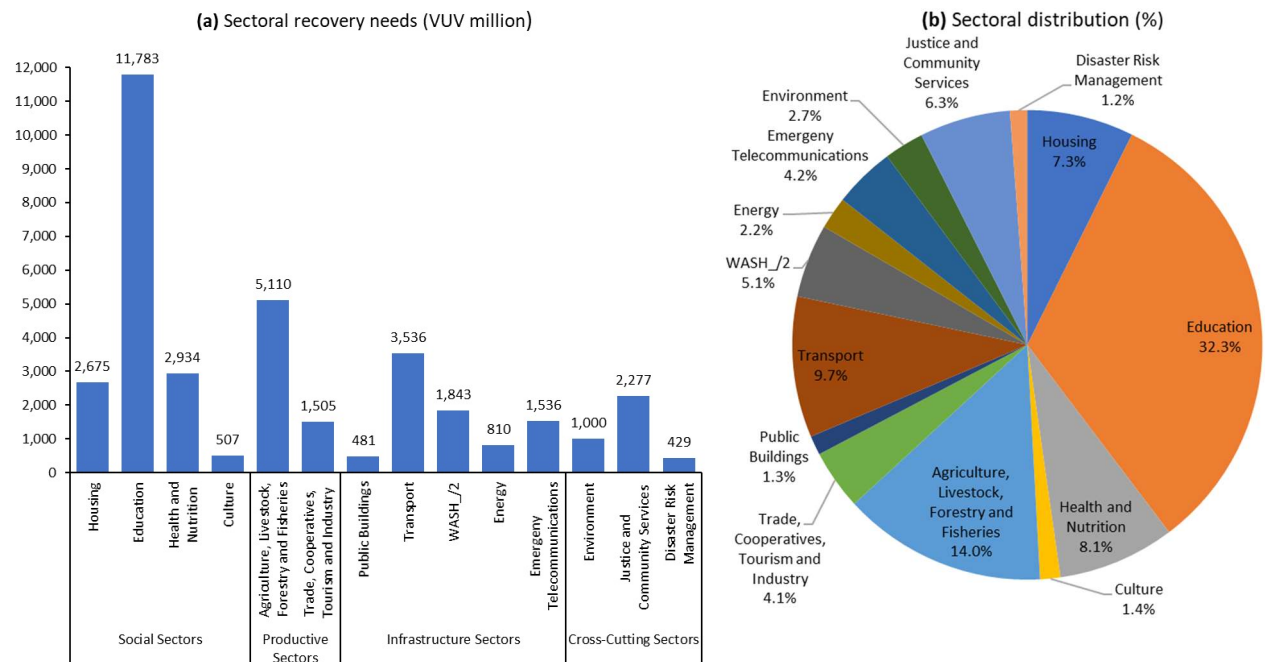


<sup>1</sup> Sectoral assessments are still subject to sectoral validation. The values presented are preliminary. Environment Sector and Justice and Community Services sectors are not included.

<sup>2</sup> Economic losses for COVID-19 are estimated for the period March - June 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Includes Damages and losses in education and health facilities.

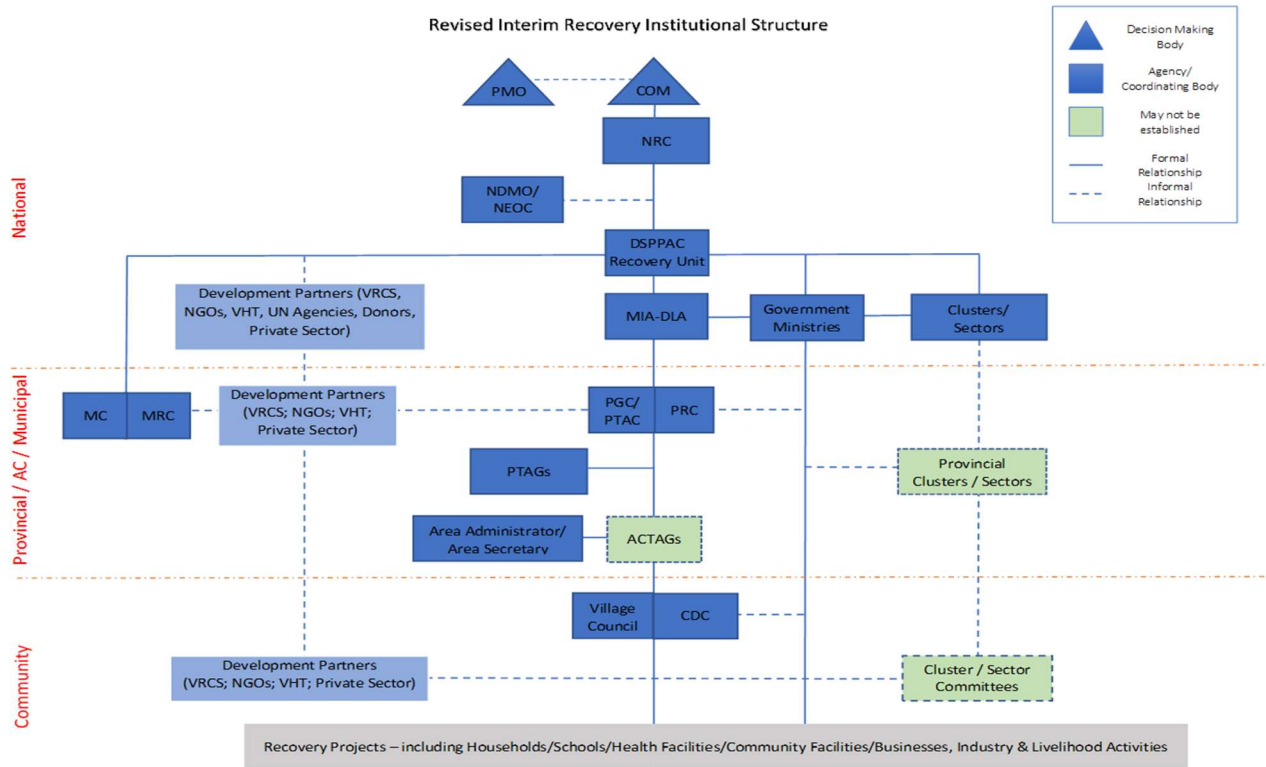
## Recovery Needs<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Recovery interventions are still subject to sectoral validation. The values presented are preliminary.

<sup>2</sup> Includes recovery needs for WASH in education and health facilities.

# Appendix 4: Interim Recovery Structure



Endorsed by NRC, October 2019.