



UNICEF Pacific in Vanuatu

Partner Update
January – February 2017



Children, parents, teachers, health workers and community leaders at Port Narvin, Erromango, talked with UNICEF's Regional Director and Representative about how happy they are for support UNICEF provided to their school and community to ensure they are back in schools, immunised and protected after a major disaster like Cyclone Pam. UNICEF Pacific/2017/Olul

HIGHLIGHTS

UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office Director, Ms. Karin Hulshof, met with children, communities, health workers, teachers, and government counterparts during her mission to Vanuatu from 21 – 25 January. She gained insight into highlights and challenges of providing supplies and services to children in a Pacific Island Country.

226,241 people have been registered since TC Pam, including **68,760 children** and **157,481 adults**. A total of 45,864 children were issued with replacement birth certificates throughout the six provinces while 22,896 children were newly registered.

Over **90 participants** trained on the child protection community facilitation package during the pilot phase with lessons to be integrated into the review of the package at the end of March.

15 youths trained in facilitation of the child protection community facilitation package conducted a **child protection baseline** in pilot site.

UNICEF seconded a specialist to the Department of Water (DoW) to develop a **National Water Policy**.

Overview

In 2017 UNICEF support to both the Vanuatu National Recovery TC Pam plan and longer term development activities within line Ministries is largely embedded in respective Ministries' Business Plans. This purposes to reinforce Government systems by reflecting support **'on plan and on budget'**. Advantages include greater ownership, mutual accountability, transparency and stakeholder commitments in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Health, Nutrition, Education and Child Protection.

On 18 January the Vanuatu Government launched *'Vanuatu 2030'*, the country's new National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) for which UNICEF and other UN agencies provided input. The NSDP defines steps to deliver on the national vision for achievement of 'a Stable, Sustainable and Prosperous Vanuatu' in keeping with the new SDGs. It builds on progress made and lessons learned under the previous plan, *'Priorities and Action Agenda'* (PAA) 2006-2015 that was aligned with the MDGs.

The NSDP is broadly centered on three pillars: Society; Environment; and the Economy. Unlike previous plans, the Vanuatu 2030 has culture and *kastom* (custom) at the heart of the document. This theme was prominent during the initial stages of writing the plan and reaffirmed during extensive public consultations. In launching the plan, the Prime Minister challenged development partners to engage with *'Vanuatu 2030'* as a tool to encourage better alignment of government and donor resources, and to work together in true partnership to deliver on the aspirations of the people of Vanuatu. The Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination is working to finalise a monitoring and evaluation framework of the plan. Ministerial Corporate and Business Plans will serve as the accompanying budgetary and implementation framework.

From 21 to 25 January, UNICEF East Asia Pacific Regional Director, Ms. Karin Hulshof, visited Vanuatu accompanied by UNICEF Pacific Representative, Mr. Sheldon Yett. The mission served to provide the Regional Director with a deeper awareness of opportunities and challenges related to UNICEF Pacific's multi country programme approach. The field level experience in Vanuatu was an opportunity to engage with children, caregivers, health workers, teachers, community leaders and the government on particular logistical challenges of bringing services and supplies to children. During the mission, the Regional Director travelled to Erromango, an island isolated challenging to reach and move around, despite being located just south of the capital, Port Vila. Communities visited by the Regional Director expressed appreciation for the support from UNICEF, particularly after Cyclone Pam. The support ensured children returned to schools, children continue to be fully immunised and protected, and that communities have sustainable access to clean drinking water.

In mid-February UNICEF supported the mission of a three person team from the UNICEF New Zealand National Committee to Vanuatu. The mission visited sites where UNICEF supports WASH recovery activities. The National Committee staff listened to stories of children, caregivers, health workers and teachers including how these interventions are affecting their lives.

In keeping with the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) practiced by multiple UN agencies, UNICEF commissioned independent audits in late 2016 of all partners to whom cumulative cash transfers had exceeded US\$500,000 during the current programme cycle (2013-2017). Following receipt of the final audit reports, UNICEF is working closely with respective parties in-country to answer queries and action the recommendations.

During February, UNICEF supported attendance by Civil Aviation Authority of Vanuatu and Ministry of Health of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Industry Conference at which details of the proposed UAV Vaccine Transport Trial were shared with stakeholders.

UNICEF hosted the quarterly meeting of communications officers, a forum for information sharing and networking, on 23 February.

United Nations Pacific Strategy (2018-2022)

The Pacific UN Country Team and Deputy Representatives' Monitoring & Evaluation Group have been diligently drafting the UN Pacific Strategy Results Framework. This framework is expected to be finalised in March 2017. UN participation in the Pacific Community-convened Sustainable Development Goals' Pacific Headline Indicators meeting in late February 2017, ensures alignment of the UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) M&E framework to that of the Regional SDG framework. Validation of the UNPS with Government is currently scheduled for May. The UN Joint Presence in Vanuatu is working to connect the validation of the UNPS with an SDG localisation workshop planned for the same month.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



Under the NZ-MFAT Recovery Funds, the partnership with CARE was extended to the end of April to allow incorporation of further work in Tafea province. World Vision continues work on the UNICEF funded DoW contract water project in the southern part of Tanna, utilizing savings to extend the reach of their work. Oxfam continues with WASH implementation in the Shefa Province islands of Epi and Emao.

UNICEF continues to support the DoW with sector strengthening. With NZ-MFAT funding, a 'no cost extension' was agreed on to enable completion of work by ADRA on the water project in Lamap, Malekula. Supplies ordered by World Vision for the water project on east Malo, Sanma Province contracted by DoW, have arrived in country. DoW is in discussion with relevant departments to address the issue of government tax and duty exemptions for the materials. Through the Government Tender Board, Vanuatu Agricultural Suppliers won the bid to supply materials to DoW for implementation of the water project in Walarano, Malekula. UNICEF and DoW finalised the design for the water project on West Ambae. This will now be complemented by SPC supported drilling by the DoW team. Extension to the Luganville water supply system in Santo to enable Banban community to have access to water was completed and launched by the Minister of Lands & Natural Resources (MoLNR).

In addition to the ongoing work on contracts, a number of other activities are on-going: a design team is in country currently to support development of the design document for the MFAT funded WASH in Schools (WinS) project in Penama Province; further Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Trainings commenced in communities on Tanna led by CARE; and discussion took place with UNDP to fund the national water inventory from the ongoing Vanuatu Climate Adaption Programme (VCAP).

Extensive discussion was had with WASH stakeholders around the value of developing contingency agreements for mutual cooperation and use during crises. It is hoped that these will be finalized with partners in the coming months and have a two year validity.

The UNICEF WASH team in Vanuatu is largely based in the DoW where three staff provide technical assistance on: recovery projects; sector strengthening and development of national Water Policy. Additional capacity will be engaged to support the WinS in Penama.

Health and Nutrition



UNICEF continues to provide technical support in the critical area of nutrition to the MoH including: review of the *Pikinini Helt Buk* (Child Health Book); and finalization of guidelines for Maternal and Infant and Young Child Feeding and Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition.

UNICEF's support to the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) of the MoH continues. During the period technical assistance was provided for training of health workers in Shefa on introduction of the Human Papillomavirus Vaccine and support for finalization of the 2016 programme annual report. The planned UAV transportation trials will focus on enhancing vaccination coverage and reducing costs.

A UNICEF Communications Consultant worked for a month from 26 January to support MoH with development of the Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) Communications Strategy. In collaboration with MoH Reproductive Health and Health Promotion teams a working group co-chaired by Reproductive Health and Health Promotion Units was established comprising MoH technical staff, non-governmental organization partners, and provincial level staff. The group worked to design the key components of the strategy that focuses on the 1,000 days of opportunity for women and children and includes both promotion of uptake of positive care practices for newborns and young children along with demand creation for services required during this critical period. On 22 February the draft strategy was presented for discussion and validation by high level MoH representatives. The working group set up as a result of the validation meeting will work to finalise the draft for endorsement by government and support roll out.

Education



Twenty replacement tents provided by UNICEF to the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) were allocated to Shefa Province to ensure tents still being used by children as learning spaces are replaced as well as for prepositioning purposes. Of these, 10 have been allocated to the MoET's Reconstruction Project to be temporarily used as classrooms while schools are undergoing reconstruction. Principal Education Office on Tafea is working with a company for proper disposal of deteriorated tents on Tanna that were replaced by the 98 distributed in partnership with World Vision.

In February through UNICEF support, Save the Children worked with the ministry to finalise the draft MoET Contingency Plan. This would ensure MoET is better prepared for future emergencies.

UNICEF is supporting the development of a new Education Strategy with other stakeholders. To support this exercise, UNICEF has been asked by the Minister of Education and Training to serve as Managing Agent for Global Partnership for Education.

Complementing Early Childhood Care and Education activities in Penama province supported by Dubai Cares, UNICEF has secured funding from New Zealand MFAT for rollout of a matching WASH in Schools (WinS) programme. An Education Officer will be recruited for placement within the Provincial Education Office (PEO) to provide on-ground support to both activities. UNICEF has supported procurement of a boat for the PEO to facilitate mobility and monitoring by government staff. Delivery is expected in the second quarter of 2017.

Child Protection



The revised 2016-2017 Vanuatu Child Protection Work Plan has been signed by Vanuatu Government and UNICEF and circulated to all child protection partners. In keeping with the intention to ensure UNICEF support is 'on plan and budget', UNICEF and Ministries of Justice & Community Services (MoJCS), Internal Affairs (MoIA), and Youth, Sports Development & Training (MoYSDT) are in discussion regarding reflection of these commitments within respective 2017 Business Plans.

Inter-sectoral coordination between civil registry, health, education and youth and sport development has significantly increased the rate of birth registration in Vanuatu through UNICEF supported mobile registration campaigns after Cyclone Pam. To date, a total of 226,241 people have been registered, including 68,760 children and 157,481 adults. Of these, 45,864 children were issued with replacement birth certificates throughout the six provinces while 22,896 children were newly registered. 110,831 adults were issued with replacement birth certificates and 46,650 were registered for the first time. To ensure a continued and sustainable system is in place to continue registration of children and their families, the national Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) committee is currently carrying out provincial consultations on the first draft of the national CRVS policy.

MoJCS, MoYSDT and trained facilitators of the UNICEF-supported Community Facilitation Package ("Children are our Future") aimed at preventing child abuse, exploitation and neglect undertook four workshops on Erromango, Santo and Pentecost with more than 90 participants. A meeting will take place at the end of March to review the package.

Since the pilot community based child protection system begun in July 2016 on Pentecost, MoJCS and MoYSDT trained 15 young people who conducted a child protection baseline study in three communities. The purpose of the baseline was to get a better understanding of the lives and experiences of children, parents and caregivers on child protection in pilot communities.

An informal dialogue took place on 8 February with UNICEF staff and two members of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Committee on the submission of the government and confidential reports. This is in preparation for the dialogue between the Vanuatu government and the CRC committee later this year.

Operations

The UNICEF Vanuatu Field Office received contingency supplies valued at USD 22,828 for WASH, Health and Communications materials during the period.

On behalf of the UN Joint Presence Office, UNICEF is supporting MoFA to facilitate a review of options through which the government can honour UN hosting commitments. A consultant is under recruitment to develop and present a Government Paper for review and approval by the Council of Ministers.

UNICEF continues to work with government fiscal systems, an approach accompanied by a risk management approach of both field monitoring of activities, regular interval spot checks and financial audits by a third party. During the period, UNICEF continued to work with the four government Ministries (MoLNR, MoH, MoET and

MoIA) who participated in the audit exercise in 2016 to systematically address and strengthen systems based on audit recommendations.

Funding

UNICEF Pacific and its field office in Vanuatu appreciate 2015-2016 funding from Andorra, Australia, Estonia, France, Japan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Russia, the United Kingdom, the Oceania Football Confederation and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. As per donor intent and conditions, some funds were used for cyclone relief and other funds are still being used for recovery and for longer term development work. The contributions of thousands of people to UNICEF National Committees for Australia, France, Hong Kong, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the USA were crucial to cyclone Pam relief. Donors who have permitted flexible re-orientation of funding to address the current El Nino challenges are highly appreciated. The Japanese Committee for Vaccines is a longstanding and critical partner. UNICEF Pacific is also grateful to donors who contribute every year at the global level to our core resources and to thematic areas within the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan.

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