

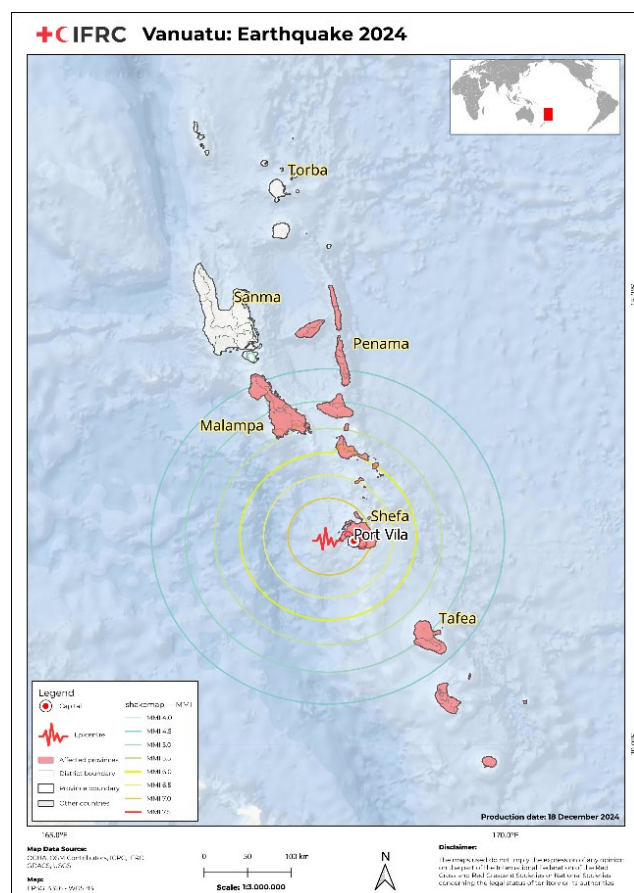
Emergency appeal №: MDRVU012 First launched on: 18/12/2024	Glide №: EQ-2024-000227-VUT
Final report issued on: 31/03/2026	Timeframe covered by final report: From 18/12/2024 to 31/12/2025
Number of people targeted: 50,000	Number of people assisted: 47,990
Funding Requirement (CHF): CHF 5.0 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal CHF 5.2 million Federation-wide	DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 750,000



VRCS volunteers support a community livelihood training session, guiding participants through group activities and discussion (Photo: VRCS)

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis



On 17 December 2024, a 7.3-magnitude earthquake struck approximately 30 kilometres west of Port Vila at a depth of 57 kilometres, causing widespread destruction across Efate and surrounding islands. The earthquake triggered landslides, building collapses, and damage to critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, water supply systems, telecommunications, and port facilities. Multiple aftershocks followed, including at least 15 above magnitude 5.0.

According to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), around **80,000 people**, about one quarter of Vanuatu's population were affected, with 36,000 in Port Vila directly impacted. The disaster resulted in 14 fatalities, at least 265 injuries, and over 2,400 people displaced¹. Essential services were disrupted, with damage to health facilities, schools, and water systems affecting access to healthcare, education, and safe water. Electricity and telecommunications were also temporarily interrupted.

Access and logistics were significantly constrained due to damage to roads, bridges, and port infrastructure, while landslides and transport restrictions delayed relief efforts. The closure of Port Vila's central business district and main market led to business disruptions, job losses, and reduced household income. Pre-existing vulnerabilities such as limited access to

basic services, poverty, and weak construction practices exacerbated the overall impact, particularly for vulnerable groups.

The Government of Vanuatu declared a State of Emergency, activated the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), and requested humanitarian assistance. In line with national protocols, sector coordination mechanisms were activated. The Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS), supported by the IFRC and Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners, rapidly mobilized volunteers to conduct needs assessments and deliver life-saving assistance in shelter, health, WASH, and psychosocial support. To support the scale-up of operations, the IFRC launched a CHF 5 million Emergency Appeal, complemented by bilateral contributions from Partner National Societies.

Following the end of the State of Emergency on 24 December 2024, national coordination transitioned from emergency response to recovery. The Government established a Recovery Operations Centre (ROC) under the leadership of the Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) and launched the Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan, with an estimated budget of approximately 26 billion Vatu (CHF 190 million)². This framework set the direction for multi-year recovery, reconstruction, and resilience-building efforts.

By the end of the operation in December 2025, the humanitarian situation had largely stabilized. Most displaced families have returned to their communities and basic services have resumed. Government-led recovery efforts

¹ UNICEF. [Vanuatu Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2 \(Earthquake\), 18 December 2024](#)

² [Government of Vanuatu. Port Vila Efate Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan 2024](#)

through the ROC, complemented by shelter and conditional cash assistance, enabled households to continue repairing homes and restoring livelihoods. While rebuilding and psychosocial recovery are still ongoing, public services, including schools and health facilities, have largely resumed operations, and community resilience and disaster risk reduction activities are well under way. Overall, the population has moved close to a new level of normalcy, with everyday life largely restored but longer-term recovery and resilience-building still ongoing.

Summary of response

Overview of the Host National Society and Response

Throughout the response, the VRCS remained a central actor in the national response and recovery, operating as the Government of Vanuatu's recognized humanitarian auxiliary under the coordination of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). Established under the Vanuatu Red Cross Act of 1982, VRCS maintained a strong operational footprint across affected provinces through its six branches, four sub-branches, and a network of over 360 trained volunteers. Building on long-standing investments in disaster preparedness, first aid, health, WASH, shelter, protection, and disaster risk reduction, VRCS was able to mobilize rapidly following the earthquake. Recently replenished pre-positioned stocks—supplemented by significant in-kind support from partners—enabled immediate emergency relief distributions alongside household- and community-level assessments. As co-lead of the National Shelter Cluster, VRCS supported NDMO in shaping the shelter response strategy and coordinating partner interventions.

By the end of the operation in December 2025, the VRCS had assisted a total of **47,990 people** through the IFRC Emergency Appeal, providing both immediate lifesaving and recovery assistance to help affected communities restore their lives and strengthen resilience. Key achievements included 1,246 households receiving Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA), over 7,700 people supported with shelter and household items, more than 6,700 people reached with clean and treated water, 2,662 children screened for malnutrition, and 2,107 people reached through targeted Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) activities. Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) mechanisms, including hotlines, helpdesks, and post-distribution monitoring, were embedded throughout implementation to ensure transparency, inclusion, and responsiveness. More details are available in Section C of this report.

Overview of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Country

Throughout the response and recovery, VRCS coordinated closely with the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) and the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), receiving sustained technical, operational, and coordination support. While there is no permanent Participating National Societies (PNSs) presence in Vanuatu, several PNSs provided significant bilateral and multilateral support throughout the operation. This included personnel deployments such as New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) support for IT and telecommunications, and French Red Cross (PIROPS) support for WASH, including water treatment and equipment. Additionally, the Australian Red Cross, American Red Cross, Austrian Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, Fiji Red Cross Society, Samoa Red Cross, and Tonga Red Cross supported the operation through surge deployments, technical assistance, and resource mobilization in close coordination with IFRC. The NZRC launched a public appeal to support the response, while other partners remained on standby to provide surge personnel, relief items, and specialized expertise as required. IFRC ensured consolidated Federation-wide reporting and coordinated communication and visibility efforts to highlight humanitarian needs and the collective Movement response. Written and audio-visual materials were produced in line with do-no-harm principles and disseminated through IFRC regional and global platforms, reinforcing transparency, accountability, and donor confidence.

Overview of Non-Red Cross Red Crescent Actors in Country

The Government of Vanuatu, through NDMO, led the overall response, activating the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and sector coordination mechanisms under a State of Emergency declared immediately after the

earthquake. Eight technical clusters were activated, with VRCS co-leading the Shelter Cluster and supporting others, including Health, WASH, Protection, and Education. Following the end of the State of Emergency in late December 2024, national coordination transitioned to recovery under the ROC, overseen by the Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC). VRCS continued to represent the Red Cross Movement within this structure, contributing to sectoral sub-committees and national recovery planning. Coordination with UN agencies, NGOs, and civil society partners—including UNICEF, IOM, WHO, UNDP, and the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD)—enabled inclusive, complementary, and community-centred interventions. At the regional level, IFRC CCD maintained regular engagement with the Pacific Humanitarian Taskforce, strengthening information-sharing and regional alignment.

Operational risk assessment

Throughout the implementation period, the Earthquake 2024 operation was delivered in a complex and evolving risk environment, transitioning from emergency response to early recovery and institutional consolidation. While no major security incidents were recorded, several operational, logistical, financial, and institutional risks affected the pace and sequencing of activities:

Access and logistical constraints: In the early months following the earthquake, damaged road infrastructure, debris, and intermittent landslides—particularly on Efate and in surrounding areas—restricted physical access to affected communities. Disruptions to telecommunications and power supply further complicated coordination, beneficiary communication, and data transmission. These constraints slowed assessments, delayed distributions, and increased transport costs, especially during periods of heavy rainfall and the cyclone season. VRCS prioritized phased and area-based planning, pre-positioned relief items where possible, and coordinated closely with local authorities to secure access routes. Logistics planning was adjusted to align distributions with periods of improved accessibility, while coordination with community leaders helped facilitate safe access to remote locations. Communication and connectivity challenges in the early response phase were partially mitigated through the deployment of a NZRC IT/telecommunications delegate, who supported the establishment of satellite communications, identified as a key enabling factor in the post-operation Lessons Learned Workshop.

Financial and delivery risks: Funding shortfalls and the timing of incoming contributions posed a significant risk to the scale and continuity of activities. In addition, coordination and reconciliation processes with Financial Service Providers (FSPs) affected the timeliness of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), contributing to delays in cash transfers and post-distribution monitoring. VRCS and IFRC revised the operational strategy to prioritize life-saving and high-impact interventions, introduced tighter targeting criteria, and phased cash distributions to align with available funding. Verification processes with FSPs were strengthened, and monitoring tools were refined to ensure accountability and reduce delivery risks as cash-based programming expanded.

Programmatic and coordination risks: As the operation transitioned into recovery, delays in construction-related activities, high market prices for materials, and technical capacity gaps slowed shelter recovery and infrastructure-related interventions. Coordination across multiple stakeholders required sustained efforts to avoid duplication and ensure alignment with national recovery plans. VRCS strengthened its role within national and sector coordination mechanisms, particularly in Shelter and WASH, supported by the deployment of an IFRC shelter delegate through to July 2025, which helped address technical capacity gaps through guidance on construction standards, Build Back Better approaches, and Cash-for-Shelter implementation. The operation also adopted more flexible, market-based approaches, such as Cash-for-Shelter pilots.

Despite persistent operational and institutional risks, proactive risk management and adaptive planning enabled the operation to progress steadily toward recovery and resilience-building. Continuous monitoring, strong coordination with government and partners, and the integration of learning into operational decision-making helped limit the impact of risks on humanitarian outcomes and supported the smooth closure of the Emergency Appeal.

Human Resources Risk: Human resource and volunteer fatigue remained a significant risk throughout the operation. VRCS teams had responded to successive disasters prior to this earthquake, including Tropical Cyclone Lola, meaning that cumulative demands on staff and volunteers were high from the outset. An influenza outbreak in Port Vila during the recovery phase further reduced staff availability and slowed operational turnaround during some periods. VRCS mitigated these risks through Psychosocial First Aid sessions for staff and volunteers, phased deployment where possible, and expanded volunteer insurance coverage from 150 to 360 volunteers.

Funding Coverage: Funding coverage remained a constraint throughout the operation. Although Emergency Appeal coverage improved from 28 per cent in January 2025 to 43 per cent by the end of the operation, available resources were insufficient to fully implement the original operational strategy. As a result, several planned activities were deferred or placed on hold, including education support, environmental sustainability activities, and complementary cash modalities such as Cash for Health, Cash for Livelihoods, and Cash for Education.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

The operation aimed to address the immediate, early recovery and recovery needs of 50,000 people living on Efate and five nearby islands impacted by the earthquake. By the end of the operation, a total of 47,990 people were reached with available resources.

The Vanuatu Earthquake 2024 response was implemented in a highly dynamic funding and operational environment, requiring continuous prioritization and adaptation to ensure that life-saving and early recovery needs were addressed in an accountable and people-centred manner. By early February 2025, the second month of the operation, Emergency Appeal coverage had only reached approximately 28 per cent, including bilateral contributions. While the full scope of activities outlined in the Operational Strategy remained relevant, the limited level of available funding necessitated early strategic discussions within the VRCS and with IFRC on prioritizing interventions should funding not increase significantly. As the operation progressed, Appeal coverage gradually improved, reaching approximately 43 per cent. While this represented a positive trend, available resources remained insufficient to fully implement the Operational Strategy as originally designed. In response, VRCS implemented a structured prioritization approach, concentrating resources on life-saving assistance and critical early recovery interventions, while postponing or scaling back activities that could not be responsibly delivered within the available funding envelope.

Several planned components were therefore deferred or placed on hold, including education support (such as tuition subsidies and school WASH rehabilitation), environmental sustainability activities, and cash-based support for health, education, and livelihoods. Selected Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) trainings were also postponed. These decisions were taken transparently and in coordination with IFRC, ensuring that remaining activities could be delivered with quality, accountability, and adequate technical oversight.

The CVA strategy was adapted by tightening beneficiary selection criteria and strengthening verification processes. As a result, 1,246 households (benefiting 6,230 people) received MPCA, representing 83 per cent of the original target of 1,500 households. Compared with the original target of 1,500 households. While the caseload was reduced, the adapted approach ensured that the most vulnerable households received timely and appropriate support, while maintaining strong fiduciary control and community trust.

Despite funding limitations, VRCS continued to deliver a targeted, multi-sector response, prioritizing Shelter, WASH, PGI, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). Coordination mechanisms, community engagement, and accountability systems remained fully operational throughout the reporting period, allowing the strategy to remain flexible and responsive to evolving needs and enabling rapid scale-up based on available funding.

In the final months of the operation, the operational strategy deliberately shifted from early recovery toward structured resilience-building. During this phase, the strategy focused on consolidating sectoral achievements, addressing operational gaps, and strengthening systems required for long-term sustainability and integration into

Unified Planning 2026. A key strategic evolution during this period was the introduction of a pilot Cash-for-Shelter modality, expanding beyond the “shopping list” approach used during the previous Tropical Cyclone (TC) Lola operation ([MDRVU011](#)). Although the pilot caseload remained intentionally limited, it enabled households to make more flexible, needs-based recovery decisions and generated valuable learning for future scale-up of market-based shelter assistance. Market-based approaches were also strengthened across WASH, Health, and DRR activities.

The strategy placed increased emphasis on quality assurance and accountability, including enhanced PDM, strengthened reconciliation with FSPs, and improved community communication around targeting criteria and entitlements. Multiple FSP framework agreements were introduced, reducing dependency risks and improving the flexibility and reliability of cash delivery systems.

Operational readiness and institutional strengthening became central strategic pillars. Targeted logistics, procurement, and warehouse management trainings delivered in Penama, Pentecost, Santo, and at headquarters significantly strengthened supply-chain reliability and branch-level preparedness. Concurrent improvements to Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) and Information Management systems, including consolidation of the Indicator Tracking Table (ITT) and operational dashboards, enhanced evidence-based decision-making and reporting quality.

Institutional learning and governance strengthening were formally embedded into the operational strategy. The Earthquake Lessons Learned Workshop (October 2025) validated sectoral lessons and refined VRCS’s strategic roadmap for CVA, Shelter, WASH, PGI/CEA, Logistics, and Human Resources. These lessons are being integrated into updated SOPs, staff and volunteer welfare measures, governance processes, and preparedness planning, including engagement at the Pacific Leadership Meeting and branch-level reviews.

Community resilience remained a consistent strategic priority. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and school-based preparedness activities were intensified across Shefa, Sanma, and Malampa, particularly during International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) month, supporting communities to prepare for the upcoming cyclone season and reducing the risk of secondary impacts on recovery efforts.

One significant strategic adjustment concerned the VRCS office building rehabilitation and construction project. Due to delayed finalization of designs and cost estimates, a slow tender process, and confirmation of new pledges only in June 2025, the project could not be completed within the Emergency Appeal timeframe. Structural assessments confirmed that the existing earthquake-damaged building would only be safe for up to five years even after renovation, and that demolition and construction of a new building is strongly recommended. While deferred, this remains a high strategic priority and has been incorporated into longer-term planning.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

Note: Some reported figures have been revised and updated since the previous report, following data reconciliation and further analysis of people reached.

	Shelter, Housing and Settlements	Total People reached	7,764
		Female > 18: 1,782	Female < 18: 2,178
		Male > 18: 1,712	Male < 18: 2,092
Objective:	<i>Communities in disaster- and crisis-affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, well-being and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions.</i>		

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	Number of people reached with shelter support. ³	7,764	20,000
	Number of people who attended contextualized training/ awareness-raising sessions on safe shelter	914	525

Achievement

By the end of the operation, the VRCS had assisted 7,764 people (male: 3,804; female: 3,960) with shelter support, including emergency shelter, essential household item and cash for shelter.

Table 1: Summary of key Shelter activities and reach

#	Activity	Location	No. of HH Reached	No. of People Reached
1	Distribution of NFI (Emergency & Recovery shelter kits, tarpaulins, tools, kitchen sets)	<i>Efate (multiple wards/area councils)</i>	1,191	5,955
2	Safe shelter awareness sessions	<i>Efate</i>	-	372
3	Shelter training for beneficiaries, staff & volunteers	<i>Efate</i>	-	542
4	Cash for Shelter — CVA (all damage levels: minor, moderate, severe, total)	<i>Efate</i>	179	895

Following the 17 December 2024 earthquake, shelter emerged as one of the most urgent needs, with widespread housing damage across Efate and surrounding areas. The VRCS, working closely with the NDMO, IFRC, and Shelter Cluster partners, implemented a phased shelter response that evolved from emergency assistance to early recovery and resilient reconstruction.

During the emergency phase, VRCS conducted household-level shelter assessments on behalf of NDMO and through its own assessment tools, reaching over 1,800 households across affected area councils. Based on assessed needs, VRCS distributed emergency shelter and essential household items, including tarpaulins, shelter toolkits, kitchen kits, and ropes, supporting 1,191 households, benefiting 5,955 people, to stabilize living conditions and reduce exposure risks. Alongside distributions, VRCS staff and volunteers provided on-the-spot guidance on safe tarpaulin use to improve the effectiveness of temporary shelters. Donations in kind received from community members were also channeled to evacuation centres to support displaced families.

As the operation transitioned into early recovery, VRCS progressively shifted its shelter approach from in-kind assistance toward conditional Cash-for-Shelter (Cfs), enabling households to prioritize repairs based on their specific needs, access local markets, and engage local builders. A total of 179 households were contracted for shelter recovery, each with tailored Bills of Quantities (BOQs) developed and technically verified. Of these, 77 households received their first cash tranche through Digicel's MyCash platform, with initial support provided by IOM and continued under the Emergency Appeal to ensure sustained shelter assistance. The remaining 102 households received their cash disbursements through additional FSPs activated during the later phase of the operation, primarily Vanuatu Post, following VRCS's expansion of FSP framework agreements in June 2025. This diversification of payment channels was

³ This indicator measures the number of people reached through shelter support, including emergency shelter assistance and the distribution of essential household items.

introduced to address connectivity limitations and beneficiary access challenges experienced with the Digicel platform, and enabled VRCS to complete disbursements to all contracted households. An amount of VUV 20,000 or around CHF 130 was issued to each household.



VRCS staff and volunteers conducting shelter house assessment in affected communities (Photo: VRCS)



Recipients receiving relief item (Photo: VRCS)

To strengthen safety and quality in reconstruction, VRCS integrated Build Back Better (BBB) principles throughout the shelter response. In total, 139 participants completed BBB awareness trainings, while 167 people/local carpenters received hands-on construction training focused on safer building techniques, including foundations, roofing, bracing, and block mixing. In parallel, 40 VRCS volunteers were trained on shelter assessments, strengthening community-level technical capacity and future preparedness.

Monitoring and community engagement were central to shelter recovery implementation. Two dedicated technical teams, supported by engineers and trained volunteers, conducted weekly household visits using KOBO-based monitoring tools and household tracking cards to assess construction progress, verify quality, and provide on-site technical advice. A multi-stage verification system was applied to ensure transparency in beneficiary selection, grievance handling, and payment readiness. Households requiring additional support—particularly those headed by elderly persons, pregnant women, or single women—were prioritized for follow-up due to labour and access constraints.

Throughout the operation, VRCS actively co-led the Shelter Cluster, ensuring alignment with the Port Vila Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan (2024) and harmonization of technical standards among partners. Close coordination with IOM, UNDP, Shelter Cluster engineers, and provincial authorities enabled VRCS to address complex cases, manage appeals, and resolve issues related to eligibility, duplication, and intra-household disputes observed earlier in the response.



Shelter Training: Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme in Community (Photo: VRCS)

Despite steady progress, shelter implementation faced several challenges, including shortages of skilled carpenters, rising construction material costs, and logistical constraints in some locations. VRCS adapted by rescheduling training sessions, expanding community outreach during field visits, strengthening communication with beneficiaries, and increasing technical accompaniment to maintain momentum and inclusion. Efforts were made to ensure gender-balanced participation across all shelter trainings and activities.

Household monitoring confirmed that most supported families had initiated or completed repairs, with cash assistance significantly contributing to improved habitability and reduced reliance on temporary shelters. About 95 per cent of the families completed their home repairs with this assistance.

Overall, the shelter response demonstrated the effectiveness of **flexible, market-based approaches combined with strong technical oversight**, reinforcing VRCS's role as a key national actor in recovery coordination. Lessons from the Cash-for-Shelter pilot, BBB integration, and monitoring systems have informed revised shelter standard operating procedures and will be carried forward into Unified Planning 2026.

Challenges

- **High construction costs and limited local materials** slowed reconstruction activities. The earthquake caused widespread damage to building materials and supply chains, increasing market prices and limiting availability of quality materials. This particularly affected vulnerable households that lacked the financial capacity to rebuild without additional support.
- **Technical capacity gaps** also affected the pace of shelter recovery. Many households required technical guidance to rebuild safely, especially in areas where pre-existing construction practices were not earthquake-resistant. Limited availability of skilled labour in affected areas further delayed reconstruction progress.
- **Infrastructure damage and logistical constraints** initially restricted access to affected communities. Landslides, damaged roads, and transport limitations complicated the delivery of shelter materials and slowed monitoring visits during the early recovery phase.
- **Financial service coordination** presented additional operational challenges for cash-based shelter assistance. Verification, reconciliation, and coordination with Financial Service Providers (FSPs) occasionally delayed payments and required additional monitoring and verification processes to ensure accountability.
- **Community expectations and targeting sensitivities** required careful management. As shelter needs remained widespread but resources were limited, some households expected assistance beyond the programme scope. VRCS strengthened communication and community engagement to clarify targeting criteria and maintain trust.
- Finally, **environmental and seasonal risks**, including heavy rainfall and cyclone-season conditions, intermittently delayed construction and affected household rebuilding timelines.

Lessons Learned

- **Cash-based shelter assistance proved to be an effective and flexible modality for early recovery.** The pilot **Cash-for-Shelter approach** allowed households to prioritize their most urgent reconstruction needs and adapt spending to local market conditions. While implemented on a limited scale, the modality demonstrated strong potential for future scale-up in similar contexts.
- **Pre-positioned stocks and strong volunteer networks enabled rapid emergency shelter support.** VRCS's preparedness systems, including recently replenished relief stocks and trained volunteers, allowed early distribution of tarpaulins, toolkits, and household items immediately after the earthquake. This significantly reduced immediate shelter vulnerability.
- **Technical guidance is essential to support safer reconstruction.** Many households required support in understanding safer building techniques. Integrating technical shelter advice with cash assistance helped reduce the risk of rebuilding unsafe structures and promoted more resilient housing practices.

- **Community engagement and clear communication are critical for maintaining trust.** Transparent explanation of targeting criteria and continuous feedback mechanisms helped manage expectations and reduce potential tensions in communities where needs exceeded available resources.
- **Partnership and coordination strengthened the overall shelter response.** VRCS's role as **co-lead of the National Shelter Cluster** enabled close coordination with government authorities, humanitarian partners, and technical actors, ensuring that shelter interventions complemented national recovery priorities.
- **Flexible programme design improves operational effectiveness.** The ability to adapt shelter assistance modalities, adjust targeting criteria, and introduce improved monitoring tools allowed VRCS to respond effectively to funding constraints and operational challenges.
- **Institutional learning should be embedded in preparedness planning.** The Earthquake Lessons Learned Workshop helped capture operational insights and integrate them into updated shelter SOPs, training programmes, and preparedness strategies for future disasters.

 Livelihoods	Total People reached	99	
	Female > 18: 0	Female < 18: 97	
	Male > 18: 0	Male < 18: 2	
Objective:	<i>Communities whose livelihoods are affected have their livelihoods restored and strengthened.</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of people reached with livelihoods support (for micro-enterprise development)</i>	99	100

Achievement

By the end of the operation, VRCS had reached 99 people (male: 2; female: 97) with targeted livelihoods support, through conditional cash grants.

The earthquake significantly disrupted livelihoods across affected areas, impacting a wide range of income sources including small businesses, market vendors, subsistence farming, and fishing. Early assessments conducted by the VRCS identified that many households experienced income loss due to damage to workplaces in Port Vila's Central Business District, which remained cordoned off for safety reasons, as well as reduced agricultural productivity caused by landslides and difficulties accessing markets to sell produce. These disruptions compounded existing economic vulnerabilities, particularly for women-led households and informal workers.

Building on assessment findings, VRCS incorporated livelihoods-related questions into household assessment tools and undertook detailed analysis to inform a targeted and phased livelihoods recovery approach. Given resource constraints and the need to strengthen internal systems, VRCS deliberately revised the original scale of livelihoods assistance and implemented the intervention as a pilot, prioritizing quality, learning, and institutional readiness over beneficiary numbers.

To support early recovery and self-reliance, VRCS launched a five-week microenterprise development programme in May 2025 for 100 selected participants (with one participant later withdrawing). The programme was facilitated by two experienced business consultants in collaboration with the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and focused on foundational business management skills, budgeting, product development, and market

resilience. As part of the programme, participants developed individual business and recovery plans, supported by tailored economic proposals outlining their income restoration strategies. These plans formed the basis for conditional livelihoods cash grants, ensuring that financial assistance was aligned with realistic, context-appropriate business objectives and capacity. Grant amounts were tailored to each participant's verified business recovery plan rather than set at a fixed value, ensuring that assistance was proportionate to realistic, context-appropriate business objectives.

During the later stages of the operation, the livelihoods component progressed from training delivery to practical application and recovery support. VRCS strengthened post-training coaching, prepared subsequent grant tranches, and conducted monitoring visits to assess income restoration among supported households. Beneficiaries began re-establishing micro-businesses such as small retail kiosks, food preparation activities, agriculture, and handicrafts, contributing to improved household coping capacity.

Findings from Livelihoods Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) indicated that initial cash support played a critical role in restarting income-generating activities. However, beneficiaries continued to face constraints including high transport costs, limited access to raw materials, labour shortages, and rising market prices. In response, VRCS refined business plans, adjusted technical support, and strengthened coaching to ensure that subsequent cash assistance was better aligned with evolving needs and market conditions. Progress and implementation data for the livelihoods intervention were also tracked through an interactive dashboard developed by IFRC CCD Suva, which provides an overview of activities and monitoring results across the operation.



Cash distribution for livelihood programme at Digicel Office (Photo: VRCS)

Coordination with local partners—including Digicel, Vodafone/Post, and Mama's Leaf—helped improve payment mechanisms and reduce delays experienced in earlier distributions. Livelihoods messaging was also integrated into broader community engagement platforms such as youth forums, disaster risk reduction awareness events, and school programmes, reinforcing linkages between income recovery, preparedness, and community resilience.

Despite ongoing challenges, particularly for female-headed households, elderly household leaders, and individuals with limited labour support, monitoring confirmed gradual improvements in economic stability and reduced reliance on negative coping strategies. Overall, the livelihoods intervention demonstrated steady recovery progress, strengthened VRCS's technical capacity for cash-based livelihoods programming, and contributed to the organization's broader transition toward integrated CVA modalities. A success story highlighting the recovery journey and experiences of supported participants is available [here](#).

The livelihoods pilot has provided valuable learning that is now informing updated standard operating procedures and the application of cash modalities across multiple sectors, including MPCA, Livelihoods, and Cash-for-Shelter. These lessons will be carried forward into Unified Planning 2026, supporting a stronger foundation for scalable, accountable, and sustainable livelihoods programming in future operations.

Challenges

- **Economic disruption** in Port Vila and surrounding areas also affected livelihood recovery. Damage to the central business district, closure of markets, and temporary disruption of supply chains resulted in loss of income for many households, particularly small vendors and informal workers. The slow reopening of businesses and continued infrastructure constraints prolonged the economic recovery of affected communities.
- **Coordination with FSPs** presented operational challenges in the delivery of cash-based assistance. Verification procedures, reconciliation processes, and coordination among VRCS, finance teams, and service providers occasionally delayed the distribution of livelihood grants and required additional monitoring to ensure accountability and transparency.
- **Market instability and fluctuating prices** also affected livelihood recovery. Increased prices of construction materials, transport costs, and basic commodities reduced the purchasing power of some households and complicated efforts to re-establish small businesses.
- **Limited business skills and market access** among some beneficiaries affected the speed at which households could re-establish sustainable income-generating activities. Continued technical guidance and follow-up were therefore required to support beneficiaries in managing their grants effectively.

Lessons Learned

- **Cash-based livelihood support** proved to be a practical and flexible modality for supporting economic recovery. The provision of small-business grants allowed affected households to restart income-generating activities based on their own priorities and local market conditions. This approach supported faster recovery compared with more prescriptive assistance models.
- **Combining financial support with livelihood training** strengthened recovery outcomes. Training provided to beneficiaries helped improve financial management, basic business planning, and responsible use of grants, increasing the likelihood that livelihood activities could be sustained beyond the immediate recovery phase.
- **Strong coordination with FSPs** is essential for efficient cash delivery. Establishing framework agreements with multiple providers strengthened payment systems and reduced dependency on a single delivery channel. This also improved operational flexibility and will support future cash-based programming.
- **PDM is critical for learning and accountability.** The PDM conducted during the operation provided valuable insights into how beneficiaries used livelihood grants, identified operational challenges, and informed adjustments to programme design and targeting.
- **Community engagement and transparent targeting criteria** helped maintain trust. Clear communication with communities regarding eligibility criteria and programme scope helped manage expectations and reduce tensions in contexts where livelihood needs exceeded available resources.
- **Early integration of livelihoods into recovery planning** supports longer-term resilience. Linking livelihood assistance with shelter recovery, WASH improvements, and disaster risk reduction activities helped households rebuild both their homes and their economic stability.



Multi-purpose Cash

Total People reached	6,230
Female > 18: 2,181	Female < 18: 1,246
Male > 18: 1,868	Male < 18: 935

Objective:

Communities affected by the earthquake have their basic household needs fulfilled, minimizing the possibility of resorting to negative coping mechanisms to meet those needs.

Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of households provided with unconditional cash assistance</i>	1,246	1,500

Achievement

By the end of the operation, VRCS had reached 1,246 households, benefitting 6,230 people (male: 2,803; female: 3,427) with targeted unconditional cash assistance.

MPCA was identified early in the response as a critical modality to support households affected by the December 2024 earthquake, particularly in the context of disrupted livelihoods, damaged housing, and restricted access to employment in Port Vila's Central Business District. From the outset, the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) engaged actively in the National Cash Working Group, where coordination confirmed that MPCA was being implemented by a limited number of actors, enabling close collaboration and harmonization with partners, particularly IOM.



Registration session for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance for targeted and eligible recipients (Photo: VRCS)

To enable timely delivery, VRCS extended its existing agreement with Digicel for mobile cash transfers through the MyCash platform until December 2025 and secured IFRC Exceptional Approval for cash activities. In parallel, VRCS initiated framework agreements with two additional FSPs-Vodafone and Vanuatu Post to diversify payment channels and reduce operational risk.

Cash transfer values were agreed through the Cash Working Group at VUV 20,000 or around CHF 130 per household, reflecting national minimum wage benchmarks and previous emergency responses, with an enhanced transfer of VUV 40,000 or around CHF 260 provided to bereaved families following earthquake-related fatalities.

Targeting criteria prioritized households facing the most severe impacts, including individuals seriously injured during the earthquake, households whose homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, and families who lost income due to employment disruption linked to the Central Business District closure. Eight VRCS volunteers (four female and four male) were trained on cash assessments, and large-scale registration was conducted through open communication channels, including radio and social media, followed by structured eligibility screening and verification.

A total of 1,411 households were registered for assistance, of which 1,246 were approved following multi-stage verification, and 1,246 households successfully received cash assistance. Distributions were conducted in phased rounds beginning in April 2025, with in-person support provided at the Saralana Park registration centre in Port Vila. By mid-2025, MPCA disbursements totaled VUV 15.14 million (CHF 102,482), including support to six bereaved households.

Strong accountability and monitoring mechanisms were embedded throughout implementation. VRCS conducted PDM with a representative sample of households, confirming that MPCA was highly relevant and primarily used to meet essential needs such as food, water, shelter, rent, transportation, and health care. While most recipients

reported receiving their funds as expected and trusted the process, early findings highlighted gaps in communication around eligibility criteria and delays between registration and receipt of cash, contributing to community frustration in some areas.

Operational challenges included delays in reconciliation reports from Digicel, data inconsistencies, SIM registration issues, and difficulty contacting some approved beneficiaries. In response, VRCS strengthened data-cleaning processes, reinforced coordination between programme and finance teams, expanded in-person briefings during registration, and activated additional feedback and grievance channels. To further mitigate payment constraints, VRCS finalized a framework agreement with Vanuatu Post, significantly improving coverage and flexibility for subsequent disbursements.

From July 2025 onward, the MPCA component transitioned from large-scale disbursement to consolidation, reconciliation, and learning. VRCS completed additional targeted registrations, finalized a consolidated PDM covering over 1,200 households, and resolved the majority of outstanding verification and reconciliation issues across multiple FSPs. Monitoring confirmed improved access to cash, with 97 per cent of recipients reporting no difficulty in receiving transfers, reflecting strengthened communication, improved SIM activation, and clearer coordination with service providers.

The MPCA programme demonstrated broader systemic impact beyond direct assistance. Lessons from implementation contributed to strengthened national cash coordination, with Digicel subsequently engaged by the Ministry of Finance to support government-led cash assistance, drawing directly on operational experience gained through the VRCS earthquake response. This highlights VRCS's growing influence within the national CVA ecosystem.

Overall, MPCA played a central role in meeting immediate household needs, reducing reliance on negative coping strategies, and restoring dignity and choice for affected families. With approximately 80 per cent of the MPCA target achieved and no additional eligible households identified within the targeted communities, the programme achieved its intended outcomes while maintaining strong accountability, inclusion, and learning. These experiences are now informing updated CVA systems, standard operating procedures, and preparedness planning under **Unified Planning 2026**, ensuring that VRCS is better positioned to scale cash assistance effectively in future emergencies.



Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA) Rollout (Photo: VRCS)

Challenges

- **Coordination with FSPs** presented operational challenges during the early phases of implementation. Verification procedures, reconciliation processes, and coordination between programme, finance, and service providers occasionally delayed cash transfers and required additional administrative follow-up to ensure compliance and accountability. Operational challenges with Financial Service Providers (FSPs) were most acute during the early disbursement phases. While beneficiaries who attended in-person distribution points received their funds quickly, with 71 per cent accessing cash within one hour, most registered households waited three weeks or more after registration before receiving their first transfer. This gap was driven by a combination of factors: delayed reconciliation reports from Digicel, SIM card registration failures that prevented some

approved beneficiaries from receiving mobile wallet transfers, data inconsistencies between the registration list and Digicel's system, and difficulty contacting some approved recipients. Together, these issues required intensive manual data-cleaning, field-based verification, and reinforced coordination between VRCS programme and finance teams.

In response, VRCS expanded in-person registration briefings, activated additional feedback and grievance channels, and finalized a framework agreement with Vanuatu Post in June 2025 to enable alternative payment channels. These measures significantly improved access in subsequent disbursement rounds, with 97 per cent of recipients in the final PDM reporting no difficulty accessing their cash: a marked improvement from the challenges experienced in earlier phases.

- **Identification and verification of eligible households** also required additional time and resources. Ensuring that assistance reached the most vulnerable households involved detailed assessments and cross-checking of beneficiary data, which slowed initial implementation but was necessary to maintain transparency and prevent inclusion or exclusion errors.
- **Community expectations and communication challenges** emerged in some locations, as needs exceeded available resources. Some households expected assistance even when they did not meet the final eligibility criteria. VRCS strengthened community engagement and feedback mechanisms to explain programme targeting and maintain trust.
- Finally, **market fluctuations and economic disruptions** following the earthquake affected the purchasing power of some households. Increased prices of building materials, transportation, and basic goods reduced the potential impact of cash assistance for some beneficiaries.

Lessons Learned

- **Cash assistance proved to be an effective and flexible modality for supporting early recovery.** MPCA enabled households to prioritize their most urgent needs, including food, shelter repairs, essential household items, and livelihood recovery, allowing assistance to be tailored to diverse household circumstances.
- **Strong coordination with FSPs improves programme efficiency.** Establishing framework agreements with multiple FSPs during the operation strengthened delivery systems and reduced dependency on a single payment channel. This diversification improved the reliability and flexibility of cash transfer mechanisms.
- **PDM is essential for programme improvement and accountability.** The PDM conducted during the operation provided valuable insights into how households utilized the assistance and highlighted areas where programme design, targeting, or communication could be improved.
- **Clear communication with communities is critical when resources are limited.** Transparent explanation of eligibility criteria, assistance amounts, and programme timelines helped manage expectations and strengthened community trust in the response.
- **Integrating MPCA with other sectoral interventions increases programme impact.** Linking cash assistance with shelter recovery, WASH activities, and protection services helped ensure that households were able to address multiple recovery needs simultaneously.
- **Strengthening internal coordination and data management systems improves implementation quality.** Improvements in beneficiary verification processes, monitoring systems, and coordination between programme, finance, and PMER teams contributed to more reliable and accountable cash assistance delivery.



Health & Care

*(Mental Health and psychosocial support /
Community Health / Medical Services)*

**Total People
reached**

14,324

Female > 18: 3,287

Female < 18: 4,018

Male > 18: 3,159

Male < 18: 3,860

Objective: *To prevent further harm or injury and support the ongoing health and well-being of affected communities.*

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	<i>Number of people who received individualized psychosocial support, including Psychological First Aid (PFA), by a trained staff member or volunteer.</i>	2,414	1,600
	<i>Number of communities covered regularly with mobile health units or health outreach activities.</i>	61	12
	<i>Number of people covered with hygiene promotion activities.</i>	7,637	10,000

Achievement

By the end of the operation, VRCS had reached 14,324 people (male: 7,019; female: 7,305) with targeted health services.

Following the December 2024 earthquake, the VRCS played a critical role in supporting community health, psychosocial well-being, and disease prevention, working closely with the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF, WHO, and other partners. Health and Care activities were designed to address both immediate trauma-related needs and longer-term public health risks, while recognizing that VRCS staff and volunteers were themselves affected by the disaster.

Table 2: Summary of key Health activities and reach

Area	Key Achievements
MHPSS	2,414 people reached with PFA, exceeding target; 75 volunteers trained; support expanded across hospitals and communities.
Health Outreach	61 communities reached through mobile and community-based activities, far exceeding target.
Nutrition	2,662 children screened for malnutrition with referrals and caregiver awareness sessions.
Hygiene & ECV	7,637 people reached through hygiene promotion and epidemic control activities.
Blood & Hospital Support	308 donors mobilized ; hospital support provided through volunteers and logistics assistance.
Integration & Coordination	Strong integration with WASH/PGI/CEA and coordination with MoH, WHO, UNICEF ensured aligned and efficient delivery.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

On the day of the earthquake, VRCS staff and volunteers provided immediate Psychological First Aid (PFA) to injured individuals at Vanuatu Central Hospital, marking the first line of psychosocial support for those directly affected.

As the response progressed, VRCS expanded PFA outreach across hospitals, schools, correctional centres, and affected communities, ensuring access to psychosocial support in both formal and community settings.

Through two rounds of PFA training, VRCS strengthened internal capacity, enabling trained staff and volunteers to deliver structured psychosocial support and identify referral needs. A total of 2,414 people had received individual or group PFA support, while 75 volunteers were trained in basic health tools and PFA methods. Mental health IEC materials were distributed widely to reinforce coping strategies, self-care, and help-seeking behaviour.



VRCS Health team assisting with injured patient at the hospital (Photo: VRCS)

Recognizing the dual role of staff and volunteers as responders and survivors, VRCS prioritized internal wellness and self-care sessions, supporting responder well-being and operational sustainability. These sessions were repeatedly highlighted during the Lessons Learned Workshop as essential to maintaining morale and preventing burnout during the response.

Community Health and Nutrition

Community-based health and nutrition activities were progressively scaled up to mitigate secondary health risks following the earthquake. VRCS worked closely with MoH nurses, UNICEF, and WHO to conduct systematic nutrition screening using Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) tools. A total of 2,662 children were screened across 61 communities, with immediate referrals made for children identified with moderate or severe malnutrition. On-site coordination with health professionals ensured rapid consultation with caregivers and referral to appropriate health facilities. Nutrition awareness sessions were delivered alongside screening activities, strengthening caregiver knowledge on malnutrition prevention and child health. This integrated approach supported early detection, timely intervention, and sustained follow-up through household engagement and community monitoring.

Integrated Health, Hygiene, and Epidemic Control

Health promotion activities were closely integrated with WASH and PGI programming to address heightened risks of communicable diseases following the earthquake. VRCS delivered community-based hygiene promotion, school-based preparedness sessions, and Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV) activities in 50 communities and schools, reaching 7,637 people. These sessions focused on prevention and early detection of vector-borne diseases (including dengue and malaria), water-borne diseases (such as diarrhoea and typhoid), and respiratory infections. Activities included household visits, clean-up campaigns to reduce mosquito breeding sites, distribution of IEC materials, and community mobilization, empowering households with practical knowledge and referral pathways to health services.

Blood Services and Hospital Support

VRCS supported national health services by mobilizing blood donation awareness and blood drives, reaching 2,521 people and mobilizing 308 blood donors in collaboration with the MoH Blood Service. These efforts helped address critical blood shortages in the aftermath of the earthquake. Australian Red Cross further strengthened this support by donating essential blood service supplies, which were formally handed over to the Ministry of Health. In the immediate post-earthquake period, VRCS deployed volunteers to support Vanuatu Central Hospital, assisting with clean-up operations, unpacking, and storage of medical supplies, and responding to subsequent requests for volunteer support as needed.

Coordination and Transition to Recovery

Throughout the operation, VRCS worked within national coordination structures, initially through the Health Cluster and later through Health and Nutrition subcommittees. This ensured alignment of messaging, referral pathways, and technical standards, while reinforcing VRCS's auxiliary role to public authorities.

Following the emergency response phase, Health and Care activities focused on sustained outreach, consolidation, and integration, particularly in Shefa, Sanma, and Malampa provinces. Mobile outreach, school-based sessions, and combined health-WASH-PGI activities strengthened efficiency and community trust. PFA support for staff and volunteers continued, addressing accumulated stress during extended deployments. Despite challenges such as volunteer turnover, limited medical supplies in some areas, and access constraints in remote communities, VRCS maintained a consistent outreach presence. Health messaging became increasingly embedded within multi-sector field visits, contributing to safer behaviours and improved community resilience ahead of the 2025 to 2026 cyclone season.

Overall, sector targets have been achieved, and key lessons—particularly on integrated delivery and responder care, are being carried forward into **Unified Planning 2026**.

Challenges

- **Damage to health infrastructure and disruption of essential services** during the early phase of the disaster significantly increased health risks for affected communities. The national referral hospital and several health facilities sustained structural damage and initially had to operate under temporary arrangements, which placed additional strain on the health system and limited-service availability.
- **Access challenges and logistical constraints** also affected the delivery of health activities in some communities, particularly during the early stages of the response when landslides, damaged roads, and transport disruptions limited access to affected areas.
- Finally, **persistent psychosocial stress among affected communities** required sustained support. Continued aftershocks, housing insecurity, and livelihood disruptions contributed to anxiety and stress among affected populations, increasing the demand for psychosocial support services.

Lessons Learned

- **Community-based health approaches proved essential in emergency and recovery phases.** Activities such as hygiene promotion, community health awareness, and nutrition screening enabled VRCS volunteers to reach affected populations quickly and provide critical health information at community level.
- **Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) are critical components of disaster response.** The earthquake and subsequent aftershocks caused significant emotional distress among affected communities. Early provision of PFA by trained volunteers helped reduce psychological stress and supported community recovery.

- **Volunteer networks are a key operational asset for community health outreach.** The existing VRCS volunteer network enabled rapid mobilization of trained personnel to deliver health awareness sessions, hygiene promotion, and community-based health support in affected areas.
- **Coordination with national health authorities strengthened the response.** Collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other partners helped align community health interventions with national health priorities and ensured that Red Cross activities complemented existing health services.
- **Integration of health activities with other sectors improves programme effectiveness.** Linking health outreach with WASH activities, nutrition screening, and protection services enabled a more holistic response and addressed multiple community needs simultaneously.
- **Continuous community engagement supports effective health messaging.** Feedback mechanisms and community dialogue helped ensure that health promotion messages were culturally appropriate, clearly understood, and responsive to community concerns.

	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	Total People reached	15,824
		Female > 18: 3,631	Female < 18: 4,439
		Male > 18: 3,489	Male < 18: 4,265

Objective: *To restore access to WASH facilities, to reduce water-related diseases in affected communities and to protect the vulnerable.*

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	<i>Number of people reached with WASH actions in emergency response</i>	15,824	8,000
	<i>Number of sanitation facilities constructed or rehabilitated</i>	36 (14 schools, 22 communities)	11

Achievement

By the end of the operation, VRCS had reached 15,824 people (male: 7,754; female: 8,070) with WASH services⁴.

Following the December 2024 earthquake, the VRCS played a central role in restoring access to safe water, promoting hygiene, and strengthening sanitation systems in affected communities, working in close coordination with the Department of Water, the WASH Cluster, French Red Cross (PIROPS), UNICEF, and other partners. WASH interventions evolved progressively from emergency water provision to early recovery and sustainability-focused solutions, ensuring both immediate risk reduction and longer-term resilience.

Table 3: Summary of key WASH activities and reach

Area	Key Achievements
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⁴ This covers four main activities: water catchment support (6,287), emergency water distribution (6,765), WASH in schools and rehabilitation (750), and hygiene awareness sessions (2,022).

Emergency Water Supply	Immediate water provision through NOMAD units and trucking, reaching 6,765 people during the critical phase; bottled water distributed to high-need communities and institutions.
WASH NFIs Distribution	1,122 households (~5,610 people) received jerry cans, hygiene kits, and MHM kits, improving safe water storage and hygiene practices.
Water System Rehabilitation	Water catchment systems rehabilitated benefiting 6,287 people ; additional water tanks and rainwater systems installed in communities and schools.
Sanitation Facilities	36 sanitation facilities constructed/rehabilitated (14 schools, 22 communities), exceeding target.
Hygiene Promotion	2,022 people reached through hygiene promotion, ECV activities, and school/community sessions.

Emergency Water Supply and Safe Water Access

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, VRCS—supported by the French Red Cross (PIROPS), established emergency water treatment using two NOMAD water treatment units. From late December 2024 to early January 2025, 76,000 litres of water were treated and distributed through a combination of water trucking, community tank filling, and direct household access. Water delivery was supported by VRCS, World Vision, and the Department of Water, reaching six severely affected communities and benefiting an estimated 6,765 people during the most critical phase.

To further address acute water shortages, VRCS distributed bottled water donated by Coca-Cola to households and institutions still facing supply disruptions, including communities such as Siviri, Bellevue, Sama, and Emua, as well as women’s and correctional facilities. Water trucking services were also provided to priority locations, and a water tank was installed at Eratap Primary School, ensuring continuity of access for students and staff.



Staff and volunteers were trained on how to use NOMAD water treatment units during emergency response phase (Photo: VRCS)

Distribution of Essential WASH and Hygiene Items

As access constraints stabilized, VRCS scaled up household-level WASH assistance across assigned communities. A total of 1,122 households in the most affected areas had received essential WASH items, benefiting around 5,610 people. These items included:

- 1,532 jerry cans (10L)
- 780 hygiene kits
- 891 Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) kits

These distributions significantly improved household capacity for safe water storage and hygiene practices, while targeted MHM support addressed the specific needs of women and adolescent girls. MHM kits were provided

through a combination of international in-kind support and local procurement, accompanied by awareness sessions delivered by trained staff and volunteers.

Transition to Recovery and Sustainable WASH Solutions

As the operation transitioned into early recovery, VRCS shifted from emergency delivery to longer-term WASH rehabilitation and system strengthening. Key recovery achievements included:

- Rehabilitation of water catchment systems, benefiting approximately 6,287 people.
- Repair of government-managed and school WASH facilities, reaching 750 people.
- Construction of two community water tanks in Pritano and Rangorango communities.
- Installation and follow-up support for rainwater harvesting systems in schools and communities.

These interventions improved reliability of water access, reduced collection distances, and strengthened community ownership of water infrastructure.



Water catchment and tank system built as part of earthquake recovery response (Photo: VRCS)

Sanitation Facilities

Sanitation activities also exceeded expectations. A total of 36 facilities were rehabilitated or constructed, 14 in schools and 22 in communities, compared to an initial target of 11. This was largely due to the expansion of school WASH activities in partnership with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), as well as increased community demand during the recovery phase.

Hygiene Promotion and Behaviour Change

Hygiene promotion was consistently integrated with Health, PGI, and Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV) activities. A total of 2,022 people were reached through structured hygiene awareness sessions, community outreach, and school-based activities focusing on handwashing, safe water storage, menstrual hygiene, and sanitation practices. Information, education, and communication (IEC) materials were developed and distributed in partnership with PIROPS, reinforcing key hygiene messages and supporting behaviour change at household and community levels. Youth volunteers played an increasingly visible role in clean-up campaigns and environmental hygiene activities, particularly during national DRR and preparedness events.

Monitoring, Community Feedback, and Adaptive Management

PDM conducted in communities such as Tanvasoko confirmed improved access to clean water and reduced water-fetching burdens, while also identifying challenges related to unequal access, limited water treatment practices, and shared tank management. In response, VRCS worked with community leaders to establish or strengthen Water Committees, improve maintenance arrangements, and plan follow-up hygiene education sessions to enhance sustainability and accountability.

Coordination and Operational Learning

Throughout the operation, VRCS remained an active member of the WASH Cluster, contributing assessment data, aligning interventions with national standards, and closely coordinated with the Department of Water. Strong inter-sectoral integration ensured that WASH activities complemented health, shelter, and cash assistance, reinforcing overall community recovery outcomes. Despite constraints—including limited availability of WASH-trained volunteers, equipment gaps for water quality monitoring, and access challenges in some rural areas—VRCS maintained consistent outreach and adapted implementation approaches to local contexts.

Overall, WASH interventions under this Emergency Appeal exceeded sector targets, driven by large-scale water provision and the rehabilitation or construction of key WASH facilities. By strengthening access to safe water, improving hygiene practices, and supporting community-led management systems, VRCS laid a strong foundation for long-term water security, disease prevention, and resilience, contributing directly to recovery and preparedness priorities under **Unified Planning 2026**.


Challenges

- **Damage to water infrastructure** significantly affected access to safe water in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. The damage to two major water reservoirs and water storage systems disrupted supply to large parts of Port Vila and surrounding communities, while some boreholes became muddy or unsafe following the seismic event. These disruptions increased the need for emergency water distribution and temporary water solutions.
- **Infrastructure damage and access constraints** also affected the delivery of WASH interventions. Landslides, damaged roads, and transport disruptions limited access to some affected communities during the early stages of the response, delaying the delivery of water, sanitation materials, and hygiene supplies.
- **Environmental conditions and seasonal hazards** also influenced implementation timelines. Heavy rainfall and flooding risks during the early cyclone season periodically affected field access and delayed construction and repair works for water systems and sanitation facilities.
- In addition, **community awareness and behaviour change challenges** required sustained engagement. In some communities, limited knowledge of safe hygiene practices and sanitation management increased public health risks following the earthquake and required continuous community outreach and awareness sessions.

Lessons Learned

- **Rapid provision of emergency water and hygiene items is critical in the immediate aftermath of disasters.** Early distribution of jerry cans, hygiene kits, and safe water helped reduce the risk of waterborne diseases and supported affected households while infrastructure systems were being restored.
- **Community-based hygiene promotion is essential for preventing disease outbreaks.** Hygiene awareness sessions conducted by VRCS volunteers helped promote safe water handling, sanitation practices, and personal hygiene behaviours, contributing to improved public health outcomes in affected communities.
- **Integration of WASH activities with other sectors improves response effectiveness.** Coordinating WASH interventions with shelter support, health outreach, and community engagement activities ensured that households received comprehensive assistance addressing multiple needs during recovery.
- **Strong coordination with government authorities and cluster partners strengthens response efficiency.** Collaboration with the Ministry of Health, local authorities, and WASH partners supported alignment with national response priorities and improved coordination of water supply and sanitation interventions.
- **Volunteer engagement strengthens community-level implementation.** The presence of trained VRCS volunteers enabled rapid dissemination of hygiene messages and facilitated community participation in sanitation campaigns and awareness activities.

- **Investment in preparedness and resilient water systems is essential for future disasters.** The earthquake highlighted the vulnerability of existing water infrastructure and reinforced the importance of strengthening community water systems and preparedness measures to reduce the impact of future hazards.

 Protection, Gender and Inclusion	Total People reached	2,829
	Female > 18: 649	Female < 18: 794
	Male > 18: 624	Male < 18: 624

Objective: *Communities identify the needs of the most at risk and particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups, due to inequality, discrimination and other non-respect of their human rights and address their distinct needs*

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	<i>National Society has adopted IFRC Integrity line (or similar internal Hotline and Case Management System) and is promoting and using it to record and respond to safeguarding cases.</i>	Yes	Yes

Achievement

PGI considerations were embedded throughout the VRCS Earthquake 2024 response, ensuring that assistance was delivered in a manner that was safe, inclusive, dignified, and accountable, particularly for individuals and households facing heightened vulnerability. From the outset, VRCS prioritized people living with disabilities, female-headed households, pregnant and lactating women, elderly persons, and individuals affected by bereavement or displacement.

Identification of Vulnerability and Inclusive Access

PGI considerations were systematically integrated into assessments, registration, and distributions. Data collected during early assessments enabled VRCS to identify households with specific protection risks and tailor delivery approaches accordingly. In remote and high-risk locations, including communities affected by landslides, VRCS staff and volunteers conducted direct outreach visits to provide support, reduce isolation, and ensure that affected families were not excluded from assistance.

To prevent barriers to access, VRCS worked in close partnership with the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD) and the Ministry of Justice, delivering emergency relief items directly to the homes of 110 persons with disabilities across five communities, in addition to earlier assistance provided to 48 households with members living with disabilities. This approach eliminated the need for travel to central distribution sites and reduced exposure to physical and protection risks. Mobility aids, including wheelchairs and crutches donated by Australian Red Cross, were also made available through the Ministry of Health physiotherapy clinic to further support independence and dignity.

Safety, Dignity, and Community Awareness



GBV key message sticker (Photo: VRCS)

To enhance household safety in areas affected by power outages, VRCS distributed 277 solar lanterns to 226 households, benefiting approximately 1,385 people. These distributions prioritized women-led households, elderly residents, and persons with disabilities and served as an entry point for household-level safety and protection messaging. Solar lanterns reduced risks associated with darkness, including accidents and exposure to violence, while reinforcing dignity and self-reliance.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) awareness sessions were conducted early in the response, including in evacuation settings such as Waisisi, reaching approximately 200 people. These

sessions focused on risk awareness, survivor-centred support, and available referral pathways, contributing to improved knowledge and safer community environments.

Restoring Family Links (RFL) and Institutional Outreach

Restoring Family Links (RFL) services played a critical role in reconnecting families during periods of disrupted communication. VRCS supported injured patients in hospitals who were unable to reach relatives and responded to 43 international RFL enquiries, the majority of which were resolved once telecommunications were restored. Direct field action enabled the closure of two tracing cases, while one case remained under active follow-up. Over the course of the operation, RFL services reached 1,444 people across 289 households, reinforcing family unity and psychosocial well-being. PGI outreach also extended to medium- and low-risk correctional facilities, where VRCS provided Psychological First Aid (PFA) to bereaved individuals and worked with authorities to support basic health and protection needs. These visits ensured that institutionalized populations were not overlooked in the response.

Capacity Strengthening and Cross-Sector Integration

As the operation progressed, PGI activities were increasingly integrated across Health, WASH, CVA, Shelter, and CEA interventions. A total of 43 volunteers and five staff were trained on PGI principles, safeguarding, and inclusive response approaches, strengthening VRCS's institutional capacity to mainstream protection across all sectors.

PGI teams contributed directly to the design and implementation of community feedback and accountability mechanisms, particularly in support of CVA. This included safeguarding input into registration processes, post-distribution monitoring



PGI and Safeguarding Policy Induction (Photo: VRCS)

tools, and complaint-handling pathways, helping to address issues such as perceived exclusion, duplication concerns, and intra-household tensions over assistance.

PGI messages were also incorporated into school-based preparedness activities, youth engagement sessions, DRR events, and integrated WASH–Health outreach, including child-friendly adaptations of PFA content. This ensured that protection awareness reached diverse age groups and reinforced safe behaviours at household and community levels.

Monitoring, Challenges, and Adaptive Action

By the close of the operation, PGI teams focused on strengthening accountability, follow-up, and risk mitigation as communities moved further into recovery. Targeted household visits and community briefings addressed protection risks identified earlier in the operation, particularly among elderly household heads, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and single caregivers. Coordination between PGI, CEA, and CVA teams improved clarity on eligibility, reduced tensions, and strengthened trust. Operational challenges included uneven documentation of feedback at branch level, limited numbers of trained PGI focal points, and cultural sensitivities that affected open reporting of safeguarding concerns. Despite this, VRCS made progress in harmonizing feedback tools, maintaining safe helpdesks during distributions, and embedding PGI checks within routine field monitoring.

Coordination and Transition

Throughout the response, VRCS remained an active member of the Gender and Protection Cluster, Disability Sub-Cluster, and Displacement Cluster, contributing to inclusive planning and coordinated protection action at national level. A total of 2,829 people had been reached through PGI-specific interventions, with protection principles consistently mainstreamed across all sectors.

Overall, PGI activities strengthened safe access to assistance, reduced protection risks, and reinforced dignity and inclusion throughout the earthquake response. These achievements reflect VRCS's commitment to do-no-harm, accountability to affected populations, and equitable service delivery, forming a strong foundation for continued protection mainstreaming as the organization transitions toward **Unified Planning 2026**.

Challenges

- **Pre-existing social vulnerabilities** were amplified by the disaster. Women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities faced increased barriers in accessing assistance, particularly in the early stages of the response when infrastructure damage and service disruptions limited access to support services.
- **Identification and inclusion of vulnerable groups** required additional coordination and verification. Ensuring that assistance reached persons with disabilities, elderly individuals, and other at-risk groups required collaboration with local authorities and partner organizations, which sometimes extended the time needed for beneficiary identification and service delivery.
- **Community awareness and sensitivity around protection issues**, including gender-based violence (GBV), posed challenges in some areas. Cultural sensitivities and stigma surrounding protection concerns made it difficult for some individuals to report issues or seek support.
- In addition, **capacity limitations among staff and volunteers** in specialized protection areas required continued training and support to ensure that PGI principles were consistently applied across sectors.

Lessons Learned

- **Integrating PGI across all sectors improves the overall quality and inclusiveness of humanitarian assistance.** Embedding PGI considerations into shelter, WASH, health, and cash assistance activities helped ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups were addressed throughout the response.
- **Partnerships with specialized organizations strengthen inclusive programming.** Collaboration with the VSPD supported more inclusive assistance delivery and improved outreach to persons with disabilities during distributions and community activities.
- **Community engagement mechanisms are essential for identifying protection risks.** Feedback sessions, community meetings, and accountability mechanisms enabled VRCS to better understand community concerns and respond to emerging protection issues.
- **Awareness-raising activities can help reduce protection risks following disasters.** Gender-based violence awareness sessions and community discussions contributed to increased understanding of protection concerns and promoted safer community environments.
- **Volunteer training strengthens the implementation of PGI principles.** Training staff and volunteers on PGI approaches improved their ability to identify vulnerable individuals, provide appropriate referrals, and ensure that assistance was delivered in a dignified and inclusive manner.
- **Inclusive planning and targeting improve the reach of humanitarian assistance.** Early consideration of gender, age, and disability factors during assessments and programme design helped ensure that assistance reached those most at risk.



Community Engagement and Accountability

Total People reached	4,320
Female > 18: 1,390	Female < 18: 1,010
Male > 18: 1,070	Male < 18: 850

Objective: *To support the operation to understand community needs, priorities, and context, and to support meaningful community participation in the response*

Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of methods used to enable communities to participate in planning and managing services, programmes and operations</i>	4	4

Achievement

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) was a core enabling component of the VRCS Earthquake 2024 response, ensuring that affected communities were well informed, able to provide feedback, and actively involved in shaping assistance throughout the operation. From the earliest days of the response through to recovery, VRCS prioritized two-way communication, transparency, and responsiveness across all sectors.

Communication and Information Sharing

VRCS maintained multiple communication channels to ensure timely and accessible information sharing. These included a dedicated CEA hotline, email and Facebook messaging, an information desk at VRCS Headquarters, and direct face-to-face engagement in communities. Social media played a particularly important role in reaching large

audiences: earthquake-related Facebook posts reached tens of thousands of people, generating high levels of interaction through comments, shares, and reactions. These platforms were used to disseminate updates on emergency assistance, cash registration, distributions, volunteer mobilization, and safety information, helping to counter misinformation and manage expectations.

Feedback Mechanisms and Responsiveness

Feedback and complaints mechanisms were progressively strengthened and embedded across all sectors. The hotline and information desk were staffed by trained volunteers who documented all enquiries and feedback in logbooks, enabling systematic follow-up. By mid-2025, the hotline had received 166 calls, and the information desk had recorded 187 in-person visits, while 68 formal feedback cases were logged across hotline, face-to-face, and digital channels. Most feedback related to CVA, including eligibility criteria, registration processes, and payment timelines. CEA focal points worked alongside sector teams during field activities, allowing real-time community input to be gathered during shelter distributions, WASH outreach, health activities, and CVA implementation. Sensitive feedback—particularly related to protection and safeguarding—was referred through established PGI pathways to ensure confidentiality and appropriate follow-up.

Use of Feedback to Improve Programming

Community feedback directly informed programme adjustments and operational decision-making. PDM conducted with 152 households receiving MPCA provided critical insights into service quality, relevance, and satisfaction. Findings from PDM and ongoing feedback led to improvements in communication materials, clearer explanation of selection criteria, refinement of targeting approaches, and adjustments to payment processes in collaboration with Financial Service Providers. During later phases of the operation, CEA supported targeted communication around Cash-for-Shelter verification and CVA Batch Four registration, helping to address misunderstandings that had caused tension earlier in the response. Improved face-to-face briefings, harmonized SMS messaging, and engagement with community leaders significantly reduced misinformation and strengthened household understanding of entitlements and processes.

Integration Across Sectors and Community Outreach

CEA approaches were integrated across CVA, PGI, Health, WASH, Shelter, and DRR activities. School-based preparedness sessions, hygiene promotion, youth engagement events, and DRR awareness days incorporated CEA principles, reinforcing respectful communication and encouraging community participation. Child-friendly messaging was used during school outreach, while volunteers received orientation on inclusive engagement and accountability practices. Throughout the response, CEA teams supported the documentation and consolidation of feedback data, contributing to a more evidence-based understanding of community priorities and concerns. Although analysis capacity varied across branches due to limited staffing, the development of a harmonized CEA tracking tool marked an important institutional improvement. Operational challenges included high foot traffic and volunteer gatherings near the hotline area, which occasionally disrupted call handling and reception services. Lessons learned included the need for a dedicated, quieter space for hotline operations and stronger systems for analyzing and closing feedback loops.

Overall, CEA activities reached around 4,320 people through various communication and feedback mechanisms and played a critical role in improving programme quality, reducing community tensions, and strengthening accountability. As VRCS transitions toward **Unified Planning 2026**, the lessons and systems developed through this operation provide a strong foundation for further institutionalization of CEA across future emergency and recovery programmes.

Challenges

- **Communication disruptions in the early phase of the disaster** limited the ability to reach some communities with timely information. Damage to telecommunications infrastructure and limited internet connectivity initially made it difficult to disseminate consistent messaging and collect feedback from affected populations, particularly in remote areas.
- **Managing community expectations** also presented challenges. The scale of needs following the earthquake was significant, while available resources remained limited due to funding constraints. Some communities expected assistance beyond the programme scope, requiring continuous communication to clarify targeting criteria, assistance modalities, and programme timelines.
- **Reaching remote and vulnerable populations** required additional effort and coordination. Geographic isolation, damaged infrastructure, and transport limitations made it more difficult to ensure consistent information sharing and feedback collection across all affected areas.
- **Capacity constraints** among staff and volunteers also influenced implementation. While VRCS volunteers played an important role in community outreach, additional training and guidance were required to strengthen their capacity in facilitating structured feedback mechanisms and documenting community concerns.
- In addition, **data management and feedback tracking systems** required strengthening to ensure that community feedback could be systematically recorded, analyzed, and used to inform programme decision-making across sectors.

Lessons Learned

- **Early and continuous community engagement strengthens the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance.** Community outreach sessions conducted across affected areas helped ensure that communities received timely information on available services, assistance modalities, and preparedness measures.
- **Multiple feedback channels improve accessibility and responsiveness.** The use of community meetings, outreach sessions, hotlines, helpdesks, and post-distribution monitoring created several opportunities for community members to raise questions and provide feedback.
- **Integrating CEA across all sectors improves programme accountability.** Embedding community engagement within shelter, WASH, health, and cash assistance activities ensured that programmes remained responsive to community needs and that feedback informed operational adjustments.
- **PDM is a valuable accountability tool.** The PDM conducted during the operation helped assess beneficiary satisfaction, understand how assistance was used, and identify areas for programme improvement.
- **Strong volunteer engagement supports effective communication with communities.** VRCS volunteers, who are familiar with local contexts and languages, played a critical role in facilitating community dialogue and sharing information in culturally appropriate ways.
- **Transparent communication builds trust during prolonged recovery operations.** Providing clear information on eligibility criteria, programme limitations, and implementation timelines helped manage expectations and maintain community trust throughout the response.



Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery

Total People reached	12,906
Female > 18: 4,517	Female < 18: 2,581
Male > 18: 3,872	Male < 18: 1,936

Objective:	<i>Reduce the vulnerability of communities to future earthquakes and other disasters</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of people reached with disaster risk reduction⁵</i>	12,906	50,000

Achievement

Risk reduction, climate adaptation, and recovery were treated as cross-cutting priorities throughout the VRCS Earthquake 2024 operation, ensuring that immediate response actions also contributed to longer-term resilience. From the earliest stages of the response, VRCS staff and volunteers adopted a multi-hazard approach, recognizing that earthquake recovery in Vanuatu must be situated within a broader context of climate risks, cyclones, flooding, and environmental degradation.

Integrating Risk Reduction into Emergency Response and Recovery



Strengthening community resilience with Disaster Information Board (Photo: VRCS)

During the emergency and early recovery phases, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness messaging were systematically integrated into community outreach conducted alongside Health, WASH, Shelter, PGI, and CEA activities. Across 61 communities, VRCS volunteers delivered awareness sessions on household safety, disaster preparedness, and safer shelter practices, helping affected families reduce immediate risks while planning for recovery. As recovery activities expanded, VRCS increasingly linked physical reconstruction and service delivery with climate-informed and resilience-focused approaches. Climate-smart shelter concepts and safer construction practices were promoted through shelter recovery activities, while rainwater harvesting systems and water catchment rehabilitation supported both recovery needs and longer-term climate adaptation.

Contribution to National Recovery and Resilience Planning

At the national level, VRCS actively contributed to the Port Vila Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan, ensuring that community-level perspectives, operational lessons, and vulnerability considerations informed longer-term recovery and adaptation strategies. This engagement reinforced VRCS’s auxiliary role to public authorities and strengthened alignment between community priorities and national resilience planning.

Preparedness and Climate Adaptation During Transition Phase

In the final months of the operation, as communities moved beyond immediate recovery, VRCS shifted its focus toward strengthening preparedness ahead of the 2025–2026 cyclone season. DRR and climate adaptation activities were expanded across Shefa, Sanma, and Malampa provinces, reaching an estimated 9,345 people through integrated outreach, school-based programming, and community engagement. A key highlight during this period was VRCS’s leadership in International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) events. These activities engaged

⁵ Indicator not listed under the Operational Strategy, added to measure progress

schools, youth groups, teachers, disability networks, and community leaders in earthquake and cyclone safety drills, early-warning awareness, hazard identification, evacuation planning, and preparedness messaging. IDRR activities strengthened community readiness and reinforced collaboration between VRCS branches, schools, and local authorities.

School-Based and Youth Engagement

DRR and climate adaptation messaging was further embedded into school outreach and youth engagement activities, combining discussions on climate change, hygiene, natural asset mapping, and risk communication. Youth Forums, particularly in Santo, positioned young volunteers as local advocates for climate adaptation and preparedness, strengthening intergenerational knowledge transfer and community leadership.

Community-Level Preparedness and Institutional Strengthening

At community level, VRCS continued hazard awareness, early-warning literacy, and natural asset mapping activities, enabling households to better understand local risks and appropriate preparedness actions. Branches also engaged in contingency planning aligned with the VRCS national Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and participated in simulation exercises with the NDMO. These efforts addressed gaps identified through Lessons Learned Workshops from previous emergency response operation: TC Lola, particularly around branch-level readiness and multi-hazard coordination.

By the end of the reporting period, DRR and climate adaptation had become firmly embedded across VRCS programming, supporting safer recovery and strengthening preparedness for future hazards. Target achievement stands at 68 per cent, with

budget utilization slightly exceeded initial projections, reflecting the operational demands of school engagement and community-based awareness activities. Overall, DRR and climate adaptation interventions under this Emergency Appeal strengthened community preparedness, improved risk awareness, and reinforced institutional learning, laying a strong foundation for **Unified Planning 2026** and VRCS's continued commitment to multi-hazard resilience in Vanuatu.



*Risk reduction awareness about earthquake in schools
(Photo: VRCS)*


Challenges

- **Limited technical and volunteer capacity for DRR activities** was a key constraint. While VRCS volunteers played an active role in community outreach, the number of volunteers trained specifically in disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation remained limited. This affected the scale at which preparedness and risk awareness activities could be implemented across all affected communities.
- **Limited early-warning infrastructure in some communities** reduced the effectiveness of preparedness efforts. Some communities lacked basic early-warning equipment and communication systems, making it more difficult to ensure timely dissemination of hazard information.

- **Geographic dispersion and logistical challenges** affected the delivery of DRR activities. Communities across multiple islands and provinces required outreach and coordination with branch teams, which sometimes slowed implementation due to transport limitations and operational costs.
- **Transition from emergency response to long-term recovery planning** also presented coordination challenges. Aligning community-level risk reduction initiatives with national recovery strategies and ensuring consistent engagement across sectors required ongoing coordination with government authorities and partners.

Lessons Learned

- **Integrating DRR across multiple sectors strengthens community resilience.** Embedding risk reduction messaging within shelter, WASH, health, and community outreach activities allowed VRCS to reach more communities and promote preparedness even when dedicated DRR resources were limited.
- **Community-based outreach is an effective approach to disaster preparedness.** Awareness sessions conducted in communities and schools helped improve understanding of disaster risks, evacuation planning, and household preparedness measures.
- **Youth engagement can strengthen local resilience initiatives.** Activities such as school-based awareness sessions and youth forums demonstrated the important role that young volunteers can play in promoting climate adaptation and disaster preparedness within their communities.
- **Coordination with national authorities supports effective recovery planning.** VRCS participation in the development of the national Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan ensured that community-level perspectives were incorporated into long-term recovery and adaptation strategies.
- **Practical resilience solutions improve recovery outcomes.** The promotion of climate-smart shelter designs and rainwater harvesting systems linked physical reconstruction with longer-term risk reduction and environmental sustainability.
- **Preparedness activities should be strengthened before future hazard seasons.** DRR awareness campaigns and preparedness activities conducted ahead of the cyclone season helped communities better understand potential risks and adopt preventive measures.

 Education	Total People reached	12,548	
	Female > 18: 2,880	Female < 18: 3,520	
	Male > 18: 2,767	Male < 18: 3,381	
Objective:	<i>Support safe access to education for affected school children and students and strengthen the education system's capacity for disaster preparedness and response</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator⁶	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of temporary learning spaces established or supported</i>	27	20

⁶ Both indicators were not listed under the Operational Strategy, added to measure progress

Number of people reached with education support

12,548

5,000

Achievement

Education-related activities within the VRCS Earthquake 2024 operation focused on supporting children’s safe return to learning, restoring protective school environments, and strengthening disaster preparedness within education settings. While VRCS did not implement a standalone education programme, education outcomes were delivered through integrated interventions in partnership with UNICEF, the MoET, and other sector teams.

By the end of the operation, VRCS had reached 12,548 people through education-related activities delivered via integrated Health, WASH, DRR, PGI, and CEA interventions. These efforts contributed to safer learning environments, improved disaster preparedness, and strengthened psychosocial support for children as communities recovered from the earthquake.

Restoring Safe Learning Environments

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, community consultations highlighted concerns about damaged school infrastructure and the ability of children to return safely to class. Although the Operational Strategy initially included school fee support and minor WASH “quick-fix” activities in three heavily affected schools, only the WASH quick-fix was completed due to funding constraints. To address urgent infrastructure gaps, UNICEF committed to providing temporary learning tents. VRCS mobilized trained volunteers to support installation, with volunteers receiving technical training in January 2025. By early February 2025, 27 temporary learning tents had been erected across nine schools, enabling classes to resume in safe and functional environments while damaged structures remained under repair.

School-Based Preparedness and Child Protection

As the operation transitioned from emergency response to early recovery, VRCS expanded its engagement with schools through integrated outreach programmes. In close coordination with MoET, VRCS delivered earthquake preparedness and safety sessions in 23 schools, reaching thousands of students, teachers, and caregivers. These sessions covered family evacuation planning, safe behaviour during aftershocks, and basic psychosocial coping strategies, while embedding PGI considerations and child-friendly messaging.

Information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on multi-hazard risks were distributed to reinforce learning and encourage household-level preparedness. Trained volunteers worked alongside Health and PGI teams to ensure that sessions were inclusive, age-appropriate, and sensitive to the psychosocial needs of children affected by the disaster.



Volunteers demonstrating earthquake golden rule: Drop, Hold, Cover
(Photo: VRCS)

Advancing School Safety and Disaster Risk Reduction

In June 2025, VRCS—together with MoET—launched a pilot school safety earthquake drill in three Port Vila schools. Supported by trained volunteers and observed by visiting British Red Cross representatives, the exercise marked an important step toward institutionalizing climate-smart DRR within the education sector. The pilot provided practical experience for schools and informed future planning for education-in-emergencies and school safety programming.

Education activities were further reinforced through VRCS's leadership in International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) events in September, where schools participated in safety drills, early-warning awareness, and preparedness exercises. These activities strengthened links between school safety and wider community preparedness efforts.

Health, Hygiene, and Dignity in Schools

Education settings also served as entry points for broader health and hygiene promotion. VRCS integrated MHM kit distribution with school-based educational messaging, supporting adolescent girls' dignity, attendance, and participation in class. Additional sessions on hygiene promotion, nutrition awareness, environmental clean-up, and psychosocial well-being were delivered through collaboration with teachers, school committees, youth volunteers, and MoET.

Youth volunteers played a critical role throughout the operation, supporting peer-to-peer learning, DRR awareness, and WASH campaigns in schools. Their involvement strengthened communication between schools, households, and community leaders, contributing to sustained engagement beyond one-off activities.



Earthquake awareness in schools (Photo: VRCS)

Overall, education-focused interventions under this Emergency Appeal supported children's safe return to school, reinforced resilience within learning environments, and laid a foundation for continued collaboration with MoET and partners as VRCS transitions toward **Unified Planning 2026**.

Challenges

- **Damage to school infrastructure and WASH facilities** significantly disrupted education services in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. Several school buildings and sanitation facilities sustained structural damage, forcing schools to remain closed for an extended period while safety assessments and repairs were conducted.
- **Logistical and access challenges** in the early stages of the response also affected the delivery of school-based activities. Damaged roads and transport disruptions slowed outreach to some schools, particularly outside the main urban areas.
- **Competing priorities during the early emergency phase** meant that resources were primarily directed toward life-saving sectors such as shelter, WASH, health, and cash assistance. As a result, education-related activities were integrated gradually into the recovery phase rather than implemented immediately after the disaster.

- In addition, **psychosocial stress among students and teachers** following the earthquake and subsequent aftershocks affected the return to normal school activities. Many children required time and support to regain a sense of safety and stability after the disaster.

Lessons Learned

- **Schools provide an effective platform for community preparedness and awareness.** School-based outreach activities enabled VRCS to reach a large number of children, teachers, and families with messages related to disaster preparedness, climate change, hygiene promotion, and first aid.
- **Integrating DRR into school activities strengthens long-term resilience.** Awareness sessions, hazard identification exercises, and evacuation drills helped improve students' understanding of disaster risks and preparedness measures.
- **Youth engagement plays a key role in promoting community resilience.** School activities and youth forums demonstrated that young people can act as important advocates for disaster preparedness and climate adaptation within their communities.
- **Education activities are most effective when integrated with other sectors.** Combining school-based outreach with WASH awareness, hygiene promotion, and DRR messaging allowed VRCS to maximize the impact of limited resources while supporting both health and preparedness outcomes.
- **Coordination with schools and local authorities supports effective implementation.** Collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and local education authorities facilitated access to schools and helped ensure that activities aligned with national recovery priorities.
- **Education recovery should be integrated into broader recovery planning.** The earthquake highlighted the importance of restoring safe learning environments and incorporating disaster preparedness into school systems to reduce the impact of future hazards.

Enabling approaches



National Society Strengthening

Objective:	<i>By the end of the operation, the VRCS has enhanced its response and resilience capacity and has not harmed its long-term development and future sustainability.</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>National Society covers health, accident and death compensation for all of its volunteers</i>	Yes	Yes
	<i>Number of paid staff</i>	47	39

Achievement

National Society Strengthening was a cross-cutting priority throughout the VRCS Earthquake 2024 operation, ensuring that the organization could respond effectively to immediate humanitarian needs while reinforcing systems, workforce capacity, and institutional resilience for future emergencies.

Volunteer Capacity, Safety, and Deployment

From the outset of the response, VRCS relied heavily on its volunteer network to deliver life-saving assistance across affected areas. Approximately 100 volunteers were deployed in Shefa Province, supporting emergency response activities across sectors and providing surge support to partner organizations, including the Vanuatu Central Hospital, UNICEF, and the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD). The availability of experienced and well-trained volunteers proved critical to the scale and quality of the response.

recognizing the increased operational demands and duty-of-care obligations, VRCS expanded its volunteer insurance coverage from 150 volunteers in 2024 to 360 volunteers in 2025, ensuring comprehensive protection for all active responders. By early 2025, 360 active volunteers and 23 staff members were covered under the revised insurance arrangements, significantly strengthening safety and risk management for personnel engaged in high-intensity operations.

Training, Skills Development, and Technical Readiness

To maintain technical quality and operational coherence, VRCS staff and volunteers participated in a series of briefings, inductions, and sector-specific training throughout the operation. These covered Shelter, CVA, Health, PGI, and RFL, delivered in collaboration with IFRC and sectoral partners.

As the response transitioned into recovery, capacity strengthening expanded to include logistics and supply-chain management, warehouse operations, and fleet coordination, with training delivered in Penama, Pentecost, and Santo. These activities

addressed gaps identified through operational monitoring and result of Lessons Learned Workshops of TC Lola, improving branch-level readiness and operational efficiency.



Participants in a group work during the Lessons Learned Workshop (Photo: VRCS)

Staff and Volunteer Wellbeing

Recognizing the sustained pressure placed on personnel during the earthquake response, VRCS prioritized staff and volunteer wellbeing as part of its strengthening efforts. PFA sessions were delivered across headquarters and branches, providing emotional support to staff and volunteers managing heavy workloads and exposure to distressing situations. Welfare systems were reinforced to promote resilience, retention, and safe working conditions.

Infrastructure and Operational Continuity

Rapid structural assessments of the VRCS Headquarters identified earthquake-related damage requiring major repairs. To maintain operational continuity and safeguard staff, VRCS initiated plans to relocate existing stock containers and construct a temporary operational hub to house staff during the repair phase. This interim

structure is also envisioned as a future training and coordination centre, strengthening preparedness and surge capacity for future responses. While design and tender processes for the VRCS Headquarters rehabilitation and construction were initiated during the Appeal period, construction has been deferred to the following year due to time constraints, with procurement processes ongoing.

Systems Strengthening and Organizational Readiness

Institutional strengthening extended beyond physical infrastructure. VRCS advanced work on internal systems, including the Human Resources Manual, recruitment processes, governance readiness, and branch documentation in preparation for National and Branch Annual General Meetings (AGMs). PMER and Information Management capacities were also strengthened, with improved Indicator Tracking Tables (ITTs), enhanced coordination between finance and programme teams, and stabilized data flows from branches. Collaboration with partners such as UNICEF, IOM, NZRC, and FSPs supported improvements in operational alignment, compliance, and institutional resilience.

Resource Mobilization and Visibility

To enhance sustainability beyond the earthquake response, VRCS began revamping its official website to improve visibility and enable direct online donations. Photo and video materials were collected during the operation to support communications, fundraising, and public engagement, marking an important step toward diversified resource mobilization and strengthened external outreach.

Overall, National Society Strengthening activities under the Emergency Appeal enabled VRCS to sustain a complex, multi-sector response while reinforcing the systems, workforce, and governance structures required for long-term resilience. Despite delays in infrastructure rehabilitation, VRCS demonstrated increasing confidence and capability at both headquarters and branch levels, laying a stronger foundation for future emergency readiness and supporting a smooth transition toward **Unified Planning 2026**.

Challenges

- **Limited institutional resources and infrastructure constraints** affected operational efficiency. The earthquake damaged VRCS headquarters facilities, and assessments indicated that the existing office building would only remain structurally safe for a limited period even after renovation. Delays in finalizing designs, cost estimates, and the tender process also slowed progress toward office rehabilitation and construction.
- **Information management and reporting capacity** also required improvement. Variations in data quality and reporting systems across branches occasionally affected the timeliness and consistency of operational reporting and monitoring.

Lessons Learned

- **Strong volunteer networks are a critical operational asset during large-scale emergencies.** The ability of VRCS to mobilize trained volunteers across its branches enabled rapid assessments, relief distributions, and community outreach activities during the early stages of the response.
- **Investment in logistics and operational training strengthens response capacity.** Logistics and supply chain trainings conducted across branches improved skills in warehouse management, procurement procedures, fleet management, and operational planning, enhancing the National Society's readiness for future emergencies.
- **Strengthening information management systems improves decision-making.** The introduction and regular use of operational monitoring tools, including the ITT and operational dashboards, improved evidence-based decision-making and supported more effective programme oversight.

- **Institutional learning processes strengthen organizational resilience.** The Earthquake Lessons Learned Workshop provided an opportunity for staff and volunteers to reflect on operational experiences, identify areas for improvement, and incorporate lessons into future planning and preparedness frameworks.
- **Leadership engagement and regional collaboration support organizational development.** Participation in regional coordination events and leadership forums strengthened VRCS's ability to share operational experiences, align with regional priorities, and enhance its institutional profile within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
- **Governance and branch-level strengthening are essential for long-term sustainability.** Branch reviews, governance preparations, and strategic planning activities helped reinforce VRCS's organizational foundations and support its transition from emergency response toward longer-term resilience programming.



Coordination and Partnerships

Objective: *Develop an efficient and coordinated approach with all stakeholders involved.*

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	<i>Number of coordination meetings at national or regional level where response updates were shared⁷</i>	14	As per need

Achievement

Throughout the earthquake response and recovery operation, the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) maintained strong coordination with government authorities, humanitarian partners, and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to ensure an effective and complementary response.

As the Government of Vanuatu's humanitarian auxiliary, VRCS worked closely with the NDMO and actively participated in national coordination mechanisms. VRCS served as co-lead of the Shelter Cluster, supporting the development of the national shelter response strategy and facilitating coordination among humanitarian partners engaged in shelter and recovery activities. This role enabled VRCS to contribute technical expertise, align interventions with government priorities, and ensure that assistance reached affected communities in a coordinated manner.



*EOC Briefing and coordination with VRCS team and surge support team
(Photo: VRCS)*

⁷ Indicator not listed under the Operational Strategy, added to measure progress

Coordination with the ROC, established following the end of the State of Emergency, ensured that VRCS recovery activities were aligned with the Government's Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan. Through participation in ROC meetings and technical working groups, VRCS contributed operational insights and supported national planning for long-term recovery.

Within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, VRCS maintained close collaboration with the IFRC CCD in Suva and the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), which provided technical guidance, operational support, and coordination for the Emergency Appeal. Several PNSs—including the Australian Red Cross, NZRC, American Red Cross, French Red Cross, and Fiji Red Cross Society—supported the response through coordination, technical assistance, and resource mobilization.

VRCS also strengthened partnerships with government ministries, local authorities, and specialized organizations. Collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD), and other national partners supported inclusive service delivery, while engagement with regional mechanisms such as the Pacific Humanitarian Team enhanced information sharing and coordination at the regional level.

Through these partnerships, VRCS was able to leverage complementary expertise, strengthen coordination across sectors, and ensure that humanitarian assistance was delivered in line with national recovery priorities.

Challenge

- **Complex coordination structures during the transition from emergency response to recovery** required ongoing adjustments. Following the end of the State of Emergency, coordination shifted from the NEOC to the ROC. This transition required partners to adapt to new coordination mechanisms and reporting structures.
- **Information sharing and data harmonization** among multiple partners also required continuous effort. Differences in reporting timelines, assessment methodologies, and data systems sometimes created challenges in consolidating information and aligning operational planning.
- **Operational and logistical constraints** also affected coordination during the early stages of the response. Damaged infrastructure, communication disruptions, and access challenges made it more difficult to organize coordination meetings and maintain consistent information flow among partners.
- Finally, **ensuring consistent engagement across national and local levels** required continued effort. Coordination mechanisms were strong at the national level but maintaining regular engagement with provincial and community-level stakeholders sometimes required additional outreach and facilitation.

Lessons Learned

- **Strong national coordination mechanisms are essential for effective disaster response.** The activation of national cluster systems and the establishment of the Recovery Operations Centre enabled coordinated planning and facilitated collaboration among government authorities, humanitarian organizations, and development partners.
- **The auxiliary role of the National Society strengthens operational effectiveness.** VRCS's recognized role as an auxiliary to the Government allowed it to act as a trusted bridge between communities, government authorities, and humanitarian partners.
- **Cluster leadership enhances strategic influence and coordination.** VRCS's role as co-lead of the Shelter Cluster enabled the National Society to contribute to national response planning and ensure that shelter interventions were aligned with broader recovery efforts.
- **Partnership with specialized organizations improves inclusive programming.** Collaboration with organizations such as the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities helped ensure that assistance was inclusive and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups.

- **Movement coordination strengthens operational support and resource mobilization.** Close collaboration between VRCS, IFRC, and Partner National Societies facilitated technical support, consolidated reporting, and improved visibility of humanitarian needs.
- **Regional coordination mechanisms support information sharing and preparedness.** Engagement with regional platforms such as the Pacific Humanitarian Team contributed to stronger coordination and knowledge exchange across the Pacific region.



Shelter Cluster Coordination

Objective:	<i>Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements are well coordinated, supporting a comprehensive, quality, coherent, and consistent. Shelter and Settlements response co-led by VRCS with support from IFRC.</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Number of joint shelter strategies or technical guidance documents produced⁸</i>	1	1

Achievement

Throughout the operation, VRCS, with the support of IFRC, co-led the national Shelter Cluster alongside the NDMO, ensuring coordination and coherence across all shelter interventions from emergency response through to recovery.

During the emergency phase, the cluster convened ten coordination meetings, aligning strategies among partners and government counterparts including the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. These meetings helped harmonize emergency shelter strategies, promote common objectives, and ensure effective collaboration during the most critical phase of the response.

Following the end of the State of Emergency, VRCS supported the establishment of the Shelter Technical Working Group, contributing to the development of its Terms of Reference and advancing the review of semi-permanent shelter designs originally developed for cyclone contexts. This work adapted existing shelter options to better reflect earthquake-specific risks and broader multi-hazard resilience requirements in recovery planning.

From February to June 2025, the Shelter Cluster and the Displacement and Evacuation Centre Management (DECM) Cluster held fortnightly coordination meetings, strengthening linkages between recovery activities, preparedness messaging, and long-term planning. Key initiatives during this period included:

- **Household Building Damage Assessment (HBDA):** Funded by UNDP and led by the Shelter Cluster, this assessment generated comprehensive, standardized damage data to inform national recovery planning and reconstruction prioritization.

⁸ Indicator not listed under the Operational Strategy, added to measure progress

- **"Building SMART Houses" campaign:** Co-designed with cluster partners to promote safe, affordable, and disaster-resilient housing reconstruction practices, building community understanding of multi-hazard shelter solutions.

The final Shelter Cluster meeting for the earthquake response took place on 11 June 2025, after which the cluster formally transitioned to preparedness mode. Findings and data were consolidated into a final cluster factsheet published on the Shelter Cluster platform.

From July 2025 onwards, IFRC on behalf of VRCS continued to support the Government of Vanuatu in its role as Shelter Cluster co-lead. Coordination efforts in this phase focused on consolidating post-distribution information, strengthening technical guidance for recovery, and ensuring alignment of shelter activities with national priorities and partner interventions. Regular cluster meetings in Port Vila brought together government partners, IOM, Habitat for Humanity, NGOs, and technical agencies to review progress on shelter assessments, Cash-for-Shelter implementation, and ongoing housing needs. Partners exchanged experience on challenges including limited carpenter availability, unequal access to materials, and household vulnerability, discussions that directly informed refinements to VRCS's construction monitoring tools and partner reporting templates.

Cluster coordination also contributed to cyclone season preparedness. Technical partners reviewed emergency shelter stock levels, Build Back Better (BBB) messaging, and dissemination plans, ensuring that lessons from the earthquake response were integrated into national contingency planning.

By the end of the operation, one joint shelter strategy and technical guidance document had been produced, meeting the indicator target. Overall, Shelter Cluster coordination remained effective throughout the operation, enabling partners to maintain clear communication, share technical resources, and align recovery activities with national standards as the operation transitioned toward long-term resilience.

Challenge.

- **The scale of shelter needs and the complexity of damage assessments** created challenges in the early stages of coordination. The earthquake caused widespread structural damage across Efate and surrounding islands, requiring rapid assessments and information sharing among multiple partners to determine shelter priorities and target areas.
- **Data collection and information management** were initially challenging due to the evolving nature of assessments and the disruption of communication systems. Differences in assessment methodologies among partners and delays in data consolidation occasionally made it difficult to establish a unified picture of shelter needs during the early phase of the response.
- **Infrastructure damage and logistical constraints** also affected coordination. Landslides, damaged roads, and port disruptions limited access to some affected communities, slowing the implementation of shelter activities and requiring adjustments to distribution plans and monitoring.
- In addition, **balancing coordination responsibilities with operational implementation** presented capacity challenges for VRCS. As both a key implementing partner and co-lead of the Shelter Cluster, VRCS had to allocate staff and resources to both operational activities and coordination responsibilities.

Lessons Learned

- **Early activation of cluster coordination mechanisms strengthens response effectiveness.** The rapid engagement of VRCS and NDMO in coordinating the Shelter Cluster helped establish a structured platform for information sharing, planning, and coordination among humanitarian partners.
- **The co-leadership model between government and the National Society supports effective coordination.** Collaboration between NDMO and VRCS enabled a strong link between national authorities,

humanitarian partners, and affected communities, facilitating alignment between government priorities and operational interventions.

- **Standardized assessment tools improve coordination and planning.** The experience highlighted the importance of harmonizing assessment methodologies and data collection processes among partners to ensure consistent information for decision-making.
- **Regular coordination meetings and information sharing enhance operational efficiency.** Continuous engagement among cluster partners enabled better alignment of shelter interventions, reduced duplication of assistance, and improved coverage across affected areas.
- **Strong technical support from the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement strengthens cluster leadership.** Technical guidance from IFRC and the Global Shelter Cluster supported VRCS in fulfilling its coordination responsibilities and strengthened national shelter coordination capacity.
- **Cluster coordination contributes to long-term recovery planning.** Engagement in shelter coordination not only supported the emergency response but also contributed to the development of recovery strategies and alignment with the Government’s Earthquake Recovery and Resilience Plan.



Secretariat Services

Objective:

To work in collaboration with the National Society and have clear definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities essential for efficient and effective results in this response.

Key indicators:

Indicator

Actual

Target

Number of evaluations conducted for this operation⁹

1

1

Achievement

Throughout the earthquake response and recovery period, IFRC provided sustained and wide-ranging technical, operational, and coordination support to the VRCS, enabling effective implementation of activities while maintaining accountability, compliance, and alignment with IFRC standards.

At the onset of the operation, IFRC issued a DREF loan of CHF 750,000 on 18 December 2024, ensuring immediate liquidity to support life-saving activities while broader resource mobilization efforts were underway. The IFRC CCD, APRO, and Geneva teams worked closely with VRCS to establish the Emergency Appeal framework, develop the mobilization table, and engage Movement partners and donors for financial and in-kind support.

Over the course of the operation, a total of 15 surge personnel were deployed under the Rapid Response Management System (RRMS), providing direct support in operations management, shelter cluster coordination, Restoring Family Links, Cash and Voucher Assistance, PMER, finance, procurement and logistics, communications, and health. These deployments were complemented by continuous remote technical assistance, ensuring coverage across all critical operational functions while strengthening VRCS’s internal capacity.

⁹ Indicator not listed under the Operational Strategy, added to reflect evaluative exercise required for the operation

The Secretariat played a central role in PMER, supporting alignment with the Emergency Appeal and Operational Strategy, refining ITT, improving sector reporting workflows, and strengthening data consolidation across Health, WASH, CVA, DRR, and Shelter. IFRC systems, including IFRC GO platform, PMER tools, and financial tracking platforms, were regularly updated and maintained to ensure transparency and real-time visibility of progress.

Strong support was also provided in financial management and compliance. The Secretariat worked closely with VRCS Finance to stabilize financial reporting, resolve reconciliation challenges related to CVA and procurement, and harmonize cash-tracking



*Inside VRCS EOC room with surge supports
(Photo : VRCS)*

and distribution datasets, particularly where network disruptions and multi-provider payment systems had caused earlier delays. This support strengthened internal controls and improved compliance with IFRC financial standards.

In the area of logistics and supply chain management, the Secretariat delivered targeted technical assistance and training across Shefa, Penama, Pentecost, and Santo. These sessions covered procurement procedures, warehouse management, fleet coordination, emergency stock planning, and supplier agreements, directly addressing capacity gaps identified during operational reviews and the Lessons Learned Workshop. These efforts strengthened branch-level readiness and preparedness for future emergencies, including the 2025–2026 cyclone season.

IFRC also supported resource mobilization and visibility, ensuring donor requirements and reporting standards were met while amplifying the operation's impact through coordinated communications. Regular updates were published on IFRC digital platforms, including web articles, social media posts, and visual content highlighting [cash distributions](#), [water tank installations](#), and community [recovery efforts](#). These visibility actions reinforced transparency and donor confidence while showcasing VRCS's [leadership](#) on the ground.

Web articles:

- [World Water Day: After the quake, Red Cross brings life-changing water to Vanuatu's hidden communities](#)
- [An "all hands on deck" situation that brought helping hands from around the Pacific.](#)
- [Vanuatu struggles to rebuild as terrifying aftershocks continue](#)

In line with the agreed monitoring and learning approach for this operation, no independent evaluation was conducted. Instead, the Secretariat supported VRCS to implement a formal [Lessons Learned Workshop](#), recognizing that the scale and duration of the operation were better suited to an internal learning process. The workshop enabled staff and volunteers across sectors to reflect on performance, capture good practices, identify gaps, and translate findings into actionable improvements aligned with **Unified Planning 2026**.

Beyond programme delivery, Secretariat Services contributed to institutional strengthening, supporting VRCS in human resources development, volunteer welfare systems, governance preparation for national and branch AGMs, and planning for the rehabilitation of the VRCS headquarters following earthquake-related structural assessments. Coordination support also enabled VRCS participation in key national and regional forums, including

the Pacific Leadership Meeting, Shelter Cluster platforms, and the CVA Lessons Learned Workshop, strengthening alignment with regional disaster-management priorities.

Overall, Secretariat Services played a critical enabling role throughout the operation—supporting VRCS to move from rapid emergency response to structured recovery, strengthening systems and compliance, and laying a solid foundation for future operational resilience and preparedness.

Challenge

- **Coordinating support across multiple stakeholders** also required continuous effort. The response involved collaboration between the VRCS, the IFRC CCD in Suva, the APRO, and several PNSs. Aligning priorities, reporting requirements, and operational timelines across these actors required sustained coordination.
- **Information management and reporting demands** increased significantly during the operation. Consolidating data from multiple sectors, partners, and field locations required strengthened monitoring systems and continuous support to ensure that operational updates, financial reports, and donor reporting requirements were met in a timely manner.
- **Operational challenges at country level**, including damaged infrastructure, logistical constraints, and communication disruptions in the early phase of the disaster, also affected the delivery of technical and coordination support.
- In addition, **the transition from emergency response to a multi-sector recovery operation** required sustained technical support across shelter, CVA, WASH, health, and PGI, placing increasing demands on the IFRC CCD Pacific team and APRO colleagues responsible for programme guidance, monitoring, and coordination. This was compounded by the absence of an in-country Operations Manager from late June to mid-October 2025, due to recruitment and visa challenges, which required the CCD team in Fiji and APRO to provide remote support during a critical phase of the operation.

Lessons Learned

- **Strong Secretariat support strengthens the capacity of National Societies to deliver effective responses.** Technical guidance and coordination provided by IFRC CCD and APRO supported VRCS in implementing the Emergency Appeal and aligning its activities with Movement standards and operational procedures.
- **Effective coordination within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement enhances response efficiency.** Close collaboration among VRCS, IFRC, and PNSs enabled the pooling of technical expertise, improved resource mobilisation, and strengthened overall operational support.
- **Strengthening monitoring and reporting systems improves operational oversight.** The use of operational dashboards, ITT, and regular reporting processes supported evidence-based decision-making and enhanced transparency throughout the operation.
- **Flexible technical support is essential during evolving emergencies.** The ability of Secretariat teams to adapt their support to changing operational priorities—including the transition from emergency response to recovery—enabled VRCS to adjust programmes and maintain effective implementation.
- **Investing in institutional learning strengthens future preparedness.** The facilitation of the Lessons Learned Workshop and continued engagement with VRCS leadership supported reflection on operational experiences and helped integrate lessons into future planning and preparedness frameworks.
- **Regional coordination platforms support knowledge exchange and operational alignment.** Engagement with regional IFRC structures and humanitarian coordination platforms enabled the sharing of experiences and strengthened collaboration across the Pacific region.

D. FINANCIAL REPORT

The overall Federation-wide funding requirement to support the VRCS amounted to CHF 5.2 million. The IFRC Secretariat funding requirement was CHF 5.0 million, with a funding coverage of CHF 2,148,878 (43 per cent). Despite the funding gap, implementation of priority activities progressed, with a total expenditure of CHF 1,825,075 representing 85 per cent of the funds received. Please refer to the attached financial report for more details.

Variances between the budget and expenditure are primarily attributable to the lower-than-anticipated funding coverage, which required the scaling down or postponement of several planned high-value activities. In particular, some interventions under education, environmental sustainability, and selected health and livelihood components were deferred or implemented at a reduced scale. Furthermore, the planned VRCS office rehabilitation and construction project experienced delays due to the late finalization of design and cost estimates, a prolonged tender process, and confirmation of additional pledges only in mid-2025. As a result, this infrastructure activity could not be completed within the timeframe of the Emergency Appeal.

The conclusion of this Emergency Appeal operation has resulted in a remaining balance of CHF 323,803. In alignment with IFRC's commitment to sustained humanitarian support and organizational strengthening, these funds are proposed to be carried forward to the **Vanuatu Network Country Plan under Unified Planning 2026**, subject to donor agreement. The remaining funds will contribute to strengthening VRCS disaster preparedness and response capacity, including support for priority institutional investments such as the planned headquarters infrastructure project.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this balance, you are kindly invited to contact: PartnershipsEA.AP@ifrc.org within 30 days from the publication of this final report. The IFRC and VRCS extend their gratitude to all partners and donors for their invaluable support in this operation.

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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At the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office, Kuala Lumpur

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Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Previous Appeals and updates](#)
- [Operational Strategy](#)

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

Operational Strategy

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2024/12-2026/2	Operation	MDRVU012
Budget Timeframe	2024/12-2025/12	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 24 Mar 2026

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRVU012 - Vanuatu - Earthquake

Operating Timeframe: 18 Dec 2024 to 31 Dec 2025; appeal launch date: 18 Dec 2024

I. Emergency Appeal Funding Requirements

Total Funding Requirements	5,000,000
Donor Response* as per 24 Mar 2026	2,148,878
Appeal Coverage	42.98%

II. IFRC Operating Budget Implementation

Planned Operations / Enabling Approaches	Op Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items	220,622	149,901	70,721
PO02 - Livelihoods	130,131	172,709	-42,579
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	389,860	260,262	129,598
PO04 - Health	114,577	48,014	66,564
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	55,134	49,382	5,752
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion	14,499	14,879	-380
PO07 - Education	15,045	17,170	-2,125
PO08 - Migration	0	0	0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	602,400	216,130	386,270
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	5,859	5,446	413
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability	0	0	0
Planned Operations Total	1,548,127	933,892	614,235
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships	542	420	122
EA02 - Secretariat Services	108,060	626,515	-518,455
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	440,894	264,247	176,647
Enabling Approaches Total	549,496	891,182	-341,686
Grand Total	2,097,623	1,825,075	272,549

III. Operating Movement & Closing Balance per 2026/02

Opening Balance	0
Income (includes outstanding DREF Loan per IV.)	2,148,878
Expenditure	-1,825,075
Closing Balance	323,803
Deferred Income	0
Funds Available	323,803

IV. DREF Loan

* not included in Donor Response	Loan :	750,000	Reimbursed :	750,000	Outstanding :	0
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Operational Strategy

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2024/12-2026/2	Operation	MDRVU012
Budget Timeframe	2024/12-2025/12	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 24 Mar 2026

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRVU012 - Vanuatu - Earthquake

Operating Timeframe: 18 Dec 2024 to 31 Dec 2025; appeal launch date: 18 Dec 2024

V. Contributions by Donor and Other Income

Opening Balance							0
Income Type	Cash	InKind Goods	InKind Personnel	Other Income	TOTAL	Deferred Income	
Australian Red Cross (from Australian Government*)	449,215				449,215		
Australian Red Cross (from Australia - Private Donors*)	51,354				51,354		
Australian Red Cross (from QBE Group Services Pty L	51,354				51,354		
British Red Cross (from British Government*)	468,909				468,909		
British Red Cross (from King Charles III Charitable Fur	3,319				3,319		
Danish Red Cross (from Faroe Islands Red Cross*)	62,341				62,341		
European Commission - DG ECHO	187,384				187,384		
Hong Kong Red Cross, Branch of the Red Cross Socie	23,084				23,084		
Japanese Red Cross Society	146,890				146,890		
Nestle	38,000				38,000		
New Zealand Government	125,912				125,912		
New Zealand Red Cross	105,249				105,249		
On Line donations	804				804		
The Canadian Red Cross Society (from Canadian Gov	134,871				134,871		
The Netherlands Red Cross (from Netherlands Govern	300,192				300,192		
Total Contributions and Other Income	2,148,878	0	0	0	2,148,878	0	
Total Income and Deferred Income					2,148,878	0	