A severe Tropical Cyclone Donna is soon to make landfall in the islands of Vanuatu\(^1\).

Even before this cyclone there has existed an extremely high level of food security risk and vulnerability. Category 5 Cyclone Pam in 2015 caused food crises for approximately 220,000 people. The severe El Nino drought of 2015/2016 further exacerbated food insecurity, leaving the people of Vanuatu in a highly vulnerable place.

The Food Security & Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) is responsible for coordination and making recommendations to Government decision-makers in regards to food security preparation, response and recovery in keeping with the Ministry of Agriculture’s Standard Operating Procedures for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation\(^2\).

Led by the Ministry of Agriculture, and supported by a range of government, civil society, private sector, technical, UN, academic and other stakeholders, the Food Security & Agriculture Cluster is the focal point for communications in regards to the food impacts and responses to TC Donna.

The MALFFB Vanuatu Food Security & Agriculture Cluster is working closely with NDMO in the following areas:

- Agricultural Damage and Impact Assessments

\(^2\) http://fscluster.org/vanuatu/document/vanuatu-ministry-agriculture-sop-drm-and
MALFFB Vanuatu Food Security & Agriculture Cluster is currently handling the situation, but may need in the near-future to call upon international assistance in a variety of areas. Such needs will be announced through Government channels at a later time.

For all communications with the Food Security & Agriculture Cluster, please use FSACreport@gmail.com

Potential impacts of TC Donna on the Agriculture Sector

Permanent crops, such as kava, banana, coconut, cocoa, and coffee, are most vulnerable to cyclone, but seasonal crops (vegetables) and annual crops (cassava, taro) are also at risk. Livestock vulnerabilities include possible damage to poultry farms and infrastructure for pigs and apiculture activities. In the forestry subsector, TC Donna poses severe risks to infrastructure and trees and the timber industry. The fishery sector is at high risk due to phenomenal seas and potential storm surge with potential impacts on artisanal fisheries and commercial aquaculture. Salt spray will likely affect crops and causing degradation of productive sector infrastructure.

Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, and Fisheries Sector Background

Vanuatu’s agricultural sector is defined to include the crops, livestock, fishery, and forestry subsectors. The sector is dominated by crops, which represented 79% of the agriculture sector contribution to GDP, livestock (14%), forestry (5%), and fisheries (3%).

Approximately 80% of Vanuatu’s population relies on agriculture (mainly crops, livestock, and fisheries) for livelihood and food and nutrition security, and at least 71% of the rural population derives some income from agricultural activities. Vanuatu’s agriculture sector is dominated by semi-subsistence farmers using mostly household labor, who are located in tiny village communities spread throughout the archipelago. Food is the most important household expenditure item among rural households, representing 56% of total household expenditure, with the large share of the value of this expenditure being for home consumption among subsistence farmers.

Thank you and God Bless Vanuatu

Hon. MATAI SEREMAIAH NAWALU
Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Bio Security