

## **Port Vila Multi-Purpose Emergency Shelters Project progressing well**

The construction of three multi-purpose emergency shelters at Seaside, Freshwota, and Korman is progressing well. Work commenced on-site in late October 2024, and the shelters are expected to be completed by late February 2026.

The shelters will provide a safe place of refuge for people living in neighbouring communities during natural disasters like cyclones and host community activities during non-emergency times.

This initiative, led by the Government of Vanuatu with the support of donor partners, aims to build urban resilience and improve service delivery. The construction of multi-purpose emergency shelters is one of the components of the Greater Port Vila Urban Resilience Project, funded by the Asian Development Bank, the Irish Trust Fund, and the Global Environment Fund.

The China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) is responsible for the construction, having successfully won all three tenders.

The shelters are designed to meet the highest international standards for seismic and cyclone loads while being mindful of community needs and budget availability. Out of this process, a standard shelter design was developed—one that can be replicated quickly at a known cost anywhere in Vanuatu. In each location, the shelters are identical from the floor up, with only the foundations adapted to fit the site's ground conditions and topography.

The standard shelters will measure 20 meters wide by 35 meters long but include enough toilets, showers, and other services to expand up to 45 meters in length, accommodating significantly more people in other locations.

The project incorporates capacity building and institutional strengthening by employing and training Ni-Vanuatu construction supervisors at each site.

Officially referred to as the "Multi-Purpose Gender-Responsive Emergency Shelters Project," the building design strongly emphasizes inclusivity, incorporating features such as disability access and gender considerations.

About 20,400 residents of Port Vila will benefit from the project, half of whom are women.

The multi-purpose emergency shelters initiative is part of the Greater Port Vila Urban Resilience Project, which also includes a nature-based coastal protection pilot, including the planting of mangroves; and climate change modelling to guide the development and updating of key urban planning documents.

The Greater Port Vila Urban Resilience Project is guided by the Greater Port Vila Resilient Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan (GPV RUDSAP), which envisions that by 2030, Port Vila will be safe, inclusive, resilient, and a vibrant economic hub based on sustainable development.

The Greater Port Vila Urban Resilience Project sits under the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Below are drone images of the current state of construction of the multi-purpose emergency shelters.



Figure 1 - Seaside multi-purpose emergency shelter under construction (Drone photo by DUAP, May 2025)



Figure 2. Korman multi-purpose emergency shelter under construction (Drone photo by DUAP, May 2025)



Figure 3 - Freshwota multi-purpose emergency shelter under construction (Drone photo by DUAP, May 2025)



Figure 4 – The Building Model – what the multi-purpose emergency shelters will look like upon completion (Photo by DUAP)