

Social Protection and Humanitarian Assistance Nexus for Disaster Response: Lessons Learnt from Fiji's Tropical Cyclone Winston

Aisha Mansur, Jesse Doyle, and Oleksiy Ivaschenko



February 2017



Social Protection and Humanitarian Assistance Nexus for Disaster Response: Lessons Learnt from Fiji's Tropical Cyclone Winston

Aisha Mansur, Jesse Doyle and Oleksiy Ivaschenko¹

February, 2017

Abstract: This paper presents an analysis of the humanitarian response led by the Government of Fiji following Tropical Cyclone Winston, and looks specifically at the role the social protection system played in disaster response, as well as complementing the humanitarian relief efforts. The safety net system or social assistance programs, were scaled up to provide relief to the most vulnerable, in the form of cash transfer top-up payments. While the national social protection system was used to channel humanitarian relief in the form of cash vouchers to the affected families. The interplay between the social protection and humanitarian assistance efforts in Fiji, presents a compelling case for synchronizing and complementing relief efforts in the future. And, a set of recommendations have been put forward for consideration, for strengthening future disaster responsive social protection.

JEL Classification: I39, Q54

KEYWORDS: Social Protection, Humanitarian Assistance, Social Assistance, Natural Disasters, Poverty Alleviation, Poverty, Hardship, Safety Net, Impact Evaluation, Cash Transfers, Pacific Island Countries, Fiji.

¹ Aisha Mansur, Consultant, World Bank, SPL GP, amansur@worldbank.org; Jesse Doyle, Economist, World Bank, SPL GP, jdoyle1@worldbank.org; Oleksiy Ivaschenko, Sr. Economist, World Bank, SPL GP, oivaschenko@worldbank.org.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Executive Summary | 3 |
| I. Country Overview..... | 9 |
| II. Fiji’s Social Protection System | 13 |
| III. Impact of Tropical Cyclone Winston..... | 18 |
| IV. Humanitarian Response to TC Winston | 23 |
| 4.1 Humanitarian Response Structure | 24 |
| 4.2 Relief Efforts | 26 |
| 4.3 Humanitarian Response Funding | 29 |
| V. Analysis of Humanitarian Response to TC Winston | 31 |
| 5.1 Achievements | 31 |
| 5.2 Challenges and Constraints | 33 |
| VI. Disaster Responsive Social Protection post-TC Winston..... | 35 |
| 6.1 Social Protection Programs | 37 |
| 6.2 Impact of SP Programs and Funding | 40 |
| 6.3 Evaluation of the Impact of the Social Assistance Top-up Payments | 41 |
| VII. Changing Landscape of Social Protection following TC Winston | 46 |
| VIII. Recommendations for Strengthening Disaster Responsive Social Protection..... | 48 |
| References..... | 52 |

Executive Summary

This discussion paper presents an analysis of the humanitarian response following Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston, and looks specifically at the role social protection played in improving disaster response and complementing the humanitarian assistance effort in Fiji. The paper also explores the changing landscape of social protection following TC Winston and documents some of the key achievements and challenges faced in the response period. Furthermore, a list of recommendations has been put together for further discussion on future disaster responsive social protection.

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston, an extremely destructive Category 5 cyclone, struck Fiji on February 20th 2016, causing widespread damage and destruction and reportedly impacting over 540,000 people, or 60 percent of the total population of Fiji. The government estimates the value of disaster effects arising from TC Winston to amount to F\$2 billion (US\$0.9 billion), which is more than 20 percent of current GDP, and can be broken down to include F\$1.29 billion (US\$0.6 billion) in damage (i.e., destroyed physical assets) and F\$0.71 billion (US\$0.3 billion) in losses (i.e., changes in the economic flows of the production of goods and services).

In the wake of TC Winston, a state of natural disaster was declared by the Government of Fiji on February 20th, 2016 followed by a state of emergency. Since then the government has successfully led all humanitarian response efforts, coordinated through the nine national humanitarian clusters² led by the government ministries, and received strong support from the humanitarian partners, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), foreign governments, donors and civil society. The government was quick to set into motion the humanitarian response framework necessary for initiating and coordinating humanitarian assistance.

² The national humanitarian clusters are: Communications; Education; Food Security and Livelihoods; Health and Nutrition; Logistics; Public Works and Utilities; Shelter; Safety and Protection; and WASH.

The government has received approximately US\$33.4 million in humanitarian assistance for TC Winston. Of the total US\$33.4 million, US\$21.5 million is against the UN Flash Appeal and earmarked for the response plan, while the remaining US\$13.6 million is unmarked funding. Approximately 56 percent of the funding of the UN Flash Appeal has been met, making TC Winston the best funded emergency response in the world for the year 2016, with generous donations from Australia, Canada, the European Commission, Germany, Belgium, Lithuania, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (UNOCHA, 2016). Of the total funding received under the Flash Appeal, approximately 60 percent went to projects implemented by the government.

As of early April 2016, approximately F\$10 million (US\$4.7 million) emergency relief supplies in the form of food rations have been distributed by the government through the National Disaster Management Office to the families in the affected areas, completing the first round of assistance. It is estimated that around 370,000 people were reached through the first round of food assistance (UNOCHA, 2016). The government, in collaboration with the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, has also provided an estimated 45,000 farmers with seeds and seedlings, and 14,000 fishermen with fishery assets, in affected areas to ensure longer term food security as crops are being replanted. Emergency food assistance through vouchers has been provided to an estimated 82,000 people using the government's social assistance system.

The humanitarian response to TC Winston was quick and led effectively by the government. Some of the response strategies implemented were very unique, not only to the country but also to the region, and can contribute significantly to the existing literature on disaster risk management. Some of the broader achievements of the TC Winston response and some of the challenges and constraints faced in its implementation are as follows:

Achievements

- The humanitarian response successfully leveraged and built upon the existing national systems in place in Fiji.
- There was a complementary overlap between humanitarian assistance and social protection interventions for disaster response.
- The Humanitarian response made wide use of cash and voucher payments, which is a relatively new model for the Pacific.
- Complex logistical support provided through strong civil-military cooperation enabled emergency relief across many isolated islands.
- The National Cluster System was put to the test for the first time during TC Winston and proved effective in its ability to coordinate response at the national level and work with all humanitarian actors.
- There was fast deployment of emergency relief following TC Winston due to strong institutional capacity of the government.

Challenges and Constraints

- Despite the overall success of the funding drive for the Humanitarian Flash Appeal, several key clusters were left poorly funded.
- The lack of visibility over bilateral donations limited the ability of some clusters to coordinate and monitor progress towards meeting needs.
- There is a need to strengthen the social assistance database to include near-poor families and allow for geographical targeting in future disasters.
- Adverse weather and logistical challenges in reaching some of the country's highlands and outer islands posed a challenge for the government and humanitarian actors in relief efforts.
- Absence of good quality baseline data affected the ability of many clusters in making rapid assessment of the total population affected and damages incurred and providing adequate relief accordingly.

- The Agriculture sector, which was the worst hit by TC Winston, was further impacted by TC Zena in April 2016. This caused widespread flooding of key horticultural areas of Fiji, destroying up to 80 percent of ongoing rehabilitation work.

Following TC Winston, the Government implemented a number of disaster responsive social protection programs, which have translated into an injection of approximately F\$344.7 million (US\$160 million) into the economy. In the immediate relief period following TC Winston, the government committed to a range of social protection programs, which are estimated to have impacted the lives of more than 170,000 families (Table 1).

Table 1. Post-TC Winston Social Protection Interventions

| Program | Number of Beneficiaries (Households) | Duration | Budget (F\$ million) |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Social Welfare Top-up Payments | 43,897 | 3 months (March-May 2016) | 19.9 |
| Food Voucher Program | 44,169 | 2 months (May-June 2016) | 4.6 |
| Housing Program | 30,369 | June 2016 - onwards | 70 |
| Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) | 170,000 | 2 months (March-April 2016) | 250.2 |
| Total | | | 344.7 |

Source: Fiji Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016)

Four weeks into the disaster, the Government disbursed F \$19.9 million (US\$9.4 million) using the existing social assistance schemes to efficiently disburse cash to vulnerable groups and inject much needed cash into the economy. The cash top-up payments were intended to help people meet immediate expenses following TC Winston and were provided to all existing beneficiaries, irrespective of whether they resided in the affected areas or not. A follow-up food voucher payment of F \$4.6 million (US\$2.1 million) for two months (May/June 2016) to the social assistance recipients was developed by the government and is a good example of how humanitarian assistance and social protection mechanisms have jointly been used by the government for disaster response. The humanitarian assistance received for food security has also been implemented through the governments existing

framework of social assistance. The government announced the roll-out of a F\$70 million (US\$32.6 million) Housing Program, or “Help for Homes” initiative, which is designed to assist families to rebuild homes that were damaged or destroyed by providing them with vouchers.

The Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) disbursed approximately F\$250.2 million (US\$116.4 million) to its members in the first two months following TC Winston. The Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF), the largest social insurance program in the country, allowed affected members to withdraw cash nine days after TC Winston, resulting in a significant injection of cash into the economy. However, this withdrawal may have a long term impact on members as they will receive reduced pensions in the future, and many will likely not be able to access any further funds in case of future emergencies.

The government anticipates a 33 percent increase in the number of families requiring social assistance in the wake of TC Winston and estimates a F\$7 million medium term recovery budget for the expansion of the existing social protection programs. The cyclone is expected to have impacted the most impoverished strata of the country and the possibility of people sinking into deeper poverty or more people becoming poor following TC Winston is a distinct possibility. As a result, the government has estimated a F\$7 million (US\$3.3 million) medium term recovery budget until mid-2018 for the expansion of the social protection programs in Fiji following TC Winston.

Moving forward the government is in an opportune position to reflect upon its response to TC Winston and refine its Social Protection Policy Framework to include disaster response for future emergencies. The government has been actively reviewing and refining its social protection programs in Fiji through reforms aimed at increasing the coverage and effectiveness of its operations. It has also been learning from its past disasters and has incorporated many recommendations from TC Evan into its response for TC Winston. In view of the government’s effective and timely response to TC Winston, the institutionalization of a Disaster Responsive Social Protection framework for Fiji would further help to refine the

response strategies and streamline technical details, such as targeting, payments, and budgeting to be better prepared for similar natural disasters in the future.

Based on the experiences of TC Winston and the lessons learnt, the following recommendations can be put forward for the Government's consideration moving forward, for a stronger and resilient disaster response framework.

- Develop an institutionalized (formal) Social Protection Policy Framework, with an embedded disaster responsive component.
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) and guidelines for disaster responsive social protection.
- Establish a coordination mechanism for cash transfer interventions in times of disaster.
- Consolidate and centralize the Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS) database so that both poor and near-poor households can be targeted in times of disaster.
- Complement humanitarian assistance with both in-kind and cash assistance, based on access and functionality of local markets.
- Develop a Post-Disaster Communication Plan.
- Explore options for Disaster Risk Financing in Fiji.

I. Country Overview

Fiji is one of the largest and most developed of the Pacific Island Countries (PIC) and serves geographically and economically as the centre of the Pacific. Fiji is an archipelago of 332 islands (of which approximately 110 are inhabited), and is spread over a land area of approximately 18,300km² and a geographic area of almost 50,000km². The country has a population of approximately 865,000³ people, with the majority of people residing primarily on the two largest islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Fiji is the second-largest country in the region after Papua New Guinea, and one of the wealthiest in the Pacific, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$4.53 billion and a gross national income (GNI) of US\$4,870 per capita⁴. Fiji's economic growth has been strong in recent years, reaching 3.6 percent in 2013, 5.3 percent in 2014, and an estimated 4 percent in 2015, which is significantly above the average of 2 percent for the period 1980–2012. This has been a result of strong credit growth, buoyant remittances, and improved labour market conditions which have boosted consumer demand. Furthermore, tourism and government spending on infrastructure has also supported the strong growth momentum. The economy is primarily based on agriculture, sugar, and tourism, with tourism being the largest foreign exchange earner over the years.

Fiji is highly vulnerable to external shocks and natural disasters and experiences one cyclone per year on average. Fiji is located in the tropical cyclone belt and experiences frequent tropical cyclones characterized by damaging winds, rain, and storm surge. It is situated in a relatively quiet seismic area, but is surrounded by the Pacific Ring of Fire, which aligns with the boundaries of the tectonic plates and is associated with extreme seismic activity, volcanic activity, large earthquakes, and tsunamis. Additionally, it suffers from extreme events associated with climate change, such as sea-level rise, temperature extremes and droughts. The country experiences on average one cyclone per year, and since 1980 the

³ Fiji Population and Labour Force Estimates, 2014.

⁴ World Bank Open Data website: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/fiji>

various disasters have resulted in average annual economic damages of around F\$35 million (US\$16.3 million) and impacted the lives of around 40,000 people each year (Government of Fiji, 2016). Due to the increasing incidence of global disasters, it is expected that Fiji will incur, on average, F\$158 million (US\$85 million) per year in losses due to earthquakes and tropical cyclones. In the next 50 years, Fiji has a 50 percent chance of experiencing a loss exceeding F\$1.5 billion (US\$806 million), and a 10 percent chance of experiencing a loss exceeding F\$3 billion (US\$1.6 billion)⁵, however these figures may be worse once the impacts of climate change are taken into consideration.

The country has fairly strong human development indicators. Life expectancy at birth is 69.6 years (73 for women and 67 for men), and the adult literacy rate is 93.7 percent (UNDP, 2014). Enrolment in primary education is almost universal, with a primary net enrolment rate of 96.8 percent, which is well above the Pacific average of 86.4 percent. Net enrolment in secondary education, at 80.3 percent, is the highest in the Pacific. Fiji is facing stagnant progress in some of its health indicators, with infant and child mortality rates being high at around 13 and 24 per 1000 births, respectively, compared to the MDG targets of 6 and 9. The maternal mortality rate is at around 32 per 100,000 births, against the target of 10 (WHO, 2011). Access to improved drinking water source is to about 95.7 percent of population and access to improved sanitation facilities is to about 91.1 percent of the population.⁶

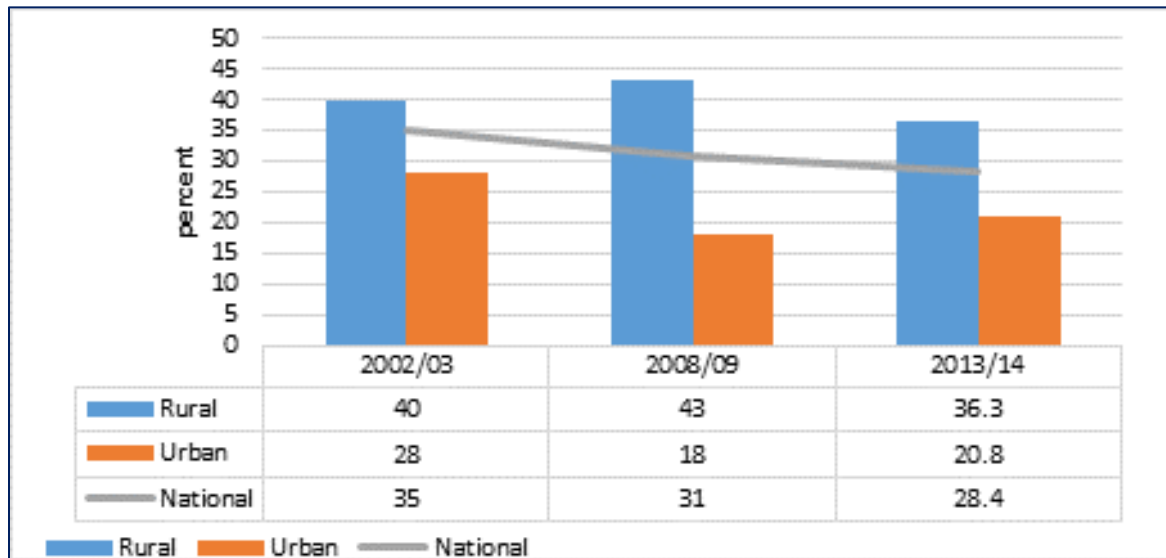
Poverty in Fiji is generally defined as hardship and instances of extreme poverty are very rare. Due to the country's reliance on community-based agricultural and fishing traditions and the presence of strong traditional support networks, which allow for individuals to be cared for within the community, poverty in Fiji is defined as hardship. This means having a

⁵ These figures are based on modelling from PCRAFI (2015) and reported in the Fiji PDNA 2016.

⁶ Website: CIA Factbook Fiji <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fj.html>. Website accessed on 30 June 2016.

lack of access to a fully nutritional diet, clean drinking water, improved sanitation, quality education and health care and employment or income earning opportunities.⁷

Figure 1 - Incidence of Poverty in Urban and Rural Fiji



Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Household Income Expenditure Surveys 2002/2003; 2008/2009; 2013/2014. Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

Although extreme poverty is rare in Fiji, 28 percent of Fijians live below the basic-needs poverty line (equivalent to US\$3.10 a day).⁸ Preliminary estimates from the 2013/14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), show a decline in the proportion of the population living below the basic-needs poverty line to 28.1 percent, from 31 percent in the 2008/09 HIES.⁹ Within that overall trend, rural poverty – which is much higher than urban poverty – fell from 43 percent to 36.7 percent, and urban poverty rose from 18 percent to 19.8 percent (Figure 1). Poverty rates are highest in the Northern and Eastern Divisions, at 47.9 percent and 40.0 percent respectively (the areas worst hit by TC Winston). The Central Division, with its large informal settlements around the capital Suva, has the highest number of people living in poverty (Table 2). Gender disaggregated poverty data is not yet available

⁷ Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (2009)

⁸ Fiji Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), 2013/2014.

⁹ The figures reported here are income-based estimates produced by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics.

from the 2013/14 HIES, but World Bank analysis of the 2008/09 HIES showed that female-headed households were less likely to be in poverty than male-headed households (World Bank, 2011). Inequality appears to have decreased between the 2008/09 HIES and 2013/14 HIES, with the income share of the top three deciles falling and that of the bottom seven deciles rising between the surveys. Inequality is significantly higher in urban areas, than in rural areas.

Table 2. Incidence of Poverty by Division (%)

| Household Income Expenditure Surveys | | 2002/2003 | 2008/2009 | 2013/2014 | Total Population (000s) | Population living below the Basic-needs Poverty Line 2013/2014 (000s) |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| Urban | Central | 24 | 16 | 8 | 260 | 20 |
| | Eastern | 42 | 30 | 29 | 4 | 1 |
| | Northern | 39 | 38 | 35 | 33 | 12 |
| | Western | 33 | 17 | 22 | 134 | 30 |
| Rural | Central | 29 | 36 | 36 | 98 | 35 |
| | Eastern | 35 | 40 | 43 | 36 | 15 |
| | Northern | 57 | 51 | 52 | 101 | 53 |
| | Western | 38 | 43 | 27 | 179 | 47 |
| National | | 35 | 31 | 28 | 845 | 240 |

Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Household Income Expenditure Surveys 2002/2003; 2008/2009; 2013/2014. Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

Fiji has a low official unemployment rate (6.2 percent), but a high dependence on informal sector employment and subsistence activities. The labour force participation rate in Fiji is 59 per cent (Table 3), which is relatively low for Pacific Island countries where the regional average is 65.6 per cent (ILO, 2016). The rate is primarily driven down by low female participation, which at 41.6 per cent compared to male participation of 75.8 percent. According to 2010/11 estimates, around 44.2 percent of employment is based in the agriculture sector, 14.3 percent in industry and 41.6 percent in services, of which nearly 50

percent of the employed are in paid positions, 26.1 per cent in a mix of paid and subsistence work, and the remaining 24 per cent in subsistence activities. In the agricultural sector, 51.2 per cent of all employment is solely on a subsistence level (ADB and ILO, 2015). Additionally, around 60 percent of Fiji’s workers are in informal employment and not contributing to the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF).

Table 3. Key Economic and Labour Market Indicators, 2014

| | Female | Male | Total |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Labour force (thousands) | 127.3 | 239.5 | 366.8 |
| Employment (thousands) | 116.0 | 227.9 | 344.0 |
| Labour force participation rate (%) | 41.6 | 75.8 | 59.0 |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 8.9 | 4.8 | 6.2 |
| Adult, ages 25+ | 5.3 | 3.1 | 2.1 |
| Youth, ages 15-24 | 26.0 | 13.8 | 18.2 |
| Informal employment rate (%) | 64.7 | 57.4 | 60.0 |

Source: Asian Development Bank (ADB) and ILO: Fiji: Creating quality jobs: Employment diagnostics study (2015)

II. Fiji’s Social Protection System

Over the years Fiji has demonstrated a strong commitment of providing social assistance to its vulnerable populations struggling to meet their basic needs. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW), under the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MWCPA), is the lead agency for social assistance in Fiji and administers Fiji’s core programs. Historically, it has focused on four major programs consisting of the Family Assistance Program (FAP), Care and Protection (C&P) allowance, Food Voucher Program (FVP) and the Free Bus Fare Program (FBFP). In 2010, these four programs represented the core of the social assistance provided in Fiji, with a combined budget amounting to F\$ 39 million, or 0.6 percent of GDP

(World Bank, 2016). Formal sector workers have also historically been covered through the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF).

A rigorous reform process of the social protection system was undertaken by the government from 2010-2011, through extensive technical assistance (TA) provided by the World Bank,¹⁰ which resulted in key reforms and an expansion of the existing social assistance programs. The new system was rolled out in 2013, with the Family Assistance Program being replaced by the improved Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS), which targeted the poorest 10 percent of households in Fiji compared to the earlier 3 percent. In addition, the Social Pension Scheme (SPS) was introduced to provide social pensions to elderly people (age 70+) who fell outside the coverage of the FNPF or other social assistance programs. The FNPF was also scrutinised and reforms undertaken to tighten the rules and regulations governing the various schemes and its long-run sustainability.

Developing systems for poverty targeting, data administration and beneficiary payments.

The SP reforms process of 2010-11 essentially focused on expanding the overall coverage and further improving targeting under the social assistance programs, especially the PBS. Under the PBS, an objectively verifiable targeting methodology was introduced using poverty means testing (PMT) to establish the poverty threshold for the program and its beneficiaries. As a self-reporting process, households apply for the PBS and are evaluated for eligibility by the Department of the Social Welfare. However, the benefit is only awarded to those households which have a welfare status falling below the poverty threshold. This is currently set at approximately the bottom 10 percent of the welfare distribution. The “near-poor” households (those whose welfare score is low, but still above the program’s threshold) are not given a benefit. Yet, the full information set is collected for all households that ask to be evaluated for eligibility. At present, regional databases exist for all active PBS beneficiaries,

¹⁰ The key objectives of the TA were to: (i) improve the design, and, ultimately, coverage and targeting, of the social assistance programs; (ii) introduce new social assistance programs targeting specific vulnerable groups; (iii) improve operational processes and practices for determination of eligibility and delivery of social transfers.

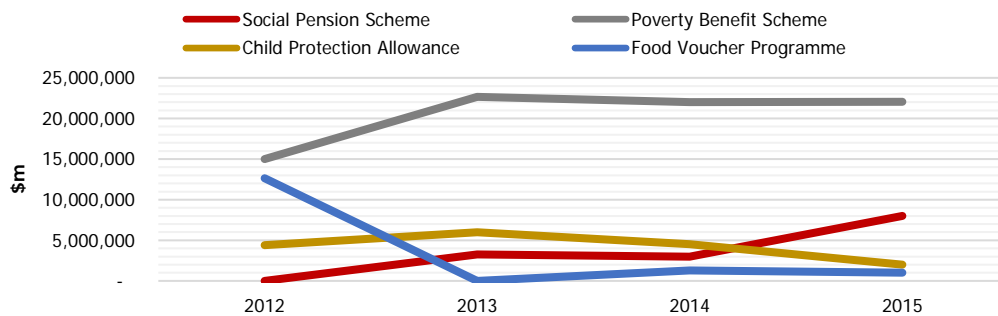
however, there is yet to be a consolidated centralized database for the program. Furthermore, the records of the “near poor” households are available on paper with the regional offices but have not been converted electronically and are not part of the existing database. However, this does not take away from the fact that Fiji has a robust poverty registry in place for PBS. In addition, the DSW also maintains separate databases for each of its other social assistance programs, ensuring that a rich repository of information is available on the poor in Fiji. Lastly, in the past few years, DSW has transitioned its beneficiaries to electronic welfare payments, with the majority now receiving their payments through the formal banking system and only a small percentage, in remote areas, still receiving their payments through the post office.

Since 2012, the government has allocated more than F \$30 million (US\$14 million) annually from the national budget to the four major social protection programs (Government of Fiji, 2016). The core programs are the Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS), Care and Protection Scheme (CPS), and the Social Pension Scheme (SPS), inbuilt with a Food Voucher Program (FVP) and the Free Bus Fare Program (FBFP). The PBS provides the benefit of F\$ 30 per person to up to 4 household members, plus a food voucher of F\$ 50. The program currently benefits 23,035 families and has an annual budget of F\$ 22 million (US\$10.2 million) (Table 4/5). The SPS is targeted towards elderly people aged 68 years¹¹ and above, who are outside of the FNPF or other social assistance coverage, and provides the benefit of F\$50 per beneficiary. The program currently benefits 17,782 individuals and has an annual budget of F\$8 million (US\$3.7 million). The CPS targets vulnerable households with children belonging to the following categories: single parents, deserted spouses, death of breadwinner, and prisoner’s dependents. Since the introduction of the PBS in 2013, a significant number of cases have been transferred from the CPS to PBS, and this process continues. The benefit level depends on the number of children and their age (school grade they are attending), and cannot exceed

¹¹ The age for the SPS beneficiaries has been reduced to 66 years following the start of the new financial year in July 2016.

F\$110 per household, plus a food voucher of F\$ 50. The CPS currently benefits 3,313 families and has an annual budget of F\$2 million (US\$0.9 million). In 2014, the Food Voucher Program (FVP) for pregnant women in rural areas was introduced with an aim to reduce the incidence of malnutrition (especially anemia) and complications during pregnancy. The program, in 2015, benefitted 4,221 rural pregnant mothers from a \$1million budget allocation. The government has invested more than F \$30 million (US\$14 million) annually in the four core social protection programs since the reforms in 2012 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Social Protection Budget (2012–2015)



Source: Fiji Budget Estimates (2012–2015) as reported in Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

Since 2009, the government has steadily increased investment in its social protection portfolio. There has been a significant increase in the amount of funding from F\$20.4 million (US\$9.5 million) in 2009 to F \$33 million (US\$15.3 million) in 2015 (Table 4). The number of families taking advantage of the programs has also increased, from 23,332 families in 2011 to 43,897 in 2016 (Table 5). The country is still heavily reliant on its social assistance programs.

Table 4. Social Protection Programs of the Government

| Program | Yearly Budget (F\$) million | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Family Assistance Program | 20 | 15 | 15 | 15 | - | - | - |
| Poverty Benefit Scheme | - | - | - | - | 22.6 | 22 | 22 |
| Care and Protection Allowance | 0.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 6 | 4.5 | 2 |
| Social Pension Scheme | - | - | - | - | 3.2 | 3 | 8 |
| Food Voucher Program | - | 7.44 | 11 | 12.6 | - | 1.3 | 1 |
| Total Budget | 20.4 | 26.84 | 30.4 | 32 | 31.8 | 30.8 | 33 |

Source: Fiji Budget Estimates (2012–2015) as reported in Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

Table 5. Total number of Beneficiaries under the Social Protection Programs

| Program | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Poverty Benefit Scheme | 19,661 | 14,660 | 17,138 | 18,093 | 23,235 | 22,802 |
| Care and Protection Allowance* | 3,671 | 3,671 | 10,831 | 2,309 | 3,141 | 3,313 |
| Social Pension Scheme | - | - | 8,407 | 9,508 | 16,472 | 17,782 |
| Total | 23,332 | 18,331 | 36,376 | 29,910 | 42,848 | 43,897 |

Source: Fiji Department of Social Welfare (2011-2016)

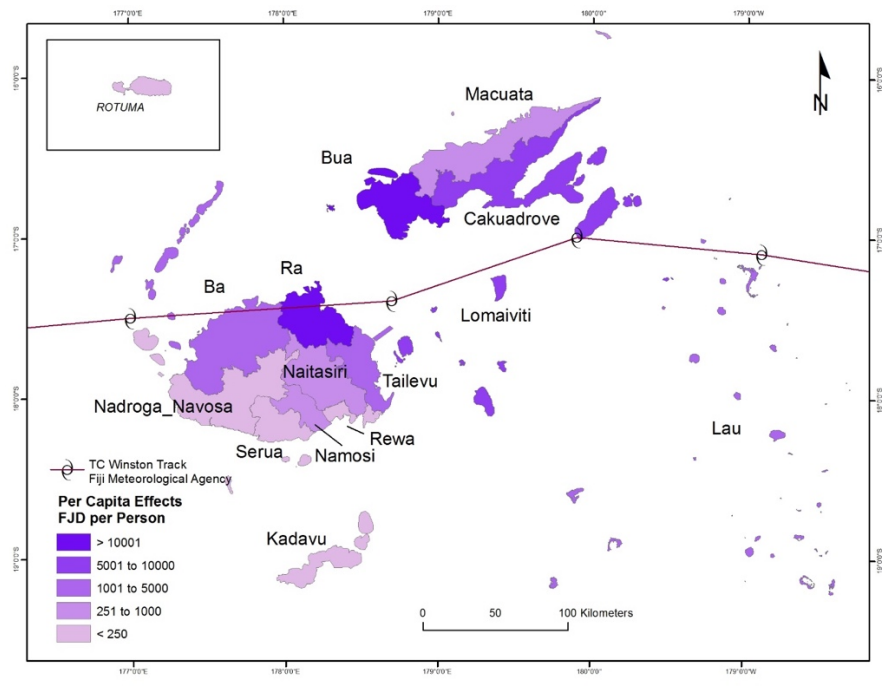
* Since the introduction of the PBS a significant number of cases have been transferred from the CPS to PBS, and this process is still ongoing.

In the wake of Tropical Cyclone Winston, Fiji has become a pioneer in the provision of disaster responsive social protection in the Pacific. With a relatively strong social protection system already in place, Fiji decided to use its existing social protection schemes to provide additional assistance to poor and vulnerable households, as part of its disaster response (discussed in detail in later chapters). As a result, the social protection system of Fiji has been rigorously tested in the face of TC Winston and has come out strong in terms of its ability to both rapidly respond and disburse cash assistance to affected families, and use its existing systems for channelling other humanitarian relief efforts.

III. Impact of Tropical Cyclone Winston

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston, an extremely destructive Category 5 cyclone, struck Fiji on 20th February 2016. It was the first Category 5 cyclone to directly impact Fiji, with maximum average wind speeds reaching 233km/hour and wind gusts peaking at around 306km/hour, making it one of the most powerful cyclones ever recorded in the Southern Hemisphere (Government of Fiji, 2016). The Eastern Division of Fiji was the first to be hit by Winston and severely damaged the Islands of Koro, Ovalau and Taveuni, also damaging other Island's within its path before reaching its peak strength and making landfall on Viti Levu (Northern part) and Vanua Levu (Southern part) (Figure 3). In addition to the extreme wind speeds, storm surges led to flooding in many islands, and in some cases, inundated areas almost 200 meters inland.

Figure 3. Geographical Distribution of Per Capita Disaster Effects



Source: Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016)

In its wake, TC Winston caused widespread damage and destruction and reportedly impacted over 540,000 people, or 60 percent of the total population of Fiji. TC Winston caused 44 fatalities and around 40,000 people required immediate assistance.¹² Consequently, over 30,000 houses, 500 schools, and 88 health clinics and medical facilities were damaged or destroyed. Approximately 80 percent of the nation’s population lost power, including the entire island of Vanua Levu. TC Winston affected approximately 540,400 people or 62 percent of the national population of Fiji (estimated at 865,611)¹³, with the largest affected population being in the Western division, and followed by the Central, the Northern and the Eastern divisions (Table 6). In terms of livelihoods affected, 57 percent relate to the agricultural sector, 17 percent to commerce, 10 percent to manufacturing, and 8 percent to tourism and transportation equally.

Table 6. Population Affected by TC Winston¹⁴

| Geographical area (Division) | Deaths | Missing | Hospitalised | Injured | Number of persons affected as a result of loss of livelihood of main bread winner (000s) | Number of persons displaced (000s) | Total number of affected Population (000s) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|---|---|---|
| Central | 6 | 0 | 2 | 24 | 163 | 5 | 168 |
| Eastern | 22 | 1 | 3 | 59 | 30 | 76 | 38 |
| Northern | 3 | 0 | 5 | 10 | 93 | 10 | 104 |
| Western | 13 | 0 | 17 | 24 | 199 | 32 | 230 |
| Total | 44 | 1 | 27 | 117 | 485 | 55 | 540 |

Source: Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

¹² Fiji PDNA TC Winston 2016.

¹³ Population and Labour Force Estimates 2014.

¹⁴ The affected population comprises: (i) those whose lives were lost, the injured, and the ill (which together accounted for approximately 0.03 percent of the total affected population); (ii) the displaced (which included those whose homes were totally destroyed and accounted for approximately 10 percent of the total affected population); and (iii) those whose livelihoods were affected (which accounted for almost 90 percent of the total affected population).

Box 1. The impact of TC Winston at the Village Level

The village of Bureiwai was one of many villages severely affected by TC Winston. A vibrant community, with farming and fishing as its main source of livelihood, the effects of the cyclone have been devastating here. There has been extensive damage to property, with only one house standing in the entire village, and loss of income. Nearly all the villagers have lost their boats and fishing gear due to the tidal waves, and have limited access to their agricultural farmlands (fallen trees and soil erosion) following the cyclone. The cyclone also damaged the fences securing the livestock due to which some escaped while others entered the village and further damaged the village.

Impacts: The community is now engaged in daily subsistence activities with the women fishing on the shores for everyday survival. They are now eating less (only 2 meals a day) and steadily running out of the initial food relief supplies. The community is facing psychological trauma due to the cyclone, especially elders and children, who were identified as the most vulnerable groups. They have also not received any power since the cyclone as the village generator got damaged.

Immediate Needs: Rebuilding houses, fishing gears, boats, seedlings (short term crops), farming equipment (for clean-up and preparing of land for planting), rebuilding fencing, solar power lights, and psychological counselling.

Source: World Bank team

* A field visit was conducted two months into TC Winston to understand how the communities in the province of Ra, Central Division of Fiji, had been affected by the disaster, while looking specifically at their changing livelihoods, coping strategies, and their immediate needs.

The government estimates the value of disaster effects arising from TC Winston to amount to F\$2 billion (US\$0.9 billion), which is more than 20 percent of current GDP. The value of disaster effects and can be broken down to include F\$1.29 billion (US\$0.6 billion) in damage (i.e., destroyed physical assets) and F\$0.71 billion (US\$0.3 billion) in losses (i.e., changes in the economic flows of the production of goods and services)¹⁵ (Table 7). The individual sectors that sustained the greatest damage were housing, accounting for 58 percent of total damage costs, followed by transport, accounting for 10 percent of all damage. While, the highest level of production losses was sustained in the agriculture sector and were estimated at 65 percent of total losses. The housing sector suffered the highest total effects from TC Winston (including both damage and losses), accounting for 39 percent of the total. Damage and losses were highest in the Western Division (49 percent of total disaster effects) and in

¹⁵ These figures exclude the environment sector, as environmental assets and flows of environmental services are not included in the national accounts.

the Northern Division (28 percent), while the Central and Eastern Divisions were affected to a lesser degree (12 percent and 11 percent respectively).

Table 7. Summary of Disaster Effects by Sector

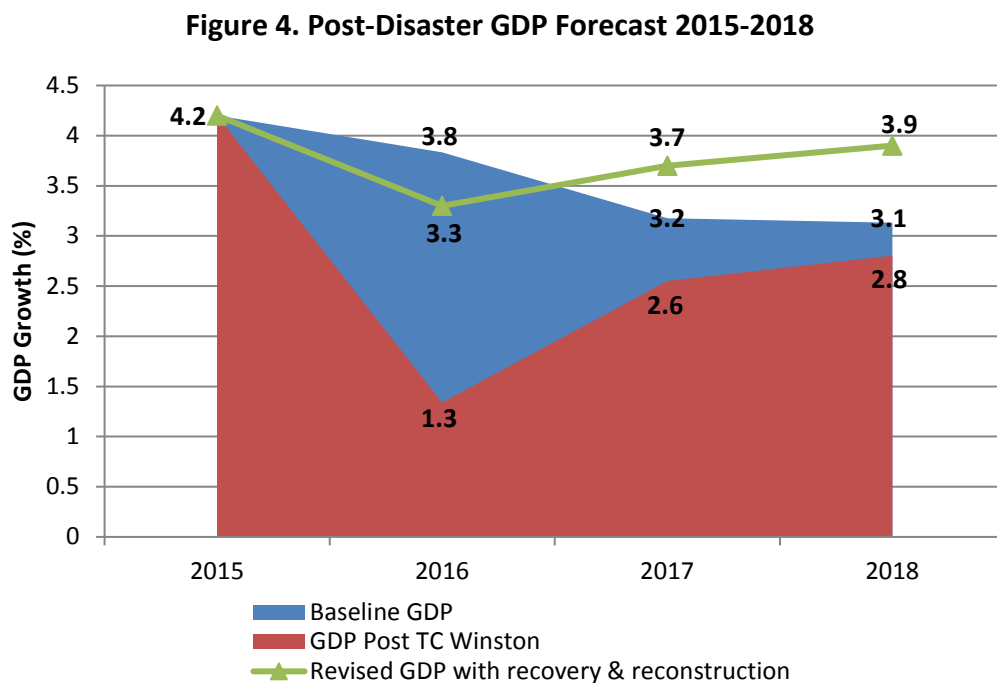
| | Disaster Effects (F\$ million) | | | Share of Disaster Effects (%) | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| | Damage | Losses | Total | Public | Private |
| Productive Sectors | 241.8 | 594.5 | 836.3 | 12 | 88 |
| Agriculture | 81.3 | 460.7 | 542.0 | 7 | 93 |
| Commerce and Manufacturing | 72.9 | 69.9 | 142.8 | 49 | 51 |
| Tourism | 76.1 | 43.9 | 120.0 | 0 | 100 |
| Mining | 11.5 | 20.0 | 31.5 | 0 | 100 |
| Social Sectors | 827.9 | 40.0 | 867.9 | 12 | 88 |
| Education | 69.2 | 7.4 | 76.6 | 100 | 0 |
| Health | 7.7 | 6.2 | 13.9 | 100 | 0 |
| Housing | 751.0 | 26.4 | 777.4 | 2 | 98 |
| Infrastructure Sectors | 208.2 | 40.4 | 248.6 | 84 | 16 |
| Transport | 127.1 | 2.4 | 129.5 | 98 | 2 |
| Water and Sanitation | 16.9 | 7.9 | 24.8 | 100 | 0 |
| Electricity | 33.0 | 8.1 | 41.1 | 100 | 0 |
| Communications | 31.2 | 22.0 | 53.2 | 30 | 70 |
| Cross-Cutting Issues | 239.6 | 660.1 | 899.7 | 4 | 96 |
| Environment ^a | 232.5 | 629.8 | 862.3 | 0 | 100 |
| Culture and Heritage | 5.1 | 0.8 | 5.9 | 23 | 77 |
| Disaster Risk Management | 2.0 | 29.5 | 31.5 | 100 | 0 |
| Total (Excluding Environment) ^b | 1,285.0 | 705.2 | 1,990.2 | 78 | 22 |
| Grand Total | 1,517.5 | 1,335.0 | 2,852.5 | 84 | 16 |

Source: Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

- a. Estimation of environmental losses include ecosystem service losses for 2016-18 for native forests, mangroves and coral reefs. Total recovery time may stretch beyond this timeframe.
- b. These figures exclude the environment sector, as environmental assets and flows of environmental services are not included in the national accounts.

TC Winston is expected to reduce economic growth to 1.3 percent in 2016 compared to the pre-cyclone estimate of 3.8 percent. The extent of damage incurred by TC Winston to key sectors, such as housing, transport, manufacturing, agriculture, electricity, communications

and environment, are expected to significantly impact upon the macroeconomic climate of Fiji. In the agriculture sector, the cyclone's impact on sugar cane production is expected to be significant with production expected to fall to around 1.4 million tonnes this year, compared to 1.8 million tonnes in 2015. The cyclone is estimated to reduce economic growth to 1.3 percent in 2016 compared to the pre-cyclone estimate of 3.8 percent (Figure 4). However, the government anticipates that if timely recovery and reconstruction activities are started in 2016 than it is estimated to boost GDP back up to 2.4 percent.¹⁶



Source: Fiji PDNA Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016).

The government has identified a Recovery Program for TC Winston estimated at F \$731 million (US\$340 million) for the period covering mid-2016 to mid-2018. The government has identified key priority needs for TC Winston based on the needs identified through the humanitarian response, early recovery activities and the PDNA process. The Recovery Program is estimated at F \$731 million (US\$340 million) and covers the medium-term

¹⁶ Fiji Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston, March 2016.

recovery and reconstruction activities over a 2-year period, from mid-2016 to mid-2018, to be run in parallel with the ongoing short-term humanitarian assistance (Government of Fiji, 2016a). The government plans to allocate F \$136 million (US\$63.3 million) from its own resources, donor support is approximately F \$22 million (US\$10.2 million), and there is a financing gap of approximately F \$575 million (US\$267.4 million) which needs to urgently be addressed (Table 8). In recognition of the long-term nature of recovery and reconstruction, recovery efforts beyond two years will be integrated into Fiji’s National Development Plan.

Table 8. Projected Cost of Recovery Programmes by Recovery Priority – F\$ million

| Recovery Priority | Total Budget | Government | Donor | Unmet (Financing Gap) |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Priority 1 -- Rebuilding Homes | 183.94 | 72.14 | 0 | 111.80 |
| Priority 2 -- Restoring Livelihoods | 169.65 | 36.07 | 9.89 | 123.70 |
| Priority 3 -- Repairing and Strengthening Critical Infrastructure | 353.39 | 25.79 | 12.04 | 315.57 |
| Priority 4 -- Building Resilience | 23.88 | 2.00 | 0 | 23.88 |
| Total | 730.87 | 135.99 | 21.93 | 574.95 |

Source: Draft Fiji Disaster Recovery Framework, Tropical Cyclone Winston, 12 May 2016.

IV. Humanitarian Response to TC Winston

A state of natural disaster was declared by the Government of Fiji on February 20, 2016 followed by a state of emergency, preceding the devastation caused by TC Winston. Since then the government has successfully led all humanitarian response efforts, coordinated through the nine national humanitarian clusters¹⁷ led by the government ministries, and received strong support from the humanitarian partners, international and national non-

¹⁷ The national humanitarian clusters are: Communications; Education; Food Security and Livelihoods; Health and Nutrition; Logistics; Public Works and Utilities; Shelter; Safety and Protection; and WASH.

governmental organizations (NGOs), foreign governments, donors and civil society. The government was quick to set into motion the humanitarian response framework necessary for initiating and coordinating humanitarian assistance.

4.1 Humanitarian Response Structure

The overall coordination of the emergency response was the responsibility of the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and the National Disaster Management Office based on the National Disaster Management Plan 1995 and the National Disaster Management Act 1998. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) immediately activated the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) the day after TC Winston, so that the District Emergency Operations Centres could start mobilizing and deploying their teams for undertaking the initial damage assessments (IDA). The IDA's were the government preliminary assessments to warrant the need for immediate food relief distributions, and moving forward to shape the agriculture and housing relief plans. A State of Natural Disaster was declared for 30 days in recognition of the enormity of the disaster and the government straightaway requested for international assistance. Moreover, for TC Winston the government also designated the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) within the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Statistics to provide leadership and coordination for recovery implementation.

The humanitarian response was coordinated through the National Cluster System, which was first introduced at the time of TC Evan in December 2012. The Clusters are joint coordination forums with representation from all the agencies involved in that sector. Each Cluster is led by a Government Ministry, with an international agency as Co-lead¹⁸. The nine

¹⁸ Government coordination of international assistance is also supported by the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT), a regional network of partners that supports governments in delivering effective, appropriate, timely and coordinated disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

national clusters are: Communications; Education; Food Security and Livelihoods; Health and Nutrition; Logistics; Public Works and Utilities; Shelter; Safety and Protection; and WASH. The government activated the National Clusters two days after TC Winston hit, with the NDMO clearly indicating that the clusters would be identifying needs and working in cooperation with international partners to ensure gaps were covered. UNOCHA assisted in coordination between the NDMO and international humanitarian partners. It is worth mentioning here that the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation is leading the Safety and Protection Cluster with support from UN Women and UNICEF.

Immediate emergency assistance activities were undertaken through Civil-Military Coordination. Immediate emergency efforts were supported through military logistical assistance provided primarily from Australia and New Zealand, and additional support from France, India, and Indonesia, which enabled rapid deployment of equipment, personnel and supplies to affected areas. Straight after TC Winston, aerial surveillance of the affected regions was conducted using the New Zealand Defence Force P3 Orion aircraft to assess the level of damage, and the sea and air access to maritime areas. During this time the Australian military helicopters were also on standby for deployment to assist with further surveillance, medical evacuation or distribution of relief goods.

The GOF and the United Nations jointly launched an emergency humanitarian Flash Appeal on 4th March, seeking US\$38.6 million for the first three months of the TC Winston response. The needs identified were for the provision of emergency shelter, access to health, water and sanitation, food and livelihood support, access to education and rehabilitation of schools, and protection and support to vulnerable groups. The Flash Appeal period ended on 21 May 2016 with 51 percent (US\$19.8 million) of requested funding received, making the TC Winston Appeal the best funded emergency response for the year, receiving generous donations from Australia, Canada, the European Commission, Germany, Belgium, Lithuania, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (UNOCHA, 2016). The response was coordinated at the national level through

the Cluster System. The "Flash Appeal" followed the structure of the Government-led Cluster system, with specific projects submitted and approved by Government leads under each Cluster.

A Government-led Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was conducted between March/April 2016, to assess the socioeconomic impact of TC Winston and assist in the mobilization of resources for recovery and reconstruction. The PDNA process was supported by donor agencies who provided their technical expertise, with the World Bank leading the process followed by the European Union and United Nations (UN), as well as other regional organizations and bilateral partners, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the government of Australia, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program. The PDNA estimates the total damage and losses as a result of the disaster to stand at F\$ 1.98 billion¹⁹. Of this, F\$1.28 billion is classified as damage (i.e. destroyed physical assets), and F\$ 0.70 billion as loss (i.e., changes in the economic flows of the production of goods and services). The combined damage and losses are about 20 percent of Fiji's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2015.

4.2 Relief Efforts

Strong civil-military and donor coordination led to the fast deployment of relief assistance in the first few weeks of TC Winston. Based on the aerial surveillance by the New Zealand Defence Force P3 Orion aircraft, extensive damage was revealed to the outer islands, particularly in the Lomaiviti group and the north coast of Viti Levu. The government and humanitarian partners worked closely through the national cluster system to quickly dispatch urgent supplies and assessment teams to the affected areas. Within days the government deployed vessels to the Koro Island which had suffered the most damage, with a range of supplies including food, WASH kits and temporary classrooms, and assessment teams. The

¹⁹ This figure does not include the effects of the damage on the environment sector.

Australian military helicopters already on standby were also deployed to affected areas with relief supplies for 1500 families as part of an initial A\$5 million assistance package (UNOCHA, 2016a). The New Zealand aid initially totaled N\$2 million and an emergency flight carrying 12 tonnes of supplies requested by the Fijian Government arrived on 22 February 2016 (as part of a daily schedule which ran through until 28th February), carrying water containers, tarpaulins, generators, chainsaws, tool kits and a response team (UNOCHA, 2016b). France also donated the use of military aircrafts which arrived in late February from New Caledonia, loaded with almost 12 tonnes of shelter and WASH supplies amongst other relief items (UNOCHA, 2016c). Furthermore, the Fiji Red Cross already had 22 prepositioned containers with supplies for 100 families per container including blankets, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, clothing, hygiene kits, dignity kits, and cleaning kits. The Health and Nutrition cluster also reported sufficient medical supplies already in-country, including Inter-Agency emergency health kits for approximately 10,000 people or more for 3 months, and water purifying tablets (UNOCHA, 2016a). Lastly, the Fijian business community consisting of at least 60 Fijian companies had given combined contributions of in-kind relief and financial donations worth of approximately US \$1.2 million as of 1st March (UNOCHA, 2016c). This is perhaps one of the fastest deployment efforts by any government in response to a disaster

Strong institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms were already in place in Fiji. The government was able to carry out quick deployment efforts in the affected areas, in part because of the strong institutional arrangements already in existence in the country, such as the NDMO coordinating the on-ground relief efforts and assessments, military coordination through the Royal Fiji Forces, and donor coordination through the national cluster system. The government led all the humanitarian response efforts. The presence of pre-positioned relief supplies already in country also made it possible for the government to rapidly roll-out relief supplies in the most affected regions. All humanitarian funding for TC Winston was either channeled through UNOCHA's flash appeal or bilaterally to the Fiji Government for needs prioritization, which enabled the government to strategically lead the response efforts and eliminate duplication of relief efforts.

As of early April 2016, approximately F\$10 million (US\$4.7 million) emergency relief supplies in the form of food rations have been distributed by the government through the National Disaster Management Office to the families in the affected areas, completing the first round of assistance. It is estimated that around 370,000 people were reached through the first round of food assistance (UNOCHA, 2016). The government, in collaboration with the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, has also provided an estimated 45,000 farmers with seeds and seedlings, and 14,000 fishermen with fishery assets, in affected areas to ensure longer term food security as crops are being replanted.

Emergency food assistance through vouchers has been provided to an estimated 82,000 people using the government's social assistance system. The WFP, key partner under the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, joined hands with the government to provide top-up payments in the form of food vouchers to the poor families in the severely affected areas. The food vouchers were designed to provide two months' worth of food assistance to the existing social assistance beneficiaries (PBS, SPS and CPA) residing in the 12 priority areas of the government (also discussed under the chapter on Disaster Responsive Social Protection). The distribution of the food voucher (month of May and June, 2016) was sequenced by the government to immediately follow upon the trail of the social assistance top-up payments which were provided for three months (February to April, 2016). WFP support demonstrates the viability of linking the Fijian national social protection system with the timely and efficient provision of humanitarian aid as a successful example of shock responsive social safety nets.

Within a month of TC Winston, 99 percent of the primary and secondary schools were operational as a result of the collaboration between the government and the Education Cluster. Schools were extensively damaged in the affected areas of TC Winston but with quick relief efforts it is estimated that the needs of approximately 86,000 students enrolled in almost 500 primary and secondary schools (55 percent) were met in the TC Winston affected areas. The Education Cluster was also one of the highest funded (92 percent) clusters during the response period.

Furthermore, emergency shelter was provided to an estimated 28,000 households by the government in collaboration with the Shelter Cluster. The emergency shelter included tents, tarpaulins, shelter kits and shelter tools. Urgent medical services were provided through mobile medical services to more than 82,000 persons in the affected area and 18,000 persons were reached with psychological support. The Water Authority of Fiji and other partners provided emergency water supplies to more than 244,000 people, which included delivery of 2.7 million liters of water to communities without access to piped water supply. In addition, 11 villages (belonging to Koro and Ra) were assisted, with 300 people engaged in Cash for Work activities and 400 people engaged in debris clearance activities.

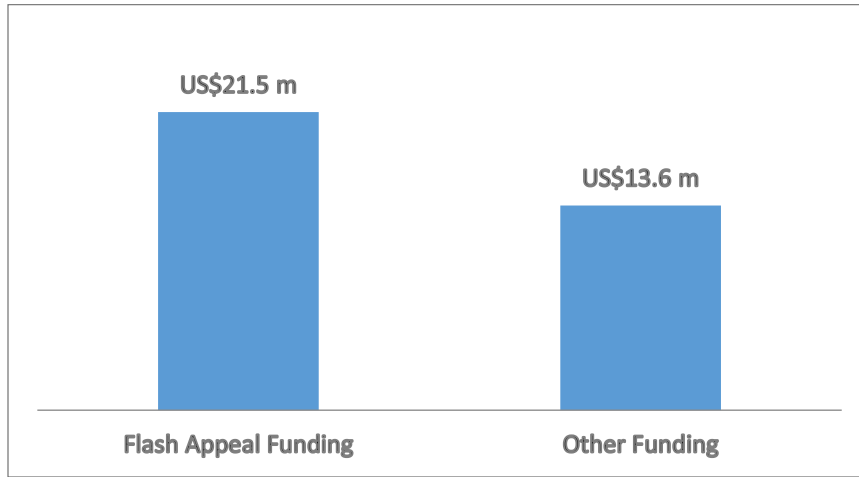
4.3 Humanitarian Response Funding

The government received approximately US\$35 million in humanitarian assistance for TC Winston. Of the total US\$35 million, US\$21.5 million is against the UN Flash Appeal and earmarked for the response plan, while the remaining US\$13.6 million is unmarked funding (Figure 5).²⁰ Approximately 56 percent of the funding of the UN Flash Appeal has been met,²¹ making TC Winston the best funded emergency response in the world for this year (Figure 6), with generous donations from Australia, Canada, the European Union, Germany, Belgium, Lithuania, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (UNOCHA 2016). Substantial bilateral funding was also provided by donors to the Fijian Government. The major bilateral donors providing support – including in kind support – to the relief and recovery effort have been Australia (US\$27 million), New Zealand (US\$10.3 million) and the EU (\$4.8 million) (World Bank, 2016).

²⁰ UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service website <http://fts.unocha.org/>. Website accessed on February 1, 2017.

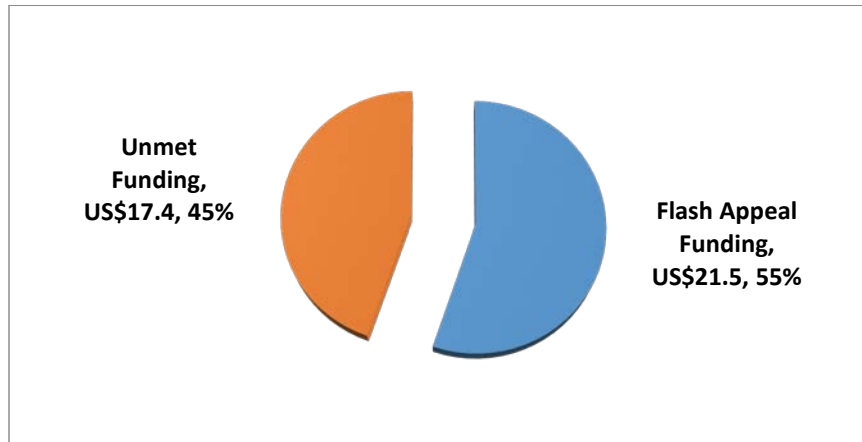
²¹ UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service website <http://fts.unocha.org/>. Website accessed on February 1, 2017.

Figure 5. Humanitarian Funding for TC Winston



Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service

Figure 6. UN Flash Appeal Funding



Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service

Of the total funding received under the Flash Appeal, approximately 60 percent went to projects implemented by the government. Despite the fact that the majority of funding was received by the UN agencies (85 percent), there was a preference to engage local actors in the implementation of projects. The distribution of project funding is as follows, with 58 percent funding going to government implemented projects, 8 percent to national NGOs, 14 percent to international NGOs, and 20 percent projects directly being implemented by UN agencies.

V. Analysis of Humanitarian Response to TC Winston

TC Winston was one of the severest disasters to hit Fiji and left a trail of destruction in its wake. The humanitarian response was quick and strongly led by the government. Some of the response strategies implemented were very unique, not only to the country but also to the region, and can contribute significantly to the existing literature on disaster risk management. This section looks specifically at some of the broader achievements of the TC Winston response and some of the challenges and constraints faced in its implementation.

5.1 Achievements

The humanitarian response successfully leveraged and built upon the existing national systems in place in Fiji. The TC Winston response saw a stronger engagement and role of the government and national actors in humanitarian assistance compared to other disasters, with nearly 60 percent of the total funding under the Flash Appeal going to government funded project, and 8 percent going to national NGOs. There was a move to strengthen local capacity and provide a localized response.

There was a complementary overlap between humanitarian assistance and social protection interventions for disaster response. For the first time the existing social protection framework of the government was used for disbursing humanitarian assistance in the form of food vouchers. By providing top-up assistance to the existing social assistance beneficiaries and using local vendors of the government, the humanitarian actors were saved from engaging in costly procurement and logistical activities. As a result, the response was more targeted and timely and is a good example of how humanitarian assistance and social protection mechanisms can jointly be used by the government for disaster response.

The Humanitarian response widely made use of cash and voucher payments, which is a relatively new model for the Pacific. The government following TC Winston immediately disbursed cash transfers under its social assistance system to provide immediate relief to its most vulnerable populations. The cash payments were fast and efficient to make due to the existing electronic payments system already in place in Fiji. Building upon the success of the cash payments, the government opted to use the same framework for providing humanitarian assistance against needs such as food and housing. Vouchers were deemed the most appropriate instrument as they were easy to distribute like cash but limited in what they could be used against (discussed in detail in following chapter).

Complex logistical support provided through strong civil-military cooperation enabled emergency relief across many isolated islands. The cyclone cut off access to many of the outer islands and even populations residing in the rural interior, hindering emergency response efforts. Many of the humanitarian actors would not have had the capacity or resources to carry out relief efforts without the support provided by the military.

The National Cluster System was put to the test for the first time during TC Winston and proved quite effective in its ability to coordinate response at the national level and work with all humanitarian actors. The National Cluster System which was instituted right after TC Evan was tried for the first time in a disaster situation for TC Winston. The clusters were seen to be firmly led by the government line Ministries and did a good job of coordinating humanitarian response at the national level amongst all actors. Overall response efforts were well coordinated and seldom showed any duplication. The government and humanitarian actors were seen to be complementing existing efforts and structures rather than re-inventing the wheel.

There was fast deployment of emergency relief following TC Winston due to strong institutional capacity of the government. The government was seen to have strong institutional capacity and systems in place for leading the humanitarian response; in the form

of the NDMO coordinating all on-ground relief efforts and assessments, military coordination through the Royal Fiji Forces, and donor coordination through the national cluster system. The presence of pre-positioned relief supplies already in country also made it possible for the government to rapidly roll-out relief supplies in the most affected regions through military deployment. Furthermore, the government financed its initial relief and rehabilitation expenditures by reallocating budgeted resources from lower-priority expenditures, allowing the government to push ahead with relief operations without delay, while the humanitarian and donor community organized themselves.

5.2 Challenges and Constraints

Despite the overall high achievement of the Humanitarian Flash Appeal funding, several key clusters were left poorly funded. The Shelter Cluster has only met 20 percent of its funding requirements which has limited its ability to widely roll out its initiatives, such as the technical training programs on building back safer homes and its direct support for the construction of core shelters for the most vulnerable. Other clusters with low funding are the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster (39 percent), and Health and Nutrition Cluster (53 percent).

The lack of visibility over bilateral donations limited the ability of some clusters to coordinate and monitor progress towards meeting needs. For some clusters such as the Food Security and Shelter cluster, there was a risk of potential duplication of response as the clusters did not have sufficient information on the donation items and their distribution being provided through bilateral donations. One of the factors contributing towards this lack of visibility was the use of parallel reporting systems amongst some agencies, at the time of TC Winston. For instance, UNOCHA was coordinating the 3W's reporting structure for all agencies, and consolidating and highlighting the donations being received. However, it was

witnessed that certain bilateral donations, especially for military support were being reported directly to the Government, although while still using the 3W's reporting format.

There is a need to strengthen the social assistance database to include near-poor families and allow for geographical targeting in future disasters. The government for the first time used its existing social assistance system for delivering humanitarian assistance. While the response was well targeted towards the poorest families who were part of the government's social assistance programs, they were not necessarily the only or most affected by the disaster. The present system lacked the flexibility of extending support to the near poor-households who might have slipped into poverty as a result of TC Winston, and did not allow for assistance to be exclusively targeted towards only those families residing in the affected areas. It is felt that humanitarian assistance could have greatly benefited and reached more affected people, had the social assistance database been updated with the computerized records of the near-poor families and the system centralized to allow for deeper geographical bifurcation of beneficiary records.

Adverse weather and logistical challenges in reaching some of the country's highlands and outer islands posed a challenge for the government and humanitarian actors in relief efforts. This challenge was overcome in the initial relief period through the strong national and international military assistance available. However, in the intermediate period when such assistance will not be available, it will impact the humanitarian relief efforts as the humanitarian actors do not have the capacity or resources to reach such far flung areas.

Absence of good quality baseline data affected the ability of many clusters in making rapid assessment of the total population affected and damages incurred and providing adequate relief accordingly. Rapid deployment of supplies and equipment was effected as a result.

The Agriculture sector, which was the worst hit by TC Winston, was further impacted by TC Zena in April 2016. This caused widespread flooding of key horticultural areas of Fiji,

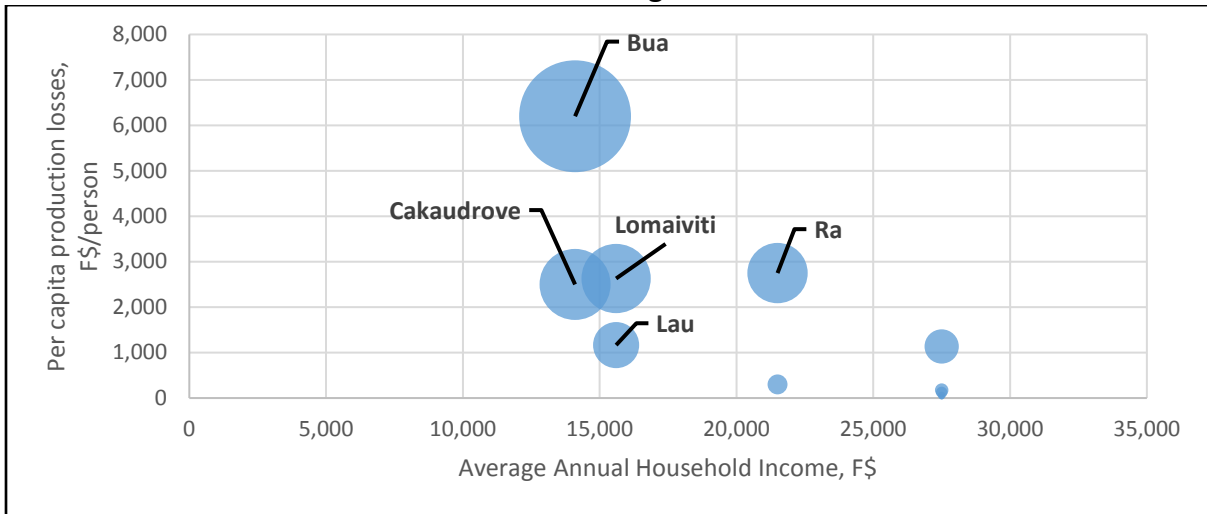
destroying up to 80 percent of ongoing rehabilitation work. The Department of Agriculture and the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, in addition faced the challenge of lack of in-country availability of seeds which delayed the distribution of seeds to needy farmers.

VI. Disaster Responsive Social Protection post-TC Winston

The government estimates that the poorest strata of the country have been affected by TC Winston. In the Post Disaster Needs Assessment for TC Winston, a comparison was made of the estimated per capita production losses with the average annual household income which revealed that TC Winston had affected the most impoverished population strata of the country (Figure 7).²² The population in the northern provinces of Bua and Cakaudrove (where average annual household income is F\$14,100/per person) have sustained the greatest production losses. These findings are in line with the Poverty Mapping study conducted by the World Bank in 2011 which shows that the poverty incidence is highest (above 50 percent) in the provinces of Ra, Cakaudrove and Macuata, followed by the provinces of Nadroga/Navosa and Bua (between 40 and 50 percent). An overwhelming majority of the poor were found to reside in Ba, which is also the most populous province of the country (World Bank, 2011).

²² Draft Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston, March 2016.

Figure 7: Relationship between Per Capita Production Losses and Average Annual Household Income Arising from TC Winston



Source: Draft Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston, March 2016.

Note: The sizes of the balls in the above figure represent the ratio between production losses and household income

Social Protection programs can help poor household’s better respond and adapt in the face of external shocks and natural disasters without having to revert to negative coping strategies. The poor and near-poor households are generally characterised as having low savings and poor access to credit and are at high risk of losing life, assets, and livelihoods in times of natural disasters. They are the first to revert to negative coping strategies, such as reduction in food consumption, health care, and selling and depletion of productive assets, which potentially has long-term implications for human development. Consequently, increasingly frequent disasters can force the poor and near-poor household into transitory poverty. Social protection programs at times of disaster can provide immediate relief to the affected families so that they can sustain themselves in the short-term, and not revert to negative coping strategies. The government in response to TC Winston implemented a number of social protection initiatives, taking advantage of the existing social protection framework in place in Fiji.

The Government decided to use its existing social protection system to provide additional assistance to the most vulnerable, as a key component of its disaster response. Fiji already has a well-established social assistance system in place, which provides regular cash and food voucher payments to vulnerable families. The system has also undergone rigorous reforms to fine tune the key design and operational features, in particular the poverty targeting, data collection and electronic payment mechanisms, ensuring that the most vulnerable are being serviced through the most effective means possible. Under these circumstances, the Government has been well placed to use its existing programs to scale up assistance through additional cash payments to its existing beneficiaries. While also successfully making wide use of cash vouchers for the purchase of both food and rebuilding materials.

6.1 Social Protection Programs

Four weeks into the disaster, on 18 March 2016, the Government disbursed F \$19.9 million using the existing social assistance schemes to efficiently disburse cash to vulnerable groups and inject much needed cash into the economy. A total of F\$19.9 million (US\$9.4 million) was disbursed through the three schemes. Under the Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS), 22,802 households were paid a lump sum of F\$600, or the equivalent of F\$200 for three months. 17,782 pensioners of the Social Pension Scheme (SPS) over the age of 68 received an additional F\$300 (F\$100 over three months). Finally, 3,313 families under the Care and Protection Scheme (CPS) received a total of F\$300 (Table 9). The cash top-up payments were intended to help people meet immediate expenses following TC Winston and were provided to all existing beneficiaries, irrespective of whether they resided in the affected areas or not. This decision was driven by several factors: (i) the urgency of the situation (the need to respond); (ii) operational constraints (database not of sufficient quality to distinguish between affected and non-affected areas) (iii) the fact that current beneficiaries are considered to be disadvantaged anyway (even if they happen to be in non-affected areas); and (iv) the belief that inter-household sharing of resources would take place (e.g.,

households in non-affected areas would share the transfers with their extended kinship networks in affected areas).

Table 9. Social Protection Scheme Benefits and Post-Disaster Payments

| Program | Number of Beneficiaries | Ordinary Benefit (monthly) | Post-Disaster Benefit |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Poverty Benefit Scheme | 22,802 households | FJD30 per person (for up to four house-hold members) + FJD50 food voucher | FJD200 x 3 months (paid as FJD600 lump sum) |
| Social Pension Scheme | 17,782 people | FJD50 + FJD50 food voucher | FJD100 x 3 months (paid as FJD300 lump sum) |
| Care and Protection Allowance | 3,313 households | FJD110 (maximum – actual amount depends on number and school grade of children) + FJD50 food voucher | FJD100 x 3 months (paid as FJD300 lump sum) |

Source: World Bank team estimates.

A follow-up food voucher payment of F \$4.6 million (US\$2.1 million) for two months (May/June 2016) to the social assistance recipients was developed by the government. The government on April 8, 2016, announced the approval of a Food Voucher Program (FVP) top-up of F\$4.6 million (US\$2.1 million), for the beneficiaries under the PBS, SPS and CPS programs, residing in the 12 priority regions. The programme has been jointly implemented by the government and the World Food Programme. As discussed earlier, the social assistance beneficiary database was used to identify families for voucher distribution, and the two-month top-up food voucher payments (distributed in May and June, 2016) were designed to immediately follow-up on the cash transfer top-up payments (distributed from February to April, 2016) delivered by the government. The food vouchers are expected to have assisted approximately 44,169 households. As discussed in earlier sections, this is a good example of how humanitarian assistance and social protection mechanisms can jointly be used by the government for disaster response.

On April 9, 2016, the Government announced the roll-out of a F \$70 million (US\$32.6 million) Housing Program, or “Help for Homes” initiative which has been designed to assist families to rebuild homes that were damaged or destroyed. A total of 30,369 homes were reported damaged or destroyed by TC Winston, and under this program the government will provide affected households with vouchers (electronic cards) for housing rehabilitation/reconstruction. The program is targeted towards households with an annual income of under F\$ 50,000 (US\$ 24,000), who have experienced housing damage. The three categories of benefits being provided are: F\$ 1,500 (US\$ 717) for houses with partial roofing damage; F\$ 3,000 (US\$ 1,434) for houses with a serious roofing damage; and F\$ 7,000 (US\$ 3,345) for almost/completely demolished households. Those living in informal settlements in affected areas are also eligible to receive \$1,500 (US\$750). In addition, applicants who have already repaired their homes can request refund, but need to provide evidence. The budget allocation for this program is F\$ 70 million (or about 1 percent of GDP), although the expected total cost is F\$184 million (US\$85.6 million) up to 2018.

The Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) disbursed about F \$250.2 million (US\$116.4 million) to its members in the first two months following TC Winston. Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF), the largest social insurance program of Fiji, allowed affected members to withdraw cash nine days after TC Winston, resulting in a significant injection of cash into the economy. Active members were allowed to withdraw up to F\$1,000 (US\$465), plus an additional F\$5,000 (US\$2,325) if they could present proof (property title) of having a house in the cyclone affected area. Within the first two months of the disaster, the FNPF processed and approved 170,000 withdrawal applications, including 35,000 in the second (F\$5,000) category. These one-time withdrawals have resulted in a massive injection of around F\$250.2 million (or about 3 percent of GDP) cash into the economy.

6.2 Impact of SP Programs and Funding

The government’s disaster responsive social protection programs following TC Winston have translated into a financial contribution of F\$344.7 million (US\$160 million) into the economy. In the immediate relief period following TC Winston the government committed to a range of social protection programs, and it is expected that the programs will impact the lives of approximately 170,000 families with a budget of approximately F \$344.7 million (Table 10).

Table 10. Post-TC Winston Social Protection Interventions

| Program | Number of Beneficiaries (Households) | Duration | Budget (F\$ million) |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Social Welfare Top-up Payments | 43,897 | 3 months (March-May 2016) | 19.9 |
| Food Voucher Program | 44,169 | 2 months (May-June 2016) | 4.6 |
| Housing Program | 30,369 | June 2016 - onwards | 70 |
| Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) | 170,000 | 2 months (March-April 2016) | 250.2 |
| Total | | | 344.7 |

Source: Fiji Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016)

The government financed its initial relief and rehabilitation expenditures by reallocating budgeted resources from lower-priority expenditures. This provided the government with the flexibility of implementing programs of its choice, such as the social protection programs, through its existing structures. As a result, relief efforts were well targeted and coordinated, with strong government leadership. This is evident in the string of disaster responsive social protection programs which were implemented immediately following TC Winston, with the objective of providing immediate relief to the vulnerable population and injecting much needed cash into the economy. Apart from the Food Voucher Program (FVP) which was funded by WFP, the remainder of the programs are all being financed through the government’s own resources.

There are long term implications of the withdrawal of F \$250.2 million (US\$116.4 million) from the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNP) following TC Winston. The FNP approved approximately 170,000 applications for withdrawal of funds and it is the first time the Fund has allowed members to make maximum withdrawals from their pension funds (ceiling of 30 percent). This has a long term impact on the members as they will receive reduced pensions in the future, and for many, they will not be able to access any further funds in case of future emergencies.

6.3 Evaluation of the Impact of the Social Assistance Top-up Payments

The government recently conducted an evaluation of the social assistance top up transfers with World Bank assistance in order to determine the impact on households and to inform future disaster response efforts²³. The main objectives of the impact evaluation were to: (i) assess the impact of TC Winston on the affected households, (ii) analyse the effects of top-up transfers and how they were spent, and (iii) assess whether top-up transfers were an appropriate response. The evaluation was conducted in the affected areas of Viti Levu (Ba and Ra provinces) and surveyed two groups of households, those eligible for the social assistance schemes (poor) before the disaster, and those ineligible but still poor.

The impact evaluation survey was conducted in June 2016, nearly 3 months after TC Winston. The impact evaluation data was collected in Fiji during June 2016, with a sample size of about 700 households. The evaluation strategy uses the regression discontinuity design (RDD) in defining the treatment and control groups based on the Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS) eligibility (poverty score) threshold. The *treatment group* is the PBS recipient households (20 percent below threshold) in affected areas that have also received an

²³ The study is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

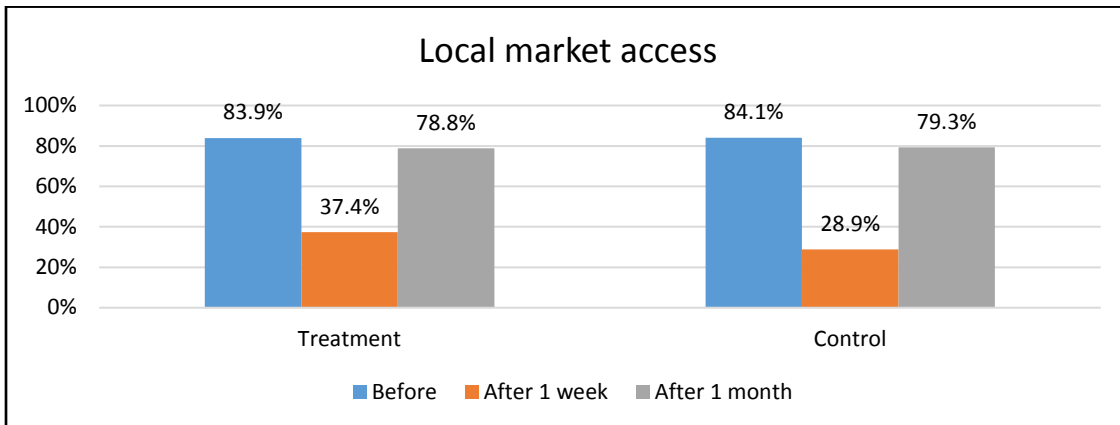
intervention (top-up PBS benefit) post TC Winston. The *control group* is the PBS-evaluated (pre-TC Winston) households in affected areas that are not eligible for PBS, as they are above (but within 20 percent) the threshold. These households did not receive an intervention. Furthermore, a qualitative survey was carried out in November 2016, with a sample size of over 100 interviews, to understand better some of the findings of the quantitative field survey.

Summary of key findings:

The results of the impact evaluation of the TC Winston social assistance top-up transfers can be summarised into the following key findings;

The disaster responsive social protection intervention, in the form of top-up transfers to beneficiaries, was found to be an effective response following TC Winston. It was rapidly implemented within one month of the disaster and clearly targeted towards the poorest households (PBS, SPS, CPS recipients). With an advanced electronic banking system already in place in Fiji for regular social assistance payments, it comes as no surprise that 98 percent of PBS recipients surveyed reported having received their top-up transfers through electronic means. The findings of the impact evaluation survey also indicate that 76 percent of households withdrew their top-up payments within the first month of receiving them. Furthermore, the top-up transfers were found to be distributed in a timely manner (by planning or default) that allowed affected families to take advantage of recovering markets. The PBS recipients reported a sharp decline in their ability to purchase all necessary goods and services from their local markets, with access to local markets dropping from 83.9 percent to 37.4 percent immediately after TC Winston. However, market access was restored to nearly the same level within a month (Figure 8). The impact evaluation findings suggest that the top-up payments were an effective intervention one month after the disaster, once the markets were restored, and should be planned as such for future response interventions.

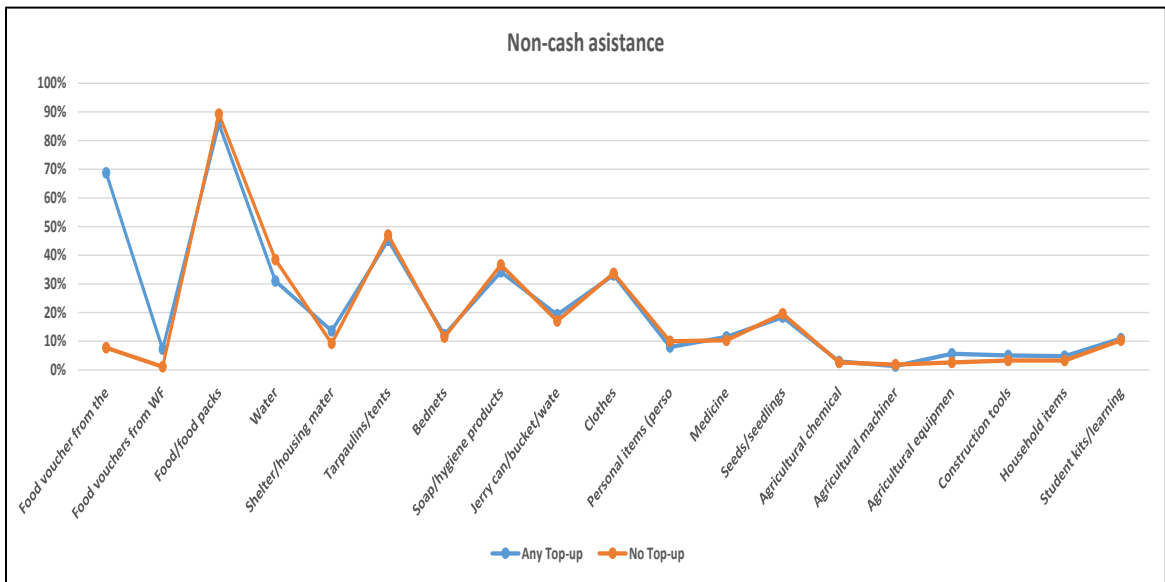
Figure 8. Households' Access to Local Markets before and after the Disaster (%)



Source: Fiji TC Winston Impact Evaluation data (2016)

The in-kind humanitarian assistance provided effective immediate assistance to all affected households, and played a crucial role in sustaining the families until the markets were restored. The results of the evaluation suggest that the efforts of the Government of Fiji, military, development partners and NGOs have resulted in the effective delivery of a wide range of items, to sustain the households in the first few days and weeks after the TC Winston. Nearly all households in the affected areas were reached with some form of non-cash assistance, in the form of food rations, building materials and temporary shelters, regardless of top-up benefits. The survey also finds that both groups of PBS recipients and non-PBS recipients were similar in receiving all types of non-cash assistance, with the exception of the food vouchers (which were by design targeted to PBS recipients) (Figure 9). This assistance was found to be even more crucial immediately after TC Winston when the markets were severely impacted. Therefore, when markets did recover one month after TC Winston, the cash assistance top up transfers meant that families could purchase their own resources and recover faster from the disaster impacts.

Figure 9. Various Humanitarian/In-Kind Assistance Received by the Households, %

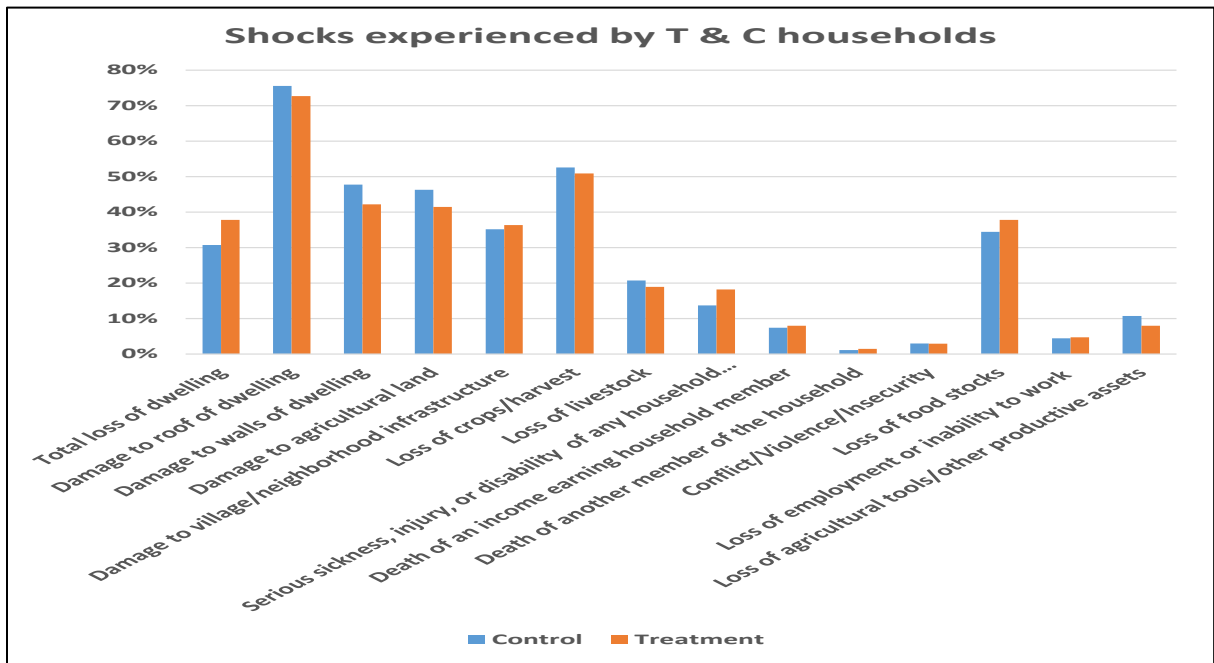


Source: Fiji TC Winston Impact Evaluation data (2016)

Both poor and near-poor households were similarly affected by TC Winston, and the households receiving the top-up transfers were quicker to recover from the disaster shocks.

The results indicate that both PBS recipients (treatment group) and non-recipients (control group) faced similar shocks in the affected areas, with the highest shocks reported for: (i) damage to the dwelling’s roof (72.7 percent and 75.6 percent, respectively), (ii) loss of crops/harvest (50.9 percent and 52.6 percent respectively), and (iii) damage to agricultural land (41.5 percent and 46.3 percent, respectively) (Figure 10). The results also indicate that three months after the cyclone took place, beneficiaries under the PBS were more likely to have recovered from the shocks they faced, relative to comparable households that did not receive the additional assistance. Importantly, the findings suggest that in times of disaster all affected households need to be provided with assistance, while the social protection system can be used to target assistance towards the poor and near-poor households. The results also indicate that assistance should be closely targeted to the affected households, as inter-household transfers from less affected areas will not necessarily be forthcoming.

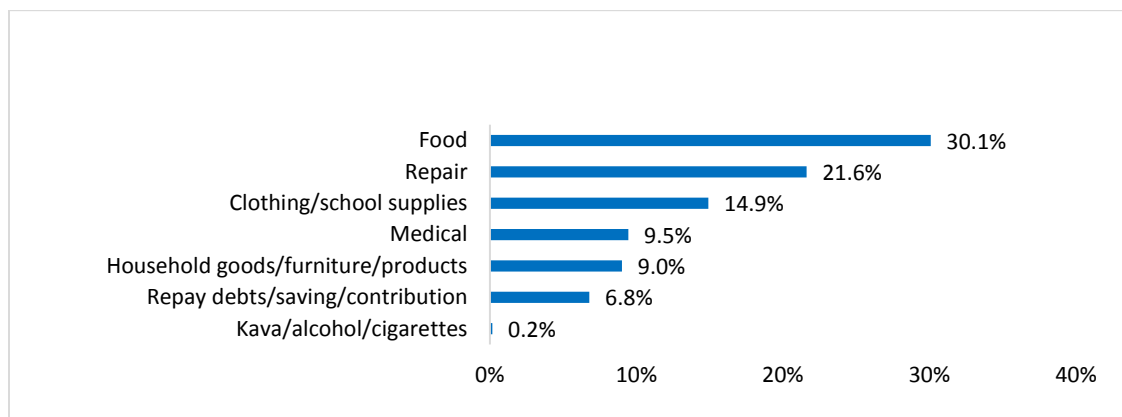
Figure 10. Percentage of Households in TC-Affected Areas Experiencing a Given Shock, %



Source: Fiji TC Winston Impact Evaluation data (2016)

Households acted rationally in their spending patterns and the top-up payments were used on essential items, which helped the beneficiaries cope and recover faster from the shocks. Top-up transfers were predominantly spent by recipient households on essential items, and the majority of top-up payments were fully utilized within the first month of receiving them. The results indicate that 99 percent of the top-up spending was done on essential items, with food and materials to repair damaged dwellings forming the two most important categories of expenditure, followed by clothing and school supplies (Figure 10). Less than 1 percent of the assistance was reported to be spent on kava, alcohol or cigarettes, addressing a common concern that additional social assistance would be used unwisely for ‘non-essential items’, and making the top-up transfers a good disaster response strategy.

Figure 11. Percentage of Top-up Assistance Spent on Various Items, %



Source: Fiji TC Winston Impact Evaluation data (2016)

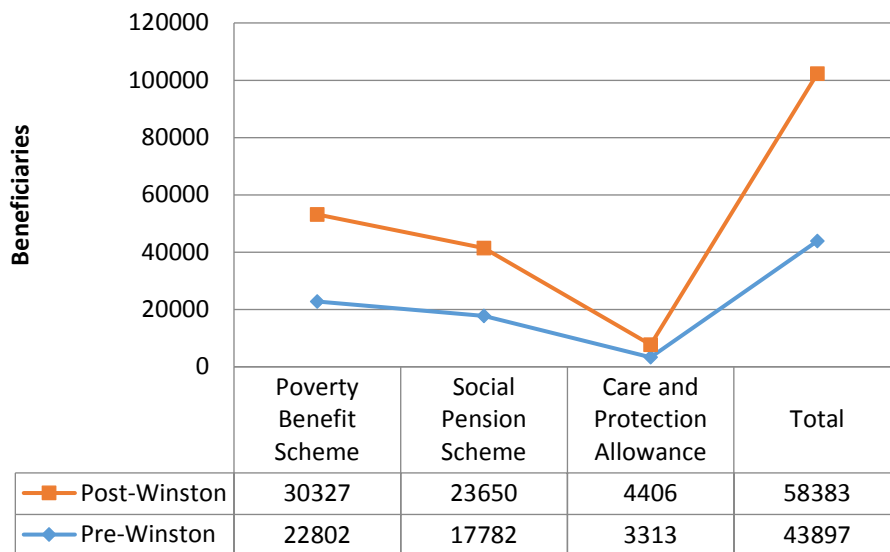
Knowledge on the top-up transfers was very low amongst the recipients, with majority of recipients unaware that they would be receiving the payment. The findings indicate that a more comprehensive and engaging public information campaign could have been employed by the government for reaching out to the affected communities and beneficiaries, and informing them about the forthcoming support, the eligibility and advice on how best to use the money received. The findings suggest the need for strengthening communication outreach in times of disaster and sharing important messages on the initiative for achieving greater impact.

VII. Changing Landscape of Social Protection following TC Winston

The government anticipates a 33 percent increase in the number of families requiring social assistance in the wake of TC Winston and estimates a F\$7 million (US\$3.3 million) medium term recovery budget for the expansion of the existing social protection programs. The cyclone is expected to have impacted the most impoverished strata of the country and the possibility of people sinking into deeper poverty or more people becoming poor following TC

Winston is a distinct possibility. The government anticipates an additional 33 percent of the population, on top of the existing beneficiaries, to seek government assistance following TC Winston.²⁴ This translates into an additional 14,486 beneficiaries potentially joining the social protection programs, bringing the total number of families to 58,383 who will potentially be serviced by the government’s social protection programs (Figure 12). As a result, the government has estimated a F \$7 million (US\$3.3 million) medium term recovery budget until mid-2018 for the expansion of the social protection programs in Fiji following TC Winston.²⁵

Figure 12. Anticipated Increase in the Number of Beneficiaries Following TC Winston



Source: Authors calculations.

Moving forward the government is in an opportune position to reflect upon its response to TC Winston and refine its Social Protection Policy Framework to include disaster response.

The government has been actively reviewing and refining its social protection programs in Fiji through reforms aimed at increasing the coverage and effectiveness of its operations. It has

²⁴ Draft Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Tropical Cyclone Winston, March 2016.

²⁵ The F \$7 million budget will primarily address the increase in the number of PBS beneficiaries as many new households will now become eligible for the benefit due to the damage to their houses following TC Winston. However, it is important to mention here that the government has recently announced a decrease in the pension age of SPS beneficiaries from 68 to 66 years which will see a rise in the number of beneficiaries in the coming months, not related to TC Winston.

also been learning from its past disasters and has incorporated many recommendations from TC Evan into its response for TC Winston. In view of the government's effective and timely response to TC Winston, the institutionalization of a Disaster Responsive Social Protection framework for Fiji would further aid to refine the response strategies and streamline technical details, such as targeting, payments, and budgeting to be better prepared for similar natural disasters in the future.

VIII. Recommendations for Strengthening Disaster Responsive Social Protection

Based on the experiences of TC Winston and the lessons learnt, the following recommendations can be put forward for the Government's consideration moving forward, for a stronger and resilient disaster response framework.

Develop an institutionalized (formal) Social Protection Policy Framework, with an embedded disaster responsive component. The social protection and safety nets structure of Fiji has been rigorously tested in the face of TC Winston and has come out strong in terms of its ability to rapidly respond and disburse cash assistance to the affected families, and the use of its existing framework for channelling other humanitarian relief efforts. This makes Fiji a pioneer in the use of social protection programs for disaster response in the Pacific, and can contribute significantly to the regional debate. Therefore, due to the increasing prominence of social protection programs in Fiji and their recent role in emergency response, there is a need to review the existing social protection policies and legislation to bring them up to date and make them a vital element of future disaster response strategies for Fiji, and set an example for the rest of the Pacific. The government can also look towards broadening its disaster responsive social protection interventions to include more interventions for the youth and working age populations as well as public works programs.

Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) and guidelines for disaster responsive social protection. The government's response to TC Winston was unprecedented in terms of its use of the existing social protection programs for disaster response, and although the overall response was found to be generally swift and effective, it did run into certain implementation challenges, such as the inability to target near-poor households, limited geographical targeting, and an ineffective information campaign on the top-up payments to the beneficiaries. There is a rising need to work on preparedness for future disasters and the development of standard operating procedures and guidelines will be a step in this direction. The SOP's and guidelines should enable the government to smoothly roll-out an emergency cash transfer operation in the event of a disaster. The SOP's should categorise the disaster levels and determine what the SP response should be at each level, and should be linked to the broader Disaster Management Framework of Fiji. These documents can further provide guidance on how to activate and scale up existing social assistance programs in response to disasters and can help the government deliver better targeted and timely programs.

Establish a coordination mechanism for cash transfer interventions in times of disaster. The government was quick to identify opportunities for channelling humanitarian assistance through its existing social assistance system. This collaboration has led to the response being better targeted, timely and reducing duplication of effort, on the part of both the government and humanitarian actors. There is a need to now formalise this coordination mechanism between the two, so that in future disasters all cash transfer interventions (including cash, vouchers and public-works) are managed separately by the government. One recommendation could be to consider adding a new national cluster for this, or even formalising the informal Cash and Voucher Working Group, which was operating as an informal cluster during the time of TC Winston. Having a dedicated national cluster would ensure that from the beginning all cash-based interventions are prioritised and sequenced to provide the maximum relief to the affected families.

Consolidate and centralize the Poverty Benefit Scheme (PBS) database so that both poor and near-poor households can be targeted in times of disaster. The PBS is a poverty-targeted social assistance program of the government and maintains a comprehensive poverty Registry of households meeting the minimum poverty threshold of the program (i.e., eligible for the PBS), and those households which are above the poverty cut-off score (i.e., not eligible for the PBS). As a result of TC Winston, it is anticipated that households in the PBS which were previously just above the poverty cut-off, may have drifted below the cut-off and are now in need of urgent assistance. Following TC Winston, the government was unable to extend its social assistance to these near-poor households as the PBS database had not been upgraded to include the electronic records of these households. It is suggested that the government intensifies the efforts of consolidating and centralizing the PBS Registry, through allocation of additional staff and resources, so that in future disasters it has the option of extending its assistance to near poor households as well as undertaking geographical targeting of assistance, based on the registry.

Complement humanitarian assistance with both in-kind and cash assistance, based on access and functionality of local markets. The case of TC Winston demonstrates the effectiveness of in-kind humanitarian assistance in providing immediate relief to affected families, especially during the period when markets are severely impacted. However, once markets are restored, the top-up cash payments have been found to be an effective intervention one month after the disaster, allowing the families to use the cash assistance to purchase their own resources and recover faster from the disaster impacts. For future disasters, the government may consider channelling humanitarian assistance in the form of both in-kind and cash assistance, and synchronising the two so that the in-kind assistance is substituted by cash assistance, once the markets are up and running. This could save valuable time on procurement and boost the local economy, provided that the markets are sufficiently capacitated by then.

Develop a Post-Disaster Communication Plan. Post TC Winston the government has been seen to struggle to effectively reach out to the communities, especially for information on top-up payments. The impact evaluation results also show low awareness amongst beneficiaries that they would be receiving the top-up payments, while this was followed by low understanding on the overall intent of the top-up payments. There is a need to therefore strengthen the communication channel for future disasters and develop a Post-Disaster Communication Plan which identifies the strategy to be employed by the government for reaching out to the beneficiaries in times of disaster and informing them and the communities about the assistance being provided to them.

Explore options for Disaster Risk Financing for Fiji. Due to the increasing occurrence of disasters in Fiji and the adverse impact on the economy, there is a need to improve the country's fiscal resilience to natural and climatic disasters, and introduce solutions for reducing its financial vulnerability to natural disasters. At the moment Fiji has F\$3 million available in Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI) instruments to respond to disasters through two sources of dedicated funds, namely the National Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation Fund (NDRRF) and the Rehabilitation Fund. However, there is a 57 percent chance of Fiji experiencing government emergency losses exceeding the F\$3 million contingency provision (World Bank, 2015). Therefore, there is a rising need to look into access to additional contingency funds and credit in emergency or pre-emergency situations for Fiji. One such option could be the Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option (CAT-DDO) which has recently been made available for Fiji.

References

- ADB (Asian Development Bank) and ILO. (International Labour Organization). 2015. Fiji: Creating Quality Jobs: Employment Diagnostics Study. December 5.
- Fiji Bureau of Statistics. 2014. "Fiji Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), 2013/2014". Preliminary results.
- Government of Fiji. 2016. "Fiji Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Tropical Cyclone Winston," February 20.
- _____. 2016a. "Fiji Disaster Recovery Framework, Tropical Cyclone Winston," February 20. Draft.
- ILO (International Labour Organization). 2016. "Fiji Labour Market Update," ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries. April.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2014. *Human Development Report*. New York: UNDP.
- UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). 2016. "Tropical Cyclone Winston - Response and Flash Appeal." Final Summary. June 13.
- _____. 2016a. "Fiji: Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston Situation Report No. 2." February 22.
- _____. 2016b. "Fiji: Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston Situation Report No.3." February 23.
- _____. 2016c. "Fiji: Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston Situation Report No.10." March 1.
- WHO (World Health Organization). 2011. *Fiji Islands Health Systems Review, Health Systems in Transition*, 1 (1): 16.
- World Bank. 2011. "Republic of Fiji Poverty Trends, Profiles and Small Area Estimation (Poverty Maps) in Republic of Fiji (2003-2009)." September 15.
- _____. 2015. "Pacific Catastrophic Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative (PCRAFI). Country note: Fiji. February 2015." Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance.
- _____. 2016. "Post-cyclone Winston Emergency Development Policy Operation." June 17.

Social Protection & Labor Discussion Paper Series Titles 2015-2017

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|-------------------|---|
| 1701 | Social Protection and Humanitarian Assistance Nexus for Disaster Response: Lessons Learnt from Fiji's Tropical Cyclone Winston by Aisha Mansur, Jesse Doyle, and Oleksiy Ivaschenko, February 2017 |
| 1614 | Urban Social Assistance: Emerging Insights from Three African Countries by Vanessa Moreira and Ugo Gentilini, December 2016 |
| 1613 | Issues for Civil Service Pension Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa by Anita M. Schwarz and Miglena Abels, November 2016 |
| 1612 | How to Target Households in Adaptive Social Protection Systems? Relative Efficiency of Proxy Means Test and Household Economy Analysis in Niger by Pascale Schnitzer, October 2016 |
| 1611 | Pensions for Public-Sector Employees: Lessons from OECD Countries' Experience by Edward Whitehouse, October 2016 |
| 1610 | Pension Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa: Brief Review of Design Parameters and Key Performance Indicators by Miglena Abels and Melis U. Guven, October 2016 |
| 1609 | Household Enterprises in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States: Results from a Qualitative Toolkit Piloted in Liberia, Volume 2 – Annexes by Emily Weedon and Gwendolyn Heaner, August 2016 |
| 1608 | Household Enterprises in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States: Results from a Qualitative Toolkit Piloted in Liberia, Volume 1 – Report by Emily Weedon and Gwendolyn Heaner, August 2016 |
| 1607 | Benefits and Costs of Social Pensions in Sub-Saharan Africa by Melis U. Guven and Phillippe G. Leite, June 2016 |
| 1606 | Assessing Benefit Portability for International Migrant Workers: A Review of the Germany-Turkey Bilateral Social Security Agreement by Robert Holzmann, Michael Fuchs, Seçil Paçacı Elitok and Pamela Dale, May 2016 |
| 1605 | Do Bilateral Social Security Agreements Deliver on the Portability of Pensions and Health Care Benefits? A Summary Policy Paper on Four Migration Corridors Between EU and Non-EU Member States by Robert Holzmann, May 2016 |

- 1604 Assessing Benefit Portability for International Migrant Workers: A Review of the France-Morocco Bilateral Social Security Agreement
by Robert Holzmann, Florence Legro and Pamela Dale, May 2016
- 1603 Assessing Benefit Portability for International Migrant Workers: A Review of the Belgium-Morocco Bilateral Social Security Agreement
by Robert Holzmann, Jacques Wels and Pamela Dale, May 2016
- 1602 Assessing Benefit Portability for International Migrant Workers: A Review of the Austria-Turkey Bilateral Social Security Agreement
by Robert Holzmann, Michael Fuchs, Seçil Paçacı Elitok and Pamela Dale, May 2016
- 1601 The Greek Pension Reform Strategy 2010-2016
by Georgios Symeonidis, July 2016
- 1507 Integrating Disaster Response and Climate Resilience in Social Protection Programs in the Pacific Island Countries
by Cecilia Costella and Oleksiy Ivaschenko, September 2015
- 1506 Effectiveness of Targeting Mechanisms Utilized in Social Protection Programs in Bolivia
by Ignacio Apella and Gastón Blanco, September 2015
- 1505 Kyrgyz Republic: Social Sectors at a Glance
by João Pedro Azevedo, Paula Calvo, Minh Nguyen and Josefina Posadas, August 2015
- 1504 Entering the City: Emerging Evidence and Practices with Safety Nets in Urban Areas
by Ugo Gentilini, July 2015
- 1503 Pension Patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa
by Mark Dorfman, July 2015
- 1502 Social Protection in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries: Trends and Challenges
by Mirey Ovadiya, Adea Kryeziu, Syeda Masood and Eric Zapatero, April 2015
- 1501 Defining, Measuring, and Benchmarking Administrative Expenditures of Mandatory Social Security Programs
by Oleksiy Sluchynsky, February 2015

To view Social Protection & Labor Discussion papers published prior to 2013, please visit www.worldbank.org/spl.

Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the humanitarian response led by the Government of Fiji following Tropical Cyclone Winston, and looks specifically at the role the social protection system played in disaster response, as well as complementing the humanitarian relief efforts. The safety net system or social assistance programs, were scaled up to provide relief to the most vulnerable, in the form of cash transfer top-up payments. While the national social protection system was used to channel humanitarian relief in the form of cash vouchers to the affected families. The interplay between the social protection and humanitarian assistance efforts in Fiji, presents a compelling case for synchronizing and complementing relief efforts in the future. And, a set of recommendations have been put forward for consideration, for strengthening future disaster responsive social protection.

About this series

Social Protection & Labor Discussion Papers are published to communicate the results of The World Bank's work to the development community with the least possible delay. This paper therefore has not been prepared in accordance with the procedures appropriate for formally edited texts.

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank and its affiliated organizations, or those of the Executive Directors of The World Bank or the governments they represent. The World Bank does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work. The boundaries, colors, denominations, and other information shown on any map in this work do not imply any judgement on the part of The World Bank concerning the legal status of any territory or the endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

For more information, please contact the Social Protection Advisory Service, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, N.W., Room G7-803, Washington, DC 20433 USA. Telephone: (202) 458-5267, Fax: (202) 614-0471, E-mail: socialprotection@worldbank.org or visit us on-line at www.worldbank.org/spl.