

Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP)

SUMMARY FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

VANUATU AFFORDABLE RESILIENT SETTLEMENTS (VARS) PROJECT
OHLEN MATASO – URBAN DRAINAGE (INFILTRATION BASIN)
NOVEMBER 2025

1. Purpose and Status of this Summary

This document presents a **detailed Summary for Public Disclosure** of the Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP) prepared for the Ohlen Mataso Urban Drainage works under the Vanuatu Affordable Resilient Settlements (VARs) Project, implemented by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MoLNR) and financed by the World Bank.

In line with guidance from the World Bank, this Summary is disclosed as a **standalone resettlement disclosure document**, focusing on:

- the reason resettlement was required;
- the nature and scale of impacts;
- the **entitlements and assistance provided**;
- the **current status of resettlement**; and
- **next steps**, including ongoing consultations to identify and address any remaining gaps.

The Summary is intended to provide sufficient information to the public without reproducing the full technical detail of the ARAP. It is written in non-technical language and has been **fully anonymised**. Individuals are referred to only as the **female head of household** and **male head of household**.

2. Project Background and Reason for Resettlement

The VARs Project supports the upgrading of infrastructure and services in selected settlements in and around Port Vila to improve resilience, safety, and access to essential services. In Ohlen Mataso, recurrent flooding has long affected households, roads, and public safety near a low-lying intersection at the edge of the settlement.

To address these risks, the approved engineering solution includes:

- construction of an **infiltration basin** to manage stormwater; and
- upgrading roadside drains to convey runoff safely during heavy rainfall events.

The infiltration basin is located within a **government-owned road reserve**, which is required to remain clear for public infrastructure. During detailed design, it was confirmed that **one household** had established an informal, temporary dwelling within this road reserve, directly on the footprint required for the infiltration basin.

Because the road reserve must be cleared to enable construction of the drainage works, which are scheduled to commence in February 2026, relocation of the household was unavoidable. Although the structure was informal and located on State land, the household was recognised as eligible for assistance under **World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5)**. As a result, a site-specific ARAP was prepared, reviewed, and disclosed prior to commencement of civil works.

3. Scope and Nature of Impacts

The resettlement impacts associated with the Ohlen Mataso infiltration basin are **limited in scale and scope** and affect only one household.

The impacts include:

- **physical displacement** from a temporary, informal dwelling located within the road reserve; and
- short-term transitional disruption associated with relocating and re-establishing shelter.

There is **no economic displacement** associated with the Project. The household's income sources are not dependent on the affected land and include construction work, small-scale trading, and seasonal employment.

There was no loss of:

- agricultural land;
- permanent structures of market value;
- trees or crops; or
- businesses facilities.

No other households or persons were affected by the works.

4. Eligibility and Entitlements

4.1 Eligibility under ESS5

In accordance with ESS5, households occupying project-affected land prior to the cut-off date are eligible for resettlement assistance, even where they do not hold legal title. The affected household met this criterion and was therefore entitled to assistance aimed at restoring living standards and ensuring no household member was made worse off as a result of the Project.

4.2 Entitlements and Assistance Provided

The VARS Project provided a comprehensive package of assistance, agreed through consultation with the household and delivered prior to site clearance. Key entitlements include:

- **In-kind compensation at replacement cost**, comprising a full package of construction materials sufficient to build a cyclone-resilient permanent dwelling (concrete block structure, iron roofing, doors, windows, and cement flooring);
- **Relocation and logistical assistance**, including labour support for dismantling the informal structure and transporting reusable materials;
- **Transitional support**, ensuring the household was not left without shelter at any stage of the relocation process; and
- **Ongoing monitoring and follow-up** by the Project Management Unit (PMU).

Compensation was provided in-kind rather than cash, consistent with the household's preference and good practice under ESS5. All assistance was financed directly by the VARS Project, and no financial contribution was required from the household. This will be further assessed through ongoing monitoring and consultation.

5. Relocation Site and Tenure Arrangements

The household selected a **permanent relocation site at Club Hippique**, located on customary family land.

Land in Vanuatu is predominantly held under customary tenure. Although the relocation site is not formally registered, tenure security is provided through recognised family and customary arrangements, including clear consent for long-term occupation and permanent house construction.

The relocation arrangement was confirmed through consultation and formalised in a signed relocation agreement. For the purposes of ESS5, this arrangement constitutes a **recognisable and secure land use right**, notwithstanding the absence of formal title.

6. Transitional Living Arrangements

Following delivery of construction materials, the **male head of household** travelled overseas for seasonal employment. During this period, the **female head of household** and family relocated to temporary accommodation with extended family on nearby registered land.

This transitional arrangement:

- was identified and agreed by the household;
- is culturally appropriate and supported by extended family networks;
- is time-bound and interim in nature; and
- is being monitored by the Project.

The Project recognises that family-provided accommodation does not replace formal entitlements. Accordingly, the PMU continues to engage with the household to confirm that living conditions during the transition remain adequate and that no unaddressed impacts arise.

7. Budget, Costs, and Potential Gap-Filling Measures

All resettlement-related costs are financed by the VARS Project. To date, the value of in-kind assistance provided totals approximately **VT 711,343**, which exceeds the replacement value of the original informal structure.

7.1 Future Costs and Gap-Filling Measures

Minor outstanding costs may relate to:

- ongoing monitoring and reporting activities (internal PMU costs only); and

- **assessment and potential compensation of any reasonable moving or reconstruction costs incurred by the affected household**, particularly during construction of the temporary shelter.

Consistent with ESS5, the Project will continue consultations with the household to identify whether any such costs were incurred and, if verified, to provide appropriate corrective assistance.

7.2 Budget Summary

The in-kind assistance provided far exceeds the replacement value of the household's original structure, ensures livelihood continuity, and complies with ESS5 and Government of Vanuatu legal requirements. The resettlement process has been transparent, documented, and supported by community leadership and the affected household.

8. Consultation and Ongoing Engagement

Consultations with the affected household were conducted between November 2024 and October 2025 and will continue through the resettlement completion period. Engagement is being maintained in an inclusive manner, with the PMU continuing regular contact with the household to:

- confirm that entitlements have been fully delivered;
- assess whether any additional support or gap-filling measures are required;
- monitor wellbeing during the transitional period; and
- support completion of permanent resettlement at the relocation site.

These consultations are particularly focused on ensuring that the **female head of household** is adequately supported during the interim period and that any outstanding issues are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

9. Grievance Redress and Contact Information

The VARS Project maintains a **Help Desk**, which serves as the Project's Grievance Redress Mechanism. Any person with questions, concerns, or complaints related to the Project or the resettlement process may raise them at any time.

How to raise questions or concerns:

- In person: VARS PMU Office, MoLNR Resource Centre, George Pompidou Area, Port Vila
- By phone: **5551551** or **7749233**
- By email: **so@vars.vu**

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing, in Bislama or English. All matters are recorded, reviewed, and addressed in a timely, confidential, and free-of-charge manner.

10. Next Steps and Completion

Key next steps in the resettlement process include:

- continued consultations with the affected household to identify any remaining gaps or corrective measures;
- verification of whether any moving or temporary shelter construction costs require compensation;
- monitoring of household wellbeing during the transition period;
- return of the male head of household from overseas seasonal work (target April 2026);
- completion of the permanent dwelling at the Club Hippique relocation site (target date December 2026); and
- preparation of an **ARAP Completion Report** confirming that all resettlement objectives have been achieved.

For Public Disclosure

This Summary is disclosed in accordance with World Bank requirements for transparency and public information.