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Learning from survivors
of development-induced displacement:

Operationalising Vanuatu's new displacement
policy toward an inclusive Capital city

Jennifer Day,
Margaretha Wewerinke-Singh

Background paper to the main report

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Learning from Survivors of Development-Induced Displacement:

Operationalising Vanuatu's New Displacement Policy toward an Inclusive Capital City

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ABSTRACT

This paper documents some of the impacts of development-induced displacement inside the capital city of Vanuatu, South Pacific against the backdrop of a brand-new policy on displacement: *Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement*. Vanuatu's new policy is an achievement. It is the first national policy on internal displacement for Vanuatu and the first such policy to be developed for any country in the Pacific. It has the potential to inform a regional framework for humane mobility in the context of Disaster Risk Reduction, climate change and urbanisation in the least-developed island nations, and to serve as a model for similar national policies elsewhere in the region.

In this paper, we contend that further work is necessary to make Vanuatu's policy inclusive for survivors of urban displacement, and that a first step in this regard is to initiate a national discussion on displacement that is more inclusive and consultative of the people living at the fringes of urban areas. We illustrate the future challenges for operationalizing the policy in Port Vila and other towns in Vanuatu, focusing particularly on recent urban dislocations and threats of dislocation in two peri-urban communities: Destination, which was forcibly evicted overnight in October 2014, and Elang Etas, where many of the displacees from Destination settled under the presumption of a permanent home. A new land conflict means that they are now again being threatened with eviction, but they are creating a civil-society response to challenge another displacement.

We present ten vignettes based on real people or amalgamations of people. Their experiences illustrate a variety of dilemmas that arise in an era of concurrent climate change and rapid urbanisation. Their experiences also highlight the problematic nature of the existing guidance for displacement in Vanuatu, both in the form of local policy and in the guidance provided by the international community. We argue that Vanuatu's policy would be strengthened by a critical engagement with the language of its policy and its implications for urban people – particularly the urban people whose lives have been torn apart by dislocation. We then analyse the policy language, illuminating the obligations that it creates for government, and pointing out the rights and responsibilities that are left unaddressed by the policy. We close by providing six recommendations that we hope the GoV will consider as it operationalizes the new policy for its capital city.

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Now, eviction is inside [the policy], but it's sleeping. Next, we need to make it work. The government needs to see this, to hear the voices of people from Destination and Elang Etas.
– Roslyn, resident of Elang Etas and survivor of forced eviction at Destination, Port Vila

1. INTRODUCTION

Mary's home was bulldozed after an overnight eviction in the community of Destination, a peri-urban settlement in Port Vila, the capital city of the island nation of Vanuatu, in the South Pacific. She did not know the eviction was coming until the Vanuatu Mobile Force arrived on a Sunday evening and forced Mary to move her belongings to the roadside while also caring for her young children. Four years later, she has not recovered. She no longer works, and for a while, her children did not attend school. She lives in a lean-to house on land at the edge of the city, far from work opportunities and without water, sanitation, or a secure source of food. Even in this marginal setting, her community is again being threatened with eviction – even though she and her family were resettled to this place with assurances by government that their tenure was secure. She and her family still recall the eviction with horror, and she says she will never again build another strong house until they have secure tenure.

As Mary's story illustrates, cities raise particular concerns about climate change and displacement. These concerns have typically been neglected in aid, development, and policy in these areas. This paper documents some of the impacts of development-induced displacement inside the capital city of Vanuatu, South Pacific against the backdrop of a brand-new policy on displacement: *Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement*. The new policy was developed through a partnership between the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in the aftermath of Category 5 Cyclone Pam, which struck Vanuatu in March 2015, causing widespread displacement. The policy was officially adopted on 26 September 2018.

Vanuatu's new policy is the first national policy on internal displacement for Vanuatu and the first such policy to be developed for any country in the Pacific. As such, this policy has the potential to inform a regional framework for humane mobility in the context of Disaster Risk Reduction, climate change and urbanisation in the least-developed island nations, and to serve as a model for similar national policies elsewhere in the region. Indeed, other countries in the Pacific, like the Solomon Islands, are already discussing development of a national displacement policy, and are looking to Vanuatu's experience for insight. In this paper, we contend that further work is necessary to make Vanuatu's policy inclusive for survivors of urban displacement, and that a first step in this regard is to initiate a national discussion on displacement that is more inclusive and consultative of the people living at the fringes of urban areas.

In Vanuatu, the national policy is the first in what will ultimately be a series of more-focused policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) toward implementing the over-arching national policy. As such, it is designed to function as a framework policy. The policy provides general guidance for displacements arising from a variety of events, including slow-onset climate change, sudden weather events and natural disasters, and development-induced displacement. However, our analysis of the policy in context demonstrates that implementation of the national policy in contested peri-urban lands will require further processes targeted specifically at the peri-urban edges of cities and towns. This analysis aims to provide suggestions for achieving a more-comprehensive national displacement policy that is inclusive of concurrent climate change and urbanisation. As noted above, Vanuatu's experience with creating a new displacement policy could provide a model for other governments struggling to begin managing displacement in its various incarnations.

Recent urban dislocations and threats of dislocation in Vanuatu illustrate the particular nature of urban displacement in the Pacific and the disempowering effect that disenfranchising people from the dislocation process has on them as citizens. Our fieldwork centres around two communities that are related to each other across time and space. They are both places where dislocated survivors have settled as part of their migration journeys. The first is a community called Destination, which was forcibly evicted overnight and under duress, in October 2014. Our fieldwork reveals that people have, as yet, not found a durable solution to their displacement. They continue to suffer livelihood and educational

consequences, have not recovered community or housing, continue to distrust government, and see no hope for secure futures. The second is a community called Etas, where many of the displacees from Destination settled under the presumption of a permanent home. A new land conflict means that they are now again being threatened with eviction, but they are creating a civil-society response to challenge another displacement.

We present ten vignettes based on real people or amalgamations of people. Their experiences illustrate a variety of dilemmas that arise in an era of concurrent climate change and rapid urbanisation. Their experiences also highlight the problematic nature of the existing guidance for displacement in Vanuatu, both in the form of local policy and in the guidance provided by the international community. We argue that Vanuatu's policy would be strengthened by a critical engagement with the language of its policy and its implications for urban people – particularly the urban people whose lives have been torn apart by dislocation. We then analyse the policy language, illuminating the obligations that it creates for government, and pointing out the rights and responsibilities that are left unaddressed by the policy.

Our critique should not diminish the achievements of this policy, one of which was to raise the problem of eviction from customary lands at the peri-urban fringe to one of national significance. The intention of this critique is, instead, to point to specific places in the implementation process that need attention in order to ensure that the promises of the policy are fulfilled. We note that we provide a critique of this policy even as Author Day uses it in discussions with community members to describe their rights under the new policy. For instance, in November 2018, she led a group of community organisers in a reading of the policy that pointed out the language that protects them from forced eviction from their community at the peri-urban edge. The policy is a document that is empowering these communities – even as it leaves questions about how it will serve them. We hope that by focusing on where the policy is non-specific and less-prescriptive for peri-urban residents, we can direct attention to the critical problems of urbanisation. Future SOPs, then, can address the specific needs to peri-urban populations at risk of eviction.

As Roslyn's opening quote illustrates, the current policy contains some of the essential language to protect the human rights of people living at the fringes of Vanuatu's cities. The concerns of urban displacement survivors are represented in the policy. A critical next step will be to operationalize the policy so that all people at the edges of Vanuatu's cities are enfranchised in the urban fabric with full participatory rights. Toward this end, we provide six recommendations that we hope the GoV will consider as it operationalizes the new policy for its capital city.

2. BACKGROUND

This section outlines background information relevant to understanding the setting for the policy and research, and the Pacific more generally.

2.1. Urban and peri-urban growth

Pacific cities are growing at breakneck speed of around four percent, with growth in peri-urban settlements in the double-digits (Jones & Sanderson, 2017a, 2017b), but governments around the Pacific continue to pay disproportionate attention to rural development. The research we present here suggests that this is also true for Vanuatu, a South Pacific country comprised of 82 islands and 283,000 people (WorldOMeters, 2018). Depending on the estimate and year, roughly 16-25 percent of the population lives in the capital city, Port Vila (Jones & Sanderson, 2017a, 2017b; Rey, Le De, Leone, & Gilbert, 2017; Vanuatu National Statistics Office, 2017). Most data on urban and peri-urban settlements in Vanuatu and the Pacific are based on estimates. Vanuatu has not conducted a full national Census since 2009, though it conducted a "mini-Census" in 2016 to assist recovery from Tropical Cyclone Pam. The mini-Census estimated the national population at 279,459 (Vanuatu National Statistics Office, 2017). In a telling indication of the minimal focus on cities, the Mini Census report does not enumerate urban populations outside of an aggregate national number of 67,749 in its "Summary of main indicators" (p. 1) or identify the estimate of city populations in the table of contents. Later tables estimate the population of Port Vila at 51,437 (p. 96) and Luganville at 16,312 (p. 95).

2.2. Customary peri-urban land

Urban populations are also difficult to estimate for many Pacific countries, including Vanuatu, because of the configuration of urban and peri-urban lands. In Pacific countries, including Vanuatu, customary and introduced land systems exist side-by-side by virtue of their constitutions.

To understand questions of land ownership in Vanuatu it is necessary to place them in their historical context. Vanuatu gained independence from joint rule by France and the United Kingdom on 30 July 1980. During colonialism, the colonial governments and private individuals took possession of most of the land that was customarily owned by *ni-Vanuatu* (indigenous people of Vanuatu). The Constitution of the Republic of Vanuatu sought to reverse this situation through a provision stating unequivocally that all land in Vanuatu belongs to its indigenous custom owners and their descendants (art 73). Further, it provides that the rules of customary law are the basis for the ownership and use of land (art 75) and only indigenous citizens who have acquired their land in accordance with custom can own land perpetually (s 3).

The boundaries of Port Vila and Luganville were delineated through the Land Reform Order No. 26 of 1981, which classified these areas as public land. Simultaneously, Land Orders No. 30 and No. 118 of 1981 established the Port Vila and Luganville Urban Land Corporations. These two institutions were tasked with managing urban land for the government, including the leasing of urban land and collecting rents (Van Trease 1987: 260). Custom owners would be compensated through a percentage of the annual rents collected (Ibid; Land Reform Regulation s. 11).

In accordance with these laws and regulations – which are still in force today - the metropolitan area that comprises Port Vila consists of municipal land that is owned by the state, and also of peri-urban lands that are under customary ownership. The community studied in this paper, Destination, sits on customary lands. This is an important feature of Destination's story – and of the stories of many other peri-urban communities – for a number of reasons.

First, land is a cultural link to the past and future. As our research corroborates, people in Vanuatu are attuned to having a place where they belong – a *man ples* (man place) (Bonnemaison, 1985). This makes land governance and tenure a contentious political issue, as it is across the Pacific. Violent conflicts over land and displacement have happened elsewhere in Melanesia (Foukona & Allen, 2017).

Second, the types of lease arrangements available to customary landowners under Vanuatu's hybrid legal system create grey areas in tenure. On the one hand, customary landowners may enter into formal long-term lease arrangements for periods of up to 75 or 99 years. These leases are a product of introduced land laws based on the pre-independence colonial models of Britain and France. Most major construction on peri-urban lands, such as for resorts and hotels, is on land leased to foreign investors under these leases. Individuals and groups can also have formal leaseholds.

On the other hand, a wide range of informal arrangements is available to customary landowners. These informal arrangements are much more common than formal leaseholds in Vanuatu and other Pacific island countries that maintain a system of customary land ownership. The arrangements can range in formality from oral permission with no financial exchange, historical arrangements with ancestors, exchange of non-monetary products such as garden produce, or monetary exchange. A significant drawback of these informal arrangements is that their features and indeed their very existence can be difficult to prove in legal proceedings when a dispute over land ownership arises. This is illustrated by the Destination story.

Third, surrounded by customary land, the cities are not designed to grow. This means that urban expansion must either become more dense – a difficult task in a place with no building codes or town plan (Cullwick, 2017) – or expand into the customary peri-urban lands. At present, there are discussions in the Ministry of Lands to acquire land to expand urban areas in Port Vila, Sola, Luganville, and Lakatoro. However, none of these lands are gazetted into the cities and towns, despite fast-growing peri-urban settlements. Jones and Sanderson (2017b) cite estimates of around 15,000 for the population of peri-urban communities around Port Vila.

2.3. The national displacement policy

In this paper, we do not disagree that Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement (Government of Vanuatu, 2018) is an important first policy move in the governance and management of disaster and displacement. Rather, we argue that the policy lacks the specificity necessary to ensure the protection of the right of those who are faced with urban development-induced displacement.

Vanuatu is the country most at-risk to natural disasters, according to the United Nations University World Risk Report 2016 (Garschagen et al., 2016), with Oceania noted as a global hotspot and nearby Tonga names as the second most-vulnerable country in the world. In fact, Vanuatu was the "most at-risk nation in the world" from 2011-2016 (United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016).

The new policy is developed as climate change and natural disasters become pressing issues for governments in the Pacific. In March 2015, Tropical Cyclone Pam (TCP) disabled Vanuatu, destroying a significant proportion of the housing stock and displacing more than 65,000 people (p. 11 of the national policy). Most of the national population was affected, including the entire population of Port Vila. Nationally, 65 percent of people temporarily displaced from their homes and 81 percent reporting damage to their homes and 24 percent reporting destruction of the walls, floor, roof, and doors/windows. A month after the cyclone, 29 percent of survey respondents reported that they were still hosting at least one family (Shelter Cluster, 2015, p. 1).

The Category 5 storm has had a strong influence on the national narrative, including a foundational influence on the new forced displacement policy, with discussion centred on the significance of TCP as a reason that the policy is critical (pp. 11, 13, 18, 24, 25, 39, 47 of the policy). Only six countries in the world have a national policy on forced displacement, according to IOM, and none of these are in the Pacific. Vanuatu, then, is positioned to lead the Pacific region in policy on forced displacement. This is both remarkable and worthy of study. This is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) that has not yet achieved universal primary education or an annual per-capita income that exceeds $3,000 USD. On many development indicators, Vanuatu lags behind its Pacific neighbours. GDP per capita, for instance, is more than $4,000 USD in Samoa and more than $5,000 USD in Fiji.

The national policy stresses durability, or the importance of finding "durable solutions" for people who are unable to return to their place of origin. The policy follows the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (United Nations, 1998) in calling for durable solutions, which must be safe from natural hazards and provide long-term safety, access to livelihoods, food, water, and sanitation, compensation and remedy for losses, and access to family and public participation.

The policy is newly adopted as disasters continue to occur. Ambae, an outer island with a volcano threatening catastrophic activity, was evacuated in October 2017, when 11,000 people were temporarily resettled to neighbouring islands. The people of Ambae were allowed to return to their island, but subsequent activity has compelled the government to plan a permanent resettlement to the nearby island of Maewo (Radio New Zealand, 2018c). However, most of the population of Ambae preferred resettlement to another island, Santo (Radio New Zealand, 2018a), and would be welcomed by communities there (Radio New Zealand, 2018b), which will likely result in the creation of new urban settlements. With a current population of around 16,000, Santo's capital, Luganville, has increased significantly in size. As with the 2017 evacuation, some Ambae islanders have come to the capital and settled in the peri-urban settlements – which are growing at an annual rate of up to 12 percent (Jones & Sanderson, 2017a). Port Vila has no plan for urban growth and development control (Cullwick, 2017), and the evidence from Destination and more-recent evictions suggests that those who move to Vanuatu's cities and towns may be displaced again and again in the absence of specific policies designed to prevent this from happening.

2.4. The eviction of Destination

This brings us back to the story of Destination. In October 2014, around 300 people comprising around 80 households were evicted from the urban community of Destination to make way for an urban housing subdivision. These households were evicted from the settlement on a Monday morning, 20 October 2014, after receiving notice after nightfall on a Sunday night that their community would be bulldozed the next morning.

The story is complicated. There were contested claims to the parcel of land on which Destination sat, that resulted in protracted court battles. On 25 August 2010 the Efate customary landowners, the Kalpuaso family, obtained a court order declaring the occupation of the land by the Destination community – a community composed primarily of migrants from different islands across the archipelago – unlawful (Pacific islands Report, 2014). When the community refused to relocate, the Kalpuaso family sought an eviction warrant, which they obtained on 28 February 2014. However, when the policy was about to execute the warrant, on 24 September 2014, the Minister of Land convinced the police to delay the execution for 'humanitarian and security reasons' (Vanuatu Daily Post, 2014).

The actual eviction came after around twelve staying orders that delayed the resettlement and civil disruption by a community desperate to avoid displacement. This disruption included community members burning tyres and felling trees onto public property in protest. According to community members, the government's response to the protests was swift and final. The community was given notice after dark on Sunday, 19 October 2014, that they could move out whatever belongings they could and place them along the island's major road. Their homes were bulldozed at 6am the next day. Regardless of the lawfulness of the eviction decision – the court decision awarding the title to the current owner appears to have been lawful under those rules in place at the time – the execution of the eviction was unconscionable, and the community is still traumatised.

Wives whose husbands were not home overnight – ten (Radio New Zealand, 2014) to twelve (based on interviews) of the community's male household heads were jailed overnight for setting the tyres alight – had to move their family's possessions alone while caring for young children. People in the homes further from the road were still moving when the homes closer to the road were razed, and they recall the noise as gut-wrenching. During my interviews on three separate occasions, children overhearing the conversation between their parents and me commented on the trauma of the eviction. One girl of eight years old who would have been five in 2014, recalled the precise day of the eviction as her mother struggled to recall the date. Another boy, now aged five and aged three at time of the eviction, stopped

his play to explain that the bulldozers had been very scary – a comment that set his mother weeping. My research protocol did not allow me to interview children, and so these comments were incidental and unsolicited. However, they do indicate that children present at the time of the eviction have lasting and traumatic memories of the event. None of the research subjects who were arrested – five in total – were charged with a crime.

Adults who were young adults or teenagers at the time of the eviction are traumatised. Some say that they will never build a secure house – though others say they dream of again having a home that would stand up to a cyclone. For many members of Destination, this was the home in which they intended to grow old. Over and over again, Author Day heard the story that some spent their savings on strong houses after a lifetime of living in one-day houses – shanties built in a day when tenure is insecure or cash for building materials is scarce, often with dirt floors. People were invested in this community, which was brought together by a chief and pastor seeking to create a cohesive urban settlement. In Port Vila, it is common for migrants from outer islands to live in ethnic enclaves in the capital. As noted above, this settlement was mixed, with people from many islands. It was an example of an emerging type of urban fabric – a cosmopolitan place in a city of enclaves.

The lawfulness of the eviction decision is not the subject of this paper, though the new policy does expressly forbid abuses that occurred during the eviction of Destination such as evictions that occur overnight. Rather, the point is that those urban communities most impacted by displacement – those who have lived through perhaps the most-traumatic examples of forced relocation in urban Port Vila to-date, and those fearing it in the future – do not appear to have been consulted about this important new policy. Much of the language of the policy, including the title, stresses slow-onset and sudden disasters. However, the policy fails to acknowledge the need for policy particular to urban settings.

It is important to underscore that the eviction of the Destination community uprooted people who were particularly vulnerable as they had already moved from elsewhere in Vanuatu seeking security – from natural disasters, food and water insecurity, informal tenure, poverty and unemployment. They saw Destination as a place where they could put down roots. Over and over again, people said in the interviews that they some spent their savings on solid houses after a lifetime of living in one-day houses – shanties built in a day when tenure is insecure or cash for building materials is scarce, often with dirt floors. People were invested in this community, which was brought together by a chief and pastor seeking to create a cohesive urban settlement. The people displaced from Destination created a diaspora that scattered across the city – and some have been resettled again and again in destructive forced evictions that are becoming increasingly common.

2.5. Eviction threats at Etas

The Destination eviction happened in 2014, before TC Pam and before the national displacement policy was in draft. One could argue that such evictions are a thing of the past. However, Author Day's recent fieldwork in October and November 2018 strongly suggests that this is not the case. Quite the contrary, ongoing eviction threats on customary lands continue in Port Vila's peri-urban areas. The difference between the case of Destination and the case of Etas is that, with this new policy in force, there is a chance to improve the outcomes for people involved in this land dispute. The case at Etas is not yet decided, so legal documentation is not available. All of the narrative here is based, resultingly, on interviews with members of the Elang Etas community.

Heading out of Port Vila to the southeast, a few kilometres out of town, one cuts a sharp left and heads up an uneven, unpaved road to Etas. The story of Etas starts when the road to the Bouffa landfill was cut through the jungle in the early 1990s. The landfill road is unpaved, but that has not prevented more than 300 people settling into the area and making it home. They have come from all around Vanuatu – including from other areas of Port Vila. Some have formal titles, though those have recently been called into question. Some are informal settlers. Some are people who were displaced from other communities in Port Vila. Virtually all of the houses in Etas are one-day houses – shanties built in a day to provide basic shelter, with dirt floors, roofs and walls made of corrugated metal. Hot in the sun and leaky in the rain, the homes are also crowded. Three or four small houses can be built on a 1/30-hectare sub-divided plot,

in addition to a toilet and kitchen. When the plots were first divided by Etas' first planner, they were meant to be temporary accommodation. This first planner was a now-resident who had a dream one night that he should clear the bush and provide affordable plots to people seeking to move to a secure piece of land in the outskirts of Port Vila. He shared his dream with the lesee who then held a leasehold agreement with the customary owner, who agreed. They cleared and subdivided the land over the next three or four years, growing the community into its current form.

The relationship between the residents of Etas, the lesee, and the customary landowner warrants some description here. A customary landowner may lease land to a lesee. In total, the area of Etas has 12 zones, the upper two-thirds of which comprise the Elang Etas community – Zones 4 through 12, the communities cut by the first planner with the agreement of the lessor, Mr. Harriman Kalsong. According to the interviewees, Kalsong leased the land from customary landowners from Eratap Village and then unofficially subdivided the land, using proceeds from payments by Etas residents to pay for the lease. Elang Etas residents agreed to pay 1.6 million Vatu ($13,280 AUD) per hectare in land rent – though only some have upheld the agreement. The agreement with Mr. Kalsong was that the one-hectare plots would be granted titles to the land once the full 1.6 million Vatu was paid. Many of Elang Etas' residents have already paid their full portion to Kalsong and his descendants (he passed away a few years ago). Others, like Mary's household, have paid about half. Some have made far payments amounting to far less, or none at all.

Author Day has interviewed representatives from at least 17 households in Etas since October 2017. Most of the earlier residents – those who moved in from 1994 to around 2012 – describe their intentions as temporary. That is, they were seeking a semi-permanent home where they could live without the high rental costs and crowding of town. Those residents that moved in after 2012 had more-permanent motivations, seeking longer-term solutions. Mary was one of ten families in Etas that credit then-Lands Minister, Ralph Regenvanu, with assisting the community to resettle and make a down-payment on their parcels in this peri-urban settlement (Joshua, 2014). This place provided what Mary thought would be a secure, formal lease and a future home for son and future generations. Regardless of the motivation to move to Etas, all but one of the households Author Day interviewed have not built anything more than a one-day house. Ongoing fear of displacement appears to be the main motivation – a fear borne out by recent events.

On 04 March 2018, Elang Etas' nine zones were threatened with an eviction order. This prompted the community to form the Elang Etas Community Association (EECA). This grass-roots community-development initiative, started by members of the Etas community when their community was again threatened by a conflict between claimants to this customary land. Soon after the launch, a targeted threat was levied at the seven members of the EECA Committee and their households. Mary's family was one of those affected households. She and her husband had already paid more than half of their agreed land payments to the customary landowner, Chief Harriman Kalsong, who was also declared to be the rightful customary owner of the land in a ceremony presided over by the previous Lands Minister (Joshua, 2014). The constitution of Vanuatu, however, is answerable to the rightful owners of the land – not to the Lands Minister. This point was highlighted in a conversation that Author Day had with an officer from the Customary Lands Office, which manages land transactions and dispute on customary lands. On the matter of Etas, no legal proceedings have yet occurred, and so no documentation exists to corroborate community rumours. This makes it difficult to assess the explanations given by the community for the current conflict. It is clear, however, that this story illustrates the risks to communities' livelihoods that emerge as soon as land becomes valuable and revenue-generating – partly prompted by new infrastructure. In this case, a hectare of land in Etas is generating around 1.6 million Vatu ($13,280 AUD) in land rent. Recent installation of a new water-treatment facility at Bouffa and the road and services upgrades announced, has created a market for this land. With new infrastructure and rapid urbanisation, the customary owner of the land on which Elang Etas sits, stands to generate much more in the near future.

3. FORCED RESETTLEMENT IN CITIES

Given the compelling problems raised by climate-change-induced weather events, it is no surprise that climate change and disasters appear prominently in the new forced relocation policy in Vanuatu. However, the focus on climate change and disasters in a national policy that purports to provide over-arching guidance on forced displacement appears to be disproportionate when placed in the context of increasingly frequent cases of development-induced displacement. We argue below that particular problems that arise for urban people facing displacement occur as an inextricable combination of climate and development whose narrative is difficult to sort into constituent components of disaster and voluntary migration.

Unfortunately, the current construction of international human rights and displacement law requires the distinction between voluntary migration (which is understood to include migration for economic reasons) and involuntary migration. Early guidance produced to assist governments and humanitarians in understanding that law, the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (1998) specifically distinguish economic migrants from involuntary migrants: "voluntary" movement toward cities disqualifies people from being classified as Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs). More-recent guidance continues to distinguish economic migrants and IDPs, e.g., the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's 2010 IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally-Displaced Persons. These documents cite disasters, conflicts, and a limited set of development-induced displacements as requirements for IDP status.

It is in this grey area that occurs between climate displacement and economic migration where we situate our discussion. We argue that new policies should take this complex interplay into account as the idea of voluntariness is interpreted, as national capacities are considered, and as the old guidance is reviewed and new guidance is assembled.

There is precedent for considering cities differently in forced displacement. The international humanitarian and development communities have taken steps to begin addressing the particular problems of cities in climate-induced and human-created crises. ALNAP, a global network of NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, and donors seeking to improve humanitarian response, has set up its Urban Response Community of Practice in acknowledgement that "Urban areas and needs in crises differ in important ways from rural contexts, and force the humanitarian community to fundamentally rethink the way they can prepare for, and respond to, disasters and conflict in cities" (ALNAP, 2018). In very recent years, various humanitarian and development agencies have produced urban-specific toolkits like the Urban Context Analysis Toolkit (Committee., 2017), which provides a guide for governments and humanitarians in providing assistance for IDPs and the cities where they settle, temporarily or permanently. Our own organisation, the Academic-Practitioner Collaboration for Urban Shelter, South Pacific (APCUS-SP) links academics with humanitarians for the rapid assembly of information during urban crises.

Still, despite these efforts, the largest efforts of humanitarian practice that arise out of human rights law have not distinguished – nor, we argue, have adequately dealt with – cities. Aside from the *Guiding Principles*, there are other examples that illustrate the focus on places outside of cities when it comes to IDPs. Much focus has been on ensuring rural populations affected by climate change can move voluntarily and with dignity from rural to urban areas before a slow-onset crisis becomes acute, or in returning migrants to rural homes after a disaster or conflict. The National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) prepared by some Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in accordance with the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) adopted by parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as part of the Cancun Agreements at the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16), for instance, generally do not reflect thinking that urban migration is a desirable outcome by LDCs (Warner, Kälin, Martin, & Nassef, 2015). Little guidance is given on what to do when IDPs originate in cities or decide to stay there.

4. APPROACH AND METHODS

Our work follows Cernea (1999), who calls for collaboration across the social sciences to understand the lived experience of forced resettlement and consider a wider scope of consequences than those that are easily translated into economic transactions. We consider both the enumerate-able and the non-enumerate-able consequences faced by communities. We also take issue with what appears to be a fundamental presumption of academic literature, Vanuatu's policy, and international guidance on forced resettlement: that urban internal displacement is a rural-to-urban journey, e.g., (Landau, 2014). In this urban century, we argue, forced displacements originating and ending within the same city have economic and social consequences that warrant attention. Our data are from:

Communities. To engage with communities who have lived through forced resettlement, Author Day used a storytelling method. In this method, participants are asked broad questions such as, Why did you move from Destination?, and Why did you move to Elang Etas? These questions are designed to get people talking about the experience of resettlement in a way that is not driven by any particular hypothesis, e.g., that gender played a significant role in the dislocation process. She have interviewed around 100 women and men in urban communities that have faced dislocation in the recent past, or that fear that they will face displacement.

The policy. We review the language of the policy in the context of international guidance on forced displacement.

Public records. We use court records and newspaper reporting to understand claims of government, the land claimants, and the survivors in in the legal dispute that involved Destination, and the general public perception of other evictions.

Policy makers. A limited number of unofficial conversations with policy-makers from the Ministry of Lands, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Customary Lands Office, Port Vila Municipal Council, and other government departments also occurred during the course of this research, from October 2017 to November 2018. These conversations occurred at various meetings, gatherings, and workshops. Some of the policy makers are mentioned by name in this document. Similarly, we draw on some informal conversations with members of various intergovernmental agencies, particularly the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank.

The arguments we make here are based partly on Author Day's observations during fieldwork in Port Vila, Vanuatu in several diverse communities of migrants from different islands in Vanuatu. Title to the land ('Destination') on which one of the communities had settled was disputed, and the community was ultimately displaced following a court order. In October 2017, Day interviewed at least 75 people now living in around eleven communities and 55 households of Port Vila, the capital city of Vanuatu. This included 40 households who previously lived at Destination and an additional fifteen households who never lived at Destination. Additionally, in October and November 2018, Day interviewed an additional 22 individuals from 17 households living at Elang Etas.

We describe the number of interviewees and households in approximate terms because of the nature of the interviews. As is typical for village environments in Vanuatu, often fifteen or twenty people observed the interview and intermittently participated. Several times, Day and her research assistant arrived for a scheduled interview with one household to instead find a group assembled. This social environment may have changed the way that people responded compared with a private interview, e.g., respondents may have shared fewer or different details in the social setting. However, the groups tended to function like a focus group, with group members clarifying details, interjecting corroborating or countervailing opinions, and often providing stories and examples of their own.

The interviewees' experiences provide valuable lessons for the development of the national policy, the *Guiding Principles*, and more-recent guidance on forced displacement, which can be drawn from reflecting on a contemporary displacement event in the Pacific. We structure the remainder of this paper

as follows. In Section 5, we describe several stories that are typical of the stories we heard during the interviews. These stories are designed to both humanize the lived experience of contemporary forced displacement in Port Vila, and to describe the complexity and relationship between climate change and urban change in the city.

Action Research. In addition to interviews with members of various communities and policy makers, and analysis of public documentation, this paper is also informed by Author Day's interaction with communities that is centred on the new displacement policy. When she became aware of the draft displacement policy about halfway through her interviews in 2017, Day had to make a choice: remain an "impartial" researcher, or share what she knew about the displacement policy with those communities in which she had been working since October 2017. Ethically, there was no choice to be made. As soon as she was aware of the policy, she began to share it with her interviewees. In October and November 2018, she helped coordinators and members of the Elang Etas Community Association to read and understand the policy – in particular, the protections that the policy offers to people in their situation. Part of this activity was to help the EECA Committee to draft publicity materials like the flyer appearing in Appendix A, announcing their organization – and to use this flyer to reach out to organisations around the world to help them network and share their experience. She also shared her opinion that the policy does not go far enough to protect people like those she knows from Destination and Elang Etas.

In this way, Day's fieldwork has a component of *action research*, wherein she is both a creator of the system and an observer of it. This is a necessary product of the developments in the policy and continuing evictions, and of Day being in a position to assist communities to mobilise knowledge toward their own aims. Throughout this process, she has not been an organizer, not has she taken on any lead role. She simply observes, volunteers to use her writing skills and computing resources to disseminate the communities' messages, and shares whatever knowledge she has with community members and leaders.

In Section 6, we summarise the interviews. In Section 7, we analyse the displacement policy language and develop key lessons from Destination for the new document. In Section 8, we make recommendations based on the stories and analysis contained in Sections 6 and 7. These include recommendation for future policy initiatives in Vanuatu, and also for international policy guidance like the *Guiding Principles*.

5. STORIES

This section describes the stories of people affected by urban displacement in Vanuatu. These are stories of people either directly or indirectly affected by the eviction of Destination. At the end of each story, we also raise some questions that arise from the vignette.

5.1. Complex migration paths

Willy, about 33, migrated from Tanna to Port Vila in 2012. He describes being equally compelled to move away from his island for several reasons. First, his small children became sick after eating forest crops and drinking contaminated water during the El Niño droughts that came on after Tropical Cyclone Pam. Second, he fears tsunamis, as his village on Tanna is near the coast. Third, he was becoming frustrated with the significant amount of "community work" that fell to a diminishing village population as able-bodied men left the island. Finally, his children are now approaching high school age, and he needs to find a job to pay school fees. He would rather stay on Tanna, but many people have moved to the capital, and he thinks it is the right move for his family.

Willy moved to Port Vila in May 2012 and found a job as a labourer in construction, and also driving for an NGO. After about six months of living with relatives, Willy joined a mixed settlement composed of people from different islands, on a small block of land near the airport. This community – Destination – had a customary arrangement negotiated by their elected chief with the landowner. The chief was excited about the land and recruited many families to make their homes there. Because other families were building strong, concrete-block houses, Willy felt confident to begin building his. During the period from October 2012 to October 2013, Willy worked hard and spent his savings from work to build a concrete-block house. Once he finished the house, which he built incrementally over the year, he started putting money away for school fees.

However, in October 2013, Willy began to hear some rumours that the landowner might seek to establish a lease with a foreign landowner. The chief reassured Willy and other nervous community members that their tenure was secure and elicited periodic, small monetary contributions from the community to seek legal advice and file legal motions. Willy has since moved in with some family members who live close to Destination, on peri-urban lands, and there is rumour that their settlement will also be displaced.

5.2. Inter-generational disagreement

Ronny, 66, is a customary landowner in Blacksans, a settlement of roughly 6,000 people. He is frustrated with the crowding in this peri-urban settlement. Thirty years ago, he says, he allowed six households from his island, Malekula, to settle on a roughly-one-hectare parcel. He did not anticipate the migration that would follow.

Now, he says, there are more than a 400 on that same land – many the relatives of the original two families, more-recently arrived from Malekula, and some also the grown children of the original families that have set up their own households. Ronny's father was also the owner of these lands, including the adjacent lands. Many residents came to live on his land from other islands and other parts of Efate, and though leases were arranged, they have never paid for their tenure. Many of the tenants have generated rental income from housing built on their lands, but Ronny has never seen any income from that.

At first, the arrangement worked to his favour. The migrants' gardens were a source of extra food when he had to provision a daughter's wedding or another ceremony. He enjoyed having the extra help to do "community work." However, as the settlement got more dense, he notes that many families had to give up gardening or to arrange garden land elsewhere, outside of Blacksans.

Worse than the crowding, he says, are the unruly bands of teenage boys that are now in the settlement. The boys do not know the island life, and the parents cannot control them. They smoke marijuana and commit crimes, and they make him feel unsafe. They do not contribute to the community by doing community work.

Ronnie knows about the eviction at Destination. He is aware that as a landowner, he could exercise his rights to evict or to limit development on his land. He has recently denied some residents permission to run pipes to connect to the Port Vila water main. He has also denied permission for the community to rebuild a strong church with a concrete foundation after Tropical Cyclone Pam. He does not want to encourage more families to come, and he does not want a permanent settlement to be established there. He has no intention to evict the families that are already there, but he also does not want any more people to come. Life in Blacksans is already too crowded and chaotic.

Reginald, 37, is an informal settler in Blacksans. His family has been in Blacksans for more than twenty years and have made a permanent home on Ronny's land according to a custom arrangement that happened between Reginald's and Ronny's fathers.

Reginald lives in a small community of four households consisting of him and his family, his widowed mother who lives with a relative with a disability, his sister and her family, his brother and his family. Their small family circle is part of a larger community of 400 people that wishes to rebuild their church, which was damaged during Tropical Cyclone Pam in March 2015. The community did not have a strong structure in which to shelter during the Category 5 cyclone. Two young men who lagged behind the evacuating community ended up sheltering in the concrete water tank during the storm, which was terrifying. Reginald and the community hope that a new church will provide shelter during the next storm.

The community also wishes to run piped water to their homes. The residents have saved enough money to pay for the pipes from the main, and each family will pay for connections to their houses. However, they have been denied permission for both of these projects by Ronny. In a city that is not designed to grow, there is a tension between private property, customary land, and development. Ronny's presumed right to manage his lands – and particularly to deny building applications – appears to be at odds with the community's right to access to water and strong, weather-resistant structures, not to mention cultural facilities like churches. English common law has precedent that allows for common-law tenure after occupancy goes unchallenged for a certain period of time, but Ronny claims that the tenants' obligations under the leases were never met. Ronny did not agree to the additional settlers, but also never did he directly challenge their presence there. Ronny does not have plans to force the people living on his lands to resettle, but if the Destination experience can act as a guide, he may seek to do so in the future.

5.3. Loss of livelihood and purpose

Mark, 41, is a skilled tradesman who was jailed during the eviction of Destination. While he was incarcerated overnight, his home was demolished with his tools inside. As a tradesman, he had independence and a sense of pride in his work. His move to Destination was also a move away from his family's custom land beside a creek not far from Destination. That land is crowded with his brothers and their families, and he wanted to try to make it on his own. Because of his trade skills, he was able to build a strong, concrete house at Destination. That house was his first experience of personal accomplishment.

Mark was incarcerated at the Destination eviction because, in protest of the eviction, he set fire to a tyre and placed it in the road. He has never been charged with a crime for that action. He has moved back to his family land, less than two kilometres from Destination, and now lives along a creek that floods periodically. The floods are more intense than he remembers from his childhood growing up there, and he worries about re-investing in new tools in such a damp, corrosion-prone environment. As a result, he feels powerless to restart his life. He has been working odd jobs as a security guard, but working with his hands is his passion. He makes wooden carvings in his spare time, but the market for these is saturated, and he does not make much money.

Mark did not have much to do with the legal conflict at Destination. He made several financial contributions to the effort, but he was busy with his business and raising his children. He trusted the chief and community elders to manage the conflict, and he felt secure in his tenure because of his investment and the arrangement that the chief had with the landowner.

The Guiding Principles say that Mark should have a right to recourse for his lost home and livelihood. Mark has a right to development, as he lost his livelihood because of the eviction, and his capabilities and aspirations as a tradesman have been undermined. But who should provide this recourse? Government carried out an eviction that violates several of Mark's rights. He was evicted while incarcerated, and the event took place overnight. As a result, he was not able to salvage building materials and basic essentials like cooking implements, leaving him to start over with his one-day house, a creek-side shack.

Climate change also presents challenges for Mark. Mark has secure tenure on ancestral lands that may longer be safe for human habitation. During Tropical Cyclone Pam in 2015, Mark's creek-side home was washed away by the surging creek. His beautiful wooden sculptures are under constant threat of deterioration in the damp, flooded conditions.

5.4. Choosing tenure security over accessibility

Mary, 40, is a mother of five children. She and her husband have two adult daughters, a preteen daughter, and two younger sons. The most important consideration for Mary after their displacement from Destination was to establish an ancestral land for her elder son. That is why she chose to move their family to Elang Etas. Elang Etas provided the promise of a formal title and a future home for Mary's son and future generations. Even before the current land conflict that now threatens tat security, there were other struggles. The area lacks water, and because of this, the family struggles to grow food. She remembers the fruit trees and plentiful water at Destination with longing. She now often finds herself managing the family's scarce resources in ways she knows are sub-optimal. For instance, with the help of friends, she has saved 6,000 Vatu to pay for a service that fills the family's 5,000-litre water tank. The family has used this service, provided by the Vanuatu Mobile Force (VMF), before. However, lately, she has not been able to reach anyone for assistance. Instead, she finds herself using 1,500 Vatu every few weeks to hire a bus ride to fill a few water jugs. She is frustrated by this arrangement, but the household has several small children, and they cannot go without water.

Most of her husband's salary goes to pay for the mortgage on their land. Even though her husband has a good job, she has struggled to pay primary school fees for her youngest daughter. Marlie has only recently returned to school with the help of friends but had not attended between 2014 and early 2017. Mary would like to work, but the distance to town and the cost of travel from the settlement makes doing so impossible.

Security is also a concern. At night, she is afraid of walking along the road. Groups of young men under the influence of alcohol have been known to rob and rape women, so she is a virtual prisoner inside her fence after dark. When friends and family come to visit, she always sends them back to town before dark.

Years later, all of Mary's children still remember the eviction at Destination – even the youngest son, who was a toddler at the time of the event. He still regularly talks about the bulldozers, which brings his mother to tears. She feels forgotten by government up here in this peri-urban community, far from town. She feels like her family has been swept out of sight because they were inconvenient, and that she cannot even get help when she asks for it and is willing to pay. She wishes for security, streetlights, and better connectivity to town. When Mary thinks about it, she is happy with what she and her husband have achieved, but she wishes they could have secure tenure in a place where there are work and educational opportunities, opportunities to grow food and gather water, and feel like they are part of Port Vila.

Over the past few years, Mary acknowledges that the feeling of community has strengthened at Elang Etas. When Author Day attended the launch of EECA's constitution on 19 October 2018, there were signs of renewed energy for rebuilding by some former members of the Destination community. There, the EECA Chairman, John Yasur, for instance, spoke excitedly to the assembled crowd of about 200 community residents, about the government's plans to pave the road and provide piped water, sanitation, and street lighting. Mary underscored his message, saying that she and her family would start to construct their strong house when all of these amenities were in place. Just a year ago, Mary felt

hopeless and isolated from town, forgotten by the government, and despairing about living a life in Etas. Now, with the promise of infrastructure, Mary is hopeful and excited about her community. At the same time, she does not know what will happen with this newest land conflict. She worries that, just like at Destination, her and her family's years of hard work and diligent payments to the landowner will be for nothing – and she will be evicted again.

5.5. Choosing accessibility over tenure security

Carol, 38, has two adopted children that she supports by selling twenty-vatu kakae at a local market every day. She would rather live on Tongoa or further from town, but she feels that she would not be able to earn enough money to pay for school fees if she moved to a place like Mary did.

Instead, Carol lives informally with relatives. A widow, she was displaced from Destination in 2014, and she has never been able to establish another household. Instead, she sleeps in Manples with her sister's family, and then spends her days with other relatives in their settlement nearer to the market. Many women from her family – many of them also widows – do the same thing. They gather in a family's courtyard near the market to cook and talk, and use it as a base for their food sales.

These women heads-of-household make the best of an uncertain situation, but they especially long for homes where they can establish gardens. In Manples, they have no space to garden. Not gardening means that they must buy food at the market to make their twenty-vatu kakae. The prices of food since Tropical Cyclone Pam in 2015 have been high and always seem to be going up. Somehow, increases in food prices have not raised the prices for their prepared foods, and they are still selling their snacks for twenty vatu.

With more and more of their relatives arriving regularly from Tongoa, the space where Carol lives with her sister is becoming more crowded with new arrivals. She knows that those relatives from the islands have come to Port Vila in search of the same opportunities that she seeks – secure food, cash incomes for school fees – but she feels like she is forgotten among so many migrants. She blames the current government for this situation.

Carol wishes that she could find another community like Destination, where food was plentiful and community was strong. A widow, she always had help from other members of the community to tend her garden. Even during the eviction, the community helped her to move her things out of the house. She still cries when she recalls members of Parliament and VMF standing with arms folded as her family was evicted and her home destroyed. No member of government has ever visited to ask how she is doing. She feels like nobody cares about her and her children. Her informal living arrangements are a daily reminder of the indignity of the dislocation she experienced. She will continue in her currently living arrangements for now and the foreseeable future, as she sees no alternative.

5.6. Listless youth

Roslyn, 23, is a talented young woman who feels that she is missing out on life in town. A young adult at Destination, she moved with her family to a Elang Etas after the eviction. She was present during the actual eviction and still comes to tears when she describes the sound of her home being demolished.

An single mother to a two-year-old child, Roslyn is at once contented, stressed and bored. She is happy that her parents have been able to provide a secure future for herself and her siblings, in the form of secure land. However, when she lived at Destination, she was an active participant in the Wan Smolbag youth centre, where she worked as a trained peer educator. Then, she could walk a few minutes to work and involvement with the youth community. For a few years when she first moved to Elang Etas, buses were difficult to catch. It would often cost 1,500-Vatu ($15 USD) for bus ride to town – ten times the normal fare – when she can get a bus to come at all. She would have liked to either study or work, but these travel costs made daily commuting impossible.

Roslyn sees the interesting and emerging youth culture and longs to be part of it. Young people who live closer to town continue to participate at Wan Smolbag, and they also gather on the new waterfront to skateboard, ride bicycles, and talk. For Roslyn, a 1,500-Vatu ($15 USD) ride to town and her parenting

responsibilities prevent her taking part. Once, when she received a large payment for her research assistant work on this project, she went a bit kranky and stayed out very late without notifying her worried family. With her baby at home waiting to be fed, she stayed out late drinking beer and kava with some of her old friends from town. She is embarrassed by this incident and has not repeated it, but she longs for the community and personal development of town.

Roslyn's story highlights the lost of the right to development faced by displaced youths. Roslyn is isolated from opportunities to develop her talents and establish a community. Her mother is Mary, from the story above. Even if their community were provisioned with the water, food, street lights, and police that are important to Mary, it would still remain a problem to make sure that Roslyn is able to reach her capabilities and have life experiences that she values.

With the recent events at Elang Etas, Roslyn has again begun to think about being involved in activism and community organising. A leader in her church and among other youths in Etas, she is learning to like life in Etas. She still wishes she could live closer to town, but Etas' growing population has meant more transport options. She can now usually catch a bus to town if it is during the peak hours – but her travel options are still not reliable enough to make work viable. She wants her family to have a secure future, and she hopes that the Elang Etas Community Association and the new displacement policy will provide her with the security that she seeks.

5.7. Still traumatised

Millie, 38, is still – three-and-a-half years later – traumatised by her eviction. Millie is sensitive and generous, and she believes in having an open heart. Despite the fact that she must carry her water from the nearby creek, she often offers passers-by water from her storage containers. She loved her community at Destination, where neighbours worked together to build strong houses and take care of the shared spaces, fruit trees, and gardens. She did not understand why she was being evicted on the day that it occurred – and she still does not understand today. Although she knew about the court order, nobody from her community explained to her that an eviction was likely or imminent.

After being evicted from Destination, she moved to a small plot nearby that is owned by a relative under customary land arrangements. She lost her adult daughter to childbirth complications right before Tropical Cyclone Pam, the year after being evicted. Now, she has only a few relatives nearby, and she feels lonely without her friends and her daughter. Occasionally, she will take a bus to see the friends from Destination that have scattered around Port Vila, but these trips are rare.

Every day, however, she is reminded of Destination. When she walks to the creek to wash her clothes or walks along the road to visit friends, she sees the overgrown plot where her house once was. It is surrounded by a fence now, but it has otherwise not been touched since the eviction. Seeing her old house – the concrete foundation is still there – she is often moved to tears remembering the happy times she had there. Now, she lives in a one-day house with her teenage son.

The thing that most bothers Millie is that the land where Destination once sat is still undeveloped. Why was she evicted overnight and at great personal loss, if they are not even going to use the land?

5.8. Competing with international migrants

Lilly, 55, is kept awake at night with fear of resettlement. A new Chinese-only subdivision has just been started near her home in Teouma, where she holds formal tenure in the form of a lease with a customary landowner. She is a friend of Millie, and although she did not suffer displacement from Destination, she no longer trusts the government to honour customary leases. She suspects that the landowner – who also leased the land for the Chinese subdivision – would also like to lease her lands to incoming Chinese residents. She fears that, as more Chinese people arrive in Port Vila, landowners with leases to locals like her will continue to displace leaseholders.

She moved to Teouma after her community in Blacksans was flooded during Tropical Cyclone Pam. Teouma is further from town than Blacksans, but she wanted to move away from the flooding, tide

surges, and tsunami threats that plagued her community at Blacksans. Blacksans was also too crowded for her to have a garden, but she has a large garen at Teouma.

Teouma, a peri-urban community on the fringes of the metropolitan area, 14 kilometres from town, has grown significantly in population in recent years. Many of its residents are recent in-migrants from crowded slums in Port Vila or people moving from Tanna or other islands. Like many of her neighbours, Lilly built a strong house because she felt secure in her lease. This strong house required significant investment, but again, she happily made this investment and set up her home because in 2015, she felt that her lease was secure. She feels that the trade-off of proximity to town was worth it to be able to garden, to have secure tenure, and to invest in her home.

Now, with the increasing population of Chinese migrants, Lilly has begun to question the security of her arrangement. She does not know if her fear of resettlement is irrational. She has held her lease since October 2015 and expects it to last for another 20 years, but her friend, Millie, whom we met above, also had a customary arrangement with the landowner at Destination. Lilly also knows other leaseholders who have been evicted. The first thing they build of the new subdivision was a wall to encircle the new community. Behind that wall, the new houses are grander than those in her neighbourhood. She knows that there is a lot of money with the incoming Chinese migrants. The new neighbourhood is shrouded in mystery, and the uncertainty makes her sick to her stomach anytime she thinks about it.

There is also a vacuum of information coming from government. Lilly would feel much better if she were reassured about the legal standing of her lease. Is it revokable if a better deal comes from the landlord? Where would she go if she were evicted? She is reluctant to go back to Blacksans, especially after having her own strong house.

5.9. Aid confusion

Lola, 52, lives on urban land in Port Vila, to which the community has held a formal title for 40 years. Despite this, she in late 2017, she was so fearful of losing her home that she no longer slept well. In 2017, the community began to hear rumours that the World Bank had plans to appropriate their land and move the community to an unserviced parcel of land near where Roslyn and Mary live[1]. In mid-2018, the chief discovered that these rumours were false and had been fabricated by a member of the community in an attempt to coax the community to move from the land.

This vignette highlights Lola's experience during the several months in which the rumour's veracity was unknown. Although the community is the leaseholder, Lola did not feel secure. She was distraught at moving away from her community – from her church, the prime location near many urban amenities, and from opportunities to earn money selling twenty-vatu kakae. Retired from her career as a clerical worker in town, Lola's children and grandchildren live in Port Vila, and she does not wish to be too far from them.

Despite Lola's prominent position in the community and her longstanding tenure rights, she lacked information and struggles to feel secure. No member of government or the World Bank had ever spoken to her or the community to clarify their intentions. As a woman, she is not included in the discussions of the matter among chiefs and other community leaders. She feels like she could be dislocated at any time – and her life's work would be for nothing.

Lola's story highlights how the "aid bubble" has affected urban Vanuatu. Using the World Bank as a scapegoat is a possibility in the post-disaster environment in Port Vila. Since Cyclone Pam in March 2015, communities have become used to being surveyed, toured, and consulted by a variety of NGOs and inter-governmental agencies like the World Bank. Lands in the urban core have become more valuable as international attention came to the islands. The new, planned tourism development zone nearby Lola's community is a product of this attention. This new zone causes her both stress and optimism.

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[1] The World Bank is neither empowered nor has intentions to acquire this or any parcel of land in Vanuatu.

5.10. Continuing Insecurity

Alice and Brian, 48 and 52, moved onto insecure lands at an informal settlement at Bladiniere after moving from Destination. Brian was one of the men jailed without ever being charged with a crime, as the eviction was ongoing. Both Alice and Brian stopped working after the eviction. They moved to Bladiniere to be near their adult daughter and her family, but the insecurity of their lives in the new community prevented them from restarting jobs or building a permanent home.

At first, Alice and Brian's daughter was paying land rent to a local landlord for her and their plot at Bladiniere. However, over time, they heard the rumours about a possible eviction and stopped making monthly rent payments. When we talked in October 2017, Alice and Brian stressed that their only desire was a stable place from which they could work and pay rent – a stable home. Instead, they felt that they were likely to experience another resettlement and be moved on to some other marginal place in Port Vila. Indeed, that is what happened to them. Between February and April 2018, the community at Bladiniere was evicted (ALNAP, 2018).

6. ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY INFORMED BY THE STORIES

This section describes how the policy is constructed, its dominant language and spirit, and its inclusion of urban people facing eviction and development-induced displacement. We argue that the policy, while indeed making provision for urban people, does so incompletely, and so should be supplemented by additional Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) governing displacements resulting from conflicts over rightful ownership of peri-urban lands. Right now, no such SOPs exist, and the processes that are in place result in evictions like those at Destination in 2014, and eviction threats like those occurring now at Elang Etas.

This section also integrates discussion of the stories described above in its analysis of the policy. There is much to learn from Destination and Elang Etas – from those directly affected and from people who experienced the event from an emotional and physical distance. This section summarises some of the lessons that come from the individual stories as told above, and from the patterns that emerge from these stories, in the context of the new policy.

6.1. The progressiveness of the policy

Before we begin any kind of critique of this policy, we first wish to acknowledge the progressive scope that this policy does achieve. One major achievement of this policy is the acknowledgement of eviction from informal settlements, and evictions as a result of land conflicts as a kind of, "disaster." According to IOM (personal communication, 30 October 2018) virtually no national policies on climate change and disaster-induced displacement contain provisions for eviction.

This policy classifies eviction as a kind of "disaster." After a discussion of dislocation induced by natural disasters and climate change, the policy goes on to describe a sub-category of displacement that includes evictions and development:

> …. displacement is triggered not only by natural hazards, but also from other crises. In this way, the concept of "disaster", as understood in this policy, is broad and does not relate only to natural hazards, but also includes a range of crises affecting communities, including evictions, land conflicts and development-induced displacement (p. 7).

In many ways, this classification provides some necessary acknowledgement of the complexity of displacement. As Willy and Mark's stories underscore, for instance, displacement of any kind can often be a product of multiple, complex factors that weave through climate, urbanisation, and conflict. Even if the initial impetus to move is a result of choice – say, moving to opportunity – subsequent evictions or disasters can place people in harm's way. In Mark's case, for instance, his forced eviction from Destination placed him back on customary land and in the path of increasingly-serious urban flooding. For a situation like Willy's, making a meaningful distinction between eviction and climate-induced displacement is unnecessary under this policy. His experience is at least partly motivated by climate change. He moved from the islands due pushed by drought, disaster, and the pressure on remaining individuals as more people move away and fewer remain to contribute to community work. His displacement from his island has denied him rights to the water, food, culture that he had there. He temporarily found food, water, community, and economic development at Destination – only to have those hopes and achievements bulldozed. Willy was also pulled to the capital city by the possibility of economic opportunity. Is Willy a climate migrant or a survivor of urban displacement? He is both, and the policy protects him regardless of his initial decision to move from his island and take up residence at Destination.

At Elang Etas, only one home remained standing after Cyclone Pam tore through in 2015, and an extended dry season could threaten the health of the entire settlement, which has no source of water. People displaced to these marginal areas, or displaced because they are becoming more marginal with climate change, deserve the same protections.   This policy is a start at providing them.

We are not arguing here that the policy is entirely problematic. Indeed, it gets many things right, and GoV should be proud of its achievement. The the new policy acknowledges the multiple drivers of displacement (Government of Vanuatu, 2018, p. 11). Even though this coupling of eviction and disaster is in some ways a strong aspect of the policy, it also introduces weakness, as we describe in Section 6.2. In its strong focus on climate change and disaster drivers of displacement, it neglects the latter part of Willy's path: dislocation within the city. We argue here not for wholesale abandonment of the policy – but rather, for more-comprehensive inclusion of the urban population in new iterations of the policy and SOPs.

6.2. Something isn't working

Some ni-Vanuatu members of the communities that Author Day interviewed noted the particular problems that are illuminated by the storyline that includes Destination and Etas. Specifically, not even the Vanuatu government is able to ensure that relocated communities are protected in relocations:

> *At Destination, that's government. Government put us out. Ralph Regenvanu put us in Etas. He didn't make a search to make sure the land is stable. People … suffer here. –* Former Destination and current Elang Etas resident

This is suggestive of how strong customary land rights are in Vanuatu – a feature of the constitution that is, in our opinion, estimable – but also about how intractable some of the land conflicts are. Not even members of government – not the sitting Minister of Lands in the case of Destination {Joshua, 2014 #19} – have been able to properly survey land in advance of a relocation to ensure that it can provide a stable future home for displacees. This is a known issue to many stakeholders. The policy itself acknowledges that,

> *There is currently limited guidance from the National and Provincial Governments about how to go about negotiating new land arrangements with customary land holders (p. 12)*

In the case of Destination, failure to secure a stable resettlement site was also likely to be, at least partially, a product of the rushed process, which occurred after the community was evicted overnight. Still, the resettlement to Etas was not instantaneous. It occurred over a number of months, during which consultations occurred with the customary landowner and the lessor.

As the policy acknowledges, capacity of government must be improved in this area. The policy places squarely on the shoulders of government, the obligation to ensure safe, participatory, stable land rights for a dislocated population. In the next several sub-sections, we offer some possible avenues of exploration that would specifically address urbanisation and forced displacements in urban areas.

6.3. Is eviction a "disaster"?

The above-stated strength of this policy is, paradoxically, also a weakness – at least in principle. It is precisely the recognition of urban, development-induced evictions to the status of, "disaster," that is one problem with this policy. On the one hand, any recognition of peri-urban displacements in progressive in the Pacific context. However, the communities that Author Day interviewed for this research took issue with the equating of development-induced displacements and evictions as a "disaster." They are adamant that eviction is not a disaster, *per se* – because "disaster" is an act of nature that is not preventable:

> *When you kick people out, it's the most serious thing in Vanuatu. More serious than climate change, because climate change is nature. If today is sunny, tomorrow it will be rain. It's nature. You cannot stop. Displacement is human being to human being. We can talk to stop this kind of discrimination to a human being.* – Elang Etas resident

Unlike "disaster," development-inducted displacement is preventable – if only we have the will to prevent it. People from Destination and Etas are aware that government has different powers to prevent evictions, compared with natural disasters. This is a source of frustration for people facing dislocation,

who wish to see a distinction between displacements caused by natural forces and those that are the result of the actions of another human being:

> *I know the volcano is important, too. But there are people here. Government are making sure the land in Maewo is stable. Make sure they have proper living. Not making them push, push push [require them to move to new places].* – Former Destination and current Elang Etas resident

> *The volcano cannot hear you. With another person, you can sit and talk, and you can have a change.* – Displacement survivor

6.4. Is eviction a "Level 2" disaster?

An aspect of this policy that at first may seem like semantics, actually drew quite strong reactions from interview participants. Several participants in the same interview became frustrated at the phrasing of the policy. This occurred after Author Day explained the places in the policy where their rights as peri-urban residents facing displacement are articulated. Day had to explain that, even though the title of the policy includes only disaster and climate change, that the rights of urban people facing displacement are also included in the policy, just as bulleted items. For the purposes of this discussion, it is worth reproducing part of Page 11 of the policy, which is the area where interviewees objected:

Displacement context in Vanuatu

In 2016, Vanuatu was ranked the most at-risk country to natural hazards in the world, primarily because of its extremely high exposure to disaster events and the frequency with which these events occur.[23] In Vanuatu, exposure to natural hazards combines with other factors, such as growing urban to rural migration, insecure land tenure arrangements, and the effects of development and small-scale urbanisation. The following processes are the core drivers of displacement in Vanuatu, bearing in mind that displacement can stem from a combination of these triggers:[24]

- Sudden-onset disasters, including cyclones, volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and impacts of La Niña, including heavy rainfall and flood, requiring evacuation and resulting in both temporary and permanent displacement;

- Slow-onset disasters, including erosion, falling volcanic ash, environmental degradation, sea level rise and drought stemming from El Niño, which is motivating some communities to consider relocation as an adaptation option;[25]

- Other crises, which have similar displacement impacts, including:

  - Rezoning as a result of hazards-mapping/identification of disaster-prone areas deemed no longer safe for communities to live;

  - Evictions stemming from private development or public infrastructure/development and planning initiatives, also referred to as "development-induced displacement";[26]

  - Land conflicts, especially where people are migrating to new locations as an adaptation strategy;

Figure 1. Extract from Page 11 of the Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement, 2018

Figure 1 shows that slow-onset and fast-onset disasters receive 'Level 1' status, appearing in a top bullet. This positioning is reflective of their status in the title of the policy. Urban displacements like those occurring at Etas and Destination appear in a 'Level 2' position, under an overall heading of "other."

This positioning and the exclusion of eviction protection from the title of the policy, obscured the protections contained inside from the community. Author Day explained to the assembled group that it is not only climate change and natural disasters which are protected under the policy – but also people in situations like theirs. In reaction to this, one participant grew

frustrated with the phrasing of the policy, arguing that it is not accessible and transparent for members of her community. Another participant agreed and extended the discussion:

> *It takes Jennie to explain their rights, where they should be able to look at this policy and immediately know their rights. When they see this, they say, oh yeah, this is mine.*
> – Displacement survivor

> *Right now, if I take this to the community, they won't understand what's inside. The community needs to understand what's inside, right now, the message about eviction is too buried.* – Displacement survivor

These interview findings suggest that members of the Destination and Elang Etas communities would prefer the terms that describe what they have survived – eviction, land conflict, and development-induced displacement – to be elevated to "Level 1" status in the list of protections. One participant stated this directly. We repeat this language from the previous section because of its importance to this point:

> When you kick people out, it's the most serious thing in Vanuatu. More serious than *climate change, because climate change is nature. If today is sunny, tomorrow it will be rain. It's nature. You cannot stop. Displacement is human being to human being. We can talk to stop this kind of discrimination to a human being.* – Elang Etas resident

6.5. The policy has a limited focus on urbanisation

Relatedly to the issue raised in Sections 6.2 and 6.3, the policy is heavily focused on displacement occurring because of climate change and disaster. Urban, development-induced displacement is important to acknowledge for a number of reasons. As we have already described, Port Vila's urbanized area is growing – fast. As Author Day argues elsewhere, this increasing population and associated infrastructure improvements add value to peri-urban lands that previously had less value from a development perspective. This added value may induce more parties with a customary claim to those lands to exercise their customary rights, and it may also induce fraudulent claims – either in the agreement to settle lands, or after land has already been transacted. A product of this new interest in peri-urban lands will be further displacements {Day, 2018 #53}.

The first indication of the strong focus on climate and disaster in this policy occurs in its very first text, its title: the Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement. The prior version of the policy had the same title, with an additional subtitle, "Towards a durable solution for people affected by displacement in Vanuatu." This title has been dropped in the final policy.

Throughout the document, urbanization takes a secondary role after slow-onset and disaster-induced displacement. Urbanisation is not mentioned in Foreword. The issues of eviction, land conflict, and development-induced displacement are mentioned in the Preamble, but not specifically in the context of urban settlements. These types of displacements can also occur in rural contexts.

To be clear, as we describe above, the policy does specifically include urbanisation as a type of displacement covered in the policy. It does this by including displacement related to eviction, land conflict, and development as a kind of "disaster":

> *…. displacement is triggered not only by natural hazards, but also from other crises. In this way, the concept of "disaster", as understood in this policy, is broad and does not relate only to natural hazards, but also includes a range of crises affecting communities, including evictions, land conflicts and development-induced displacement* (p. 7).

The problem we recognise here is, then, not that urbanisation is not recognised at all. Rather, the problem is that the policy does not contain language or process that reflects the experiences of the urban people we describe in Section 5. The discussion of urban-based displacement is incomplete. First, where cities are mentioned, the focus tends to be on one type of dislocation relevant to cities: rural-to-urban

migration. This is to the exclusion of other types of urban forced displacements, such as the intra-urban dislocation that occurred at Destination:

> *The policy also aims to address displacement risks in the broader mobility context of Vanuatu, including traditional and customary land arrangements, development pressures and rural to urban migration …. (p. 7)*

This simplification of urbanisation as an exclusively rural-to-urban process is repeated throughout the document. For instance, in the description of Strategic Area 6 on Land, Housing, Planning, and Environment, the text describes four scenarios for which planning should occur in Vanuatu (p. 34):

1. Communities returning to original locations following disaster
2. Communities in need of temporary emergency housing, extending beyond evacuation (i.e. a volcanic eruption on the islands of Tanna or Ambrym….)
3. New land with affordable, disaster-resilient housing options for rural-urban migrants, to promote the well-being of newcomers to the cities and reduce migrants moving into informal settlements and hazard-prone areas
4. New land for communities in rural and remote areas who are exploring relocation options to move away from hazards.

None of these describes the experience of Willy or Reginald, who may have once been considered rural migrants, but who established a life and community in Port Vila by the time they were evicted from Destination. None of these describes Carol, who was able to receive temporary emergency housing with relatives after being relocated from Destination, but who does not a have a permanent solution that will enable to also live near-enough to her livelihood to keep her children in school.

Displacement survivors in the communities studied here are frustrated with the classification of evictions as simply another kind of disaster. They think that evictions like the ones they face are serious-enough problems in Vanuatu that it should be acknowledged in the policy at the same level as climate change and disaster – including in the title of the policy:

> *Make eviction to the same level as climate change. I want government to run to solve things out. Not like climate change and then people are running to solve. People are running to help. Now, organisations and government are running toward climate change. You need to save human and not disaster. Disaster is nature; it doesn't have life like a human.* – Roslyn, former Destination resident and current Elang Etas resident

Another example of where the discussion of the urban experience is incomplete occurs where the policy declares its goals and strategic priority areas of setting standards and protections. The policy identifies twelve interventions to be "mainstreamed into Vanuatu's planning at national, provincial and local levels, building on existing national policy initiatives" (p. 8). These include institutions and governance (Intervention 1); evidence, information, and monitoring (Intervention 3); land, housing, planning, and environment (Intervention 6); infrastructure and connectivity (Intervention 9); and access to justice and public participation (Intervention 12).

All of these interventions are important to the lives of both urban and rural people, so one may argue that urban settlements are included by virtue of being part of the national population. However, there were other opportunities in the policy to acknowledge the particular issues facing urban people who are involuntarily displaced. Cross-cutting threads such as gender and "safe, well-managed migration" (p. 8) are discussed, but again, without explicit reference to cities. Later, the policy declares its intention to define durable solutions for all displaces and defines "durable solutions" by explicitly names informal settlements, presumably urban ones, in the context of places where people have taken refuge (p. 64):

There are generally considered to be three broad types of durable solutions:

1. Sustainable return and reintegration at the place of origin;

2. Sustainable local integration in areas where displaced persons have taken refuge (this may be in areas where people have moved temporarily or have been evacuated. It may also relate to people who are living in informal settlements);

3. Sustainable integration in another part of the country (planned relocation to elsewhere in the country).

This policy aims to support a common set of standards and protections to support people affected by displacement in relation to each of these options.

Despite this acknowledgement of peri-urban settlement, the policy remains incomplete in its identification of people in need of durable solutions. Survivors of urban displacement generally cannot return to the place or origin (Item 1) because it is in use by others, and they generally wish to remain in town and not move to another part of the country (Item 3). Item 2 covers at least some of the people we interviewed, specifically including people living in peri-urban informal settlements on customary lands who also wish to remain in "local" areas. However, it fails to account for people living on their own customary lands in the urbanized area (like Mark), or people who have settled in formal settings that are not advantageous, and where they would not have chosen to live if other alternatives had been available. This is what happened to Mary and her family, including Roslyn. In their current formal settlement, they lack food, water, work, education, and access to town.

However, their cooperation to buy the land with the then-Lands Minister suggests that their situation is not exactly a "refuge" situation. It does, however, sit in contrast to the mandates of the policy, which states that people's situation must be restored to a similar or better situation with no disruption to education, and access to all critical services, livelihoods, and due process. More broadly, the community at Destination had not "taken refuge." Rather, they had purposefully built a community.

Furthermore, how this policy and subsequent SOPs operationalize the word, "local," has particular significance here. If "local" refers to the same settlement, then it must account for people who do not wish to join informal settlements permanently (like Alice and Brian) and people who have not settled anywhere (like Carol). In short, the idea of, "local," has particular possibility for ambiguity in urban areas – further highlighting the need to operationalize urban displacement specifically in future policy. In a village setting, local resettlement has a somewhat-more-clear meaning: in or nearby the village. In a city, this term may refer to the same settlement, a neighbouring settlement, or a peri-urban settlement tens of kilometres distant.

This focus on climate and migration makes sense in the demographic, geographic, and political climate of today's Vanuatu. The policy was forged in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Pam, which affected much of the country, rural and urban. It has a current national population that is around 75 percent urban and at least one active disaster currently occurring in the country (p. 30), along with an active humanitarian cluster system. Electorates are largely rural-focused, with many people voting on their home islands.

The issue is that, in tomorrow's Vanuatu, cities will matter even more than they already do today. Urbanisation rates in Vanuatu are amongst the highest in the world. The country is urbanizing at a rapid rate of four percent per year, with peri-urban settlements growing at 12 percent or more (Jones & Sanderson, 2017b). Now is the time to build urban-responsive language and practice into this national policy.

6.6. The policy fails to provide guidance on assuring consultation during displacement

The policy asserts that, "[e]victions need to involve meaningful consultation, provision of information, adequate notice, with a plan for adequate and suitable compensation, relocation and housing." However, community structures in Vanuatu's capital city – and the failure to inform some community members about the impending eviction – raise questions about how to ensure that all members of the community understand the displacement.

In both urban and rural areas, most communities are led by a chief. Chiefs resolve conflicts among community members, between the community and other communities, and in the case of Destination, also between the community and the government. Author Day was not able to interview the chief who assembled Destination, but community members report that he was the primary representative of the community in the legal proceedings leading to the court order and eviction. Community members report periodic payments to a legal fund to continue challenging the eviction.

Despite making these payments, many members of the community did not understand that the eviction had been ordered. Mark and Millie, for instance, were taken by surprise by the appearance of the VMF to carry out the eviction order. They had taken seriously the assurances by their community leader – the chief – that the legal matters would be resolved in their favour because of the arrangement between the chief and the customary landowner prior to the entry into a lease with the lessee.

Reliance by government on chiefly structures in urban areas may be part of the problem. Destination was a "mixed community,", where members originate from various islands. This is in contrast to some settlements in the urban area that are composed of people from the same island. In mixed communities, family ties and accountability to the community may not be as strong as it is in rural areas or homogeneous communities. Destination's chief has never spoken to Mille, Mark, Alice, Brian, Roslyn, or Carol to explain what happened in October 2014. They wonder if he absconded with their money. While the accountability of the chief is not clear here, what is clear is that the government agents who carried out the eviction failed to convince members of the community to take the eviction notices seriously.

Other stories illuminate the problem of ensuring participation across the community. Lola, for instance, was informed about the possible eviction of her community, but she was excluded from the decision-making and management of the issue. Ensuring that all members of the community – including women, youths, and people with disabilities – are allowed to participate meaningfully in the resettlement planning, could have prevented the loss of property and livelihood that occurred for the people of Destination.

Whose responsibility was it to ensure that this community of 300 people were properly informed about the eviction, and had the chance to participate meaningfully? This policy does not assign this responsibility to any ministry or department of government, though it does establish a mandate to appoint a Lead Ministry within one year and to establish an institutional "hub" to support the implementation of the policy (Government of Vanuatu, 2018, p. 22).

6.7. The policy fails to articulate durability in the urban context

The policy is focused on "durable solutions" for survivors of displacement, which it describes as follows:

> *A durable solution is achieved when displaced people "no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement."*

But what is durability in the urban context? The Destination experience also illuminates how the destructive experience of dislocation can impact survivors for years, even when they have achieved stable housing situations. Some survivors, like Mary and Roslyn, have secure tenure but have been resettled far from town, where bus drivers will often charge 1,500 Vatu (USD $15) – 667 times a normal bus fare – for a ride to town. Mary and Roslyn do not have access to water and must pay 1,500 Vatu (USD $15) for a bus trip to collect about 100 litres, which may last the family a week. Because of these distances and costs, it is not logical for some adults to work. As a result, they struggle to pay school fees, and some children have not attended school since the dislocation.

Since their eviction, Tropical Cyclone Pam (TCP) crashed through Vanuatu in 2015, and the one-day houses they had constructed were again destroyed. People reconstructed their one-day houses – which would not weather another serious cyclone. Many, like Millie, are living with relatives, in *one-day houses* and have no safe place to go in the next disaster. Many, like Alice and Brian, have faced subsequent displacement at Baldiniares, and many others live in constant fear of being again involuntarily displaced.

From the perspective of international guidance such as the *Guiding Principles*, there is no question that durability in urban areas would account for issues like commuting, water and food access near home, capacity to garden, and other presumed livelihood and survival strategies. However, Vanuatu is not an urban society, and its governors are not accustomed to accommodating the needs of urban people. Its social structure is still largely focused on villages, and its governors are focused on the islands outside of the capital. The 2014 experience at Destination and evictions earlier in 2018, like Bladiniares, suggest that despite this policy being in draft since at least late 2017, there is little political will to adhere to its core principles.

A convincing policy, or future SOPs, would focus on how durability will be ensured in the urban context. There is no way to tell from this policy document whether the spirit of durability extends to people like those interviewed for this study. Indeed, as urban-to-urban survivors of displacement, they are never acknowledged in this policy (the policy names rural-to-urban migrants but not urban-based survivors). There is, in short, no evidence the situations like Destination will stop. Recent experience in Bladinieres, for Alice and Brian, suggests they may not. Future policy visions should consider the needs of urban people, consult them in the decision-making, and explicitly articulate how durability looks in cities and towns. Such a policy might address question such as,

- *By whom should Mark be compensated for his livelihood lost at Destination?*
- *How should he be compensated for the loss of his creek-side lands if he is forced to move away as floods increase?*
- *How will future policies ensure that displaced people are connected with water, food, and the chance to participate in the economy of the city?*
- *How will future policies support the aspirations of widows like Carol, who is committed to keeping her children in school despite insecure living arrangements?*
- *How will future policies support host communities and families who support locally-displaced people, like Carol*
- *Could future policies include advice and information for leaseholders and lessors about the security of lease arrangements on customary land?*
- *What could government do during the development of future policies to ensure that people like Lilly feel secure enough to invest in their homes?*

6.8. The policy could address recent dislocations to repair trust

No logistical or financial assistance for moving their possessions was provided at Destination, either to a new location or from the house to the road. People described the trauma of the Vanuatu Military Force (VMF) standing with crossed arms as they struggled to pull their lives from their community. They describe the humiliation they endured as their neighbours watched, helpless, as they stacked their possessions by the side of a busy road. They describe the members of government who were present and did nothing. Most of all, they remember that since then, not a single member of government has ever visited them to ask how they are doing and whether they need help. Many of these people are still in insecure tenures, and of the 18 homes that Author Day visited, there was only one situation where the family was living in a house with a concrete floor and brick walls, regardless of the security of tenure.

The community has disbanded, with members living all over the Port Vila area. They describe their loss of closeness as well as the loss of their houses. They feel abandoned by government, both during and after the eviction. Many community members described how they felt invisible – explaining that the government has tucked them away in peri-urban areas where their pain is invisible (like Mary), forgotten them in insecure circumstances (like Mille and Carol), or presumed that they have everything they need because they still live in town (like Mark).

Fear of displacement is not only a problem for those directly affected by the experience of displacement. Author Day interviewed several people who expressed fear of eviction despite the fact that they hold formal titles to their lands. Lilly, with titled land in the peri-urban settlement of Teouma, said, "I am worried about the current government and all of the new development by the Chinese. I do not feel

secure, even though I have a lease and have made all of my payments." This suggests that the distrust engendered by the experience of Destination extends far beyond those directly impacted.

The Destination experience also shows how a simple inquiry can return feelings of goodwill and care. Just because Author Day asked about their welfare, several of her interviewees referred to her as a "gift from God." This sentiment occurred repeatedly from men and women scattered across Port Vila and its surrounding peri-urban areas. New iterations of the policy or SOPs could articulate a process of recourse and repair for households affected by dislocation.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URBAN-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION

The upcoming operationalization of the displacement policy should include a more-explicit focus on urban development-induced displacement. This should include a full policy targeted particularly at urban development-induced displacement. Roslyn, a survivor or displacement at Destination who is again facing dislocation from Elang Etas, sums this up eloquently:

> *Now, eviction is inside [the policy], but it's sleeping. Now, we need to make it work. The government needs to see this, hear the voices of people from Destination and Elang Etas. –* Resident of Elang Etas

Acknowledging urban dislocations could be an opportunity for the sitting government. This analysis suggests that the voters of Destination, Elang Etas, and other communities in Port Vila are alert to their role as voters and the political nature of their displacements. The broken trust they feel is reinforced by the highly-politicised national conversation about land, including an extended "land grab" that has compelled the GoV to implemented major legislative and constitutional reform in 2014 to combat it (McDonnell, 2014). Understandably, many people are nervous that their rights to land may not be as strong as they think. Lilly from Teouma with a formal lease is a good illustration of this point: she was not one of those evicted from Destination, yet she cites the Destination experience as the source of her insecurity. Other community members, like Lola, cited recent urban planning changes as reasons for their insecurity, since adjacency to areas slated for development could mean future land grabs.

In this section, we put forward a few issues that are overlooked in the current policy. This is not a comprehensive list; we provide this selection as a starting point for discussion. We also argue that any policy developed should include a democratic process that includes the input of those most affected, which learns from the experience of Destination.

There is a set of opportunities in people's stories. The new displacement policy provides a platform on which to build a strong urban-focused policy to protect city dwellers. Future operationalisation of the displacement policy should include urban-specific SOPs designed for urban communities facing displacement. This should include:

1) Elevation of evictions to a "Level 1" displacement
2) Prevention of land rents to the wrong claimant, or provide redress
3) Consider location in displacement planning
4) Consult the urban community more broadly
5) Consult with community in a way that activates and empowers women, youths, and PWD. This may mean working both with and around traditional mechanisms of community outreach,
6) Support community initiatives like EECA.

7.1. Elevate peri-urban evictions to a "Level 1" displacement

This fieldwork signals that urban communities who have faced or are facing displacement, are frustrated with the secondary classification of eviction as an "other" kind of disaster. As we note above, in Section 7, Roslyn wants future iterations of the policy, and future operationalisations, to:

> *Make eviction to the same level as climate change. I want government to run to solve things out. Not like climate change and then people are running to solve. People are running to help. Now, organisations and government are running toward climate change. You need to save human and not disaster. Disaster is nature; it doesn't have life like a human. – Roslyn, former Destination resident and current Elang Etas resident*

Survivors of displacement in Port Vila think of it as a "level 1" issue – one that belongs in the title of the policy, alongside climate change and natural disasters. Currently, the policy attempts to manage urban development-induced displacement together with other types of forced resettlement such as that related

to disasters and climate change. As we describe below in Section 7, the new policy is now disproportionately focused on displacements due to weather and natural disasters. Urban development-induced displacement will need to be operationalised separately in order to prevent all forms of forced displacement to the greatest possible extent, and to protect the rights of those who are involuntarily displaced despite prevention efforts.

Urban residents who are dislocated face different problems than people facing weather-related and disaster-related dislocations. Many disaster refugees will be able to return to their places of origin. For those who are unable to return, there is strong community support and political will that they should be allocated land to resettle. This is, for instance, occurring in the resettlement of rural island of Ambae, where a volcanic eruption threatens the lives of everyone living on the island. In contrast, for urban populations, the destruction of settlements and development of land typically precludes any possibility of returning to their former home. The Destination case study suggests that urban communities have received very little public support for their relocation.

In disasters and weather events, material losses are nobody's fault. At Destination, poor execution of the eviction left people destitute, with many of their possessions still in their homes, including items on which they depended for their livelihoods. The destruction of homes also resulted in the loss of significant investments in building materials and household effects. The current policy, with its focus on losses that are nobody's fault, does not provide guidance on how to ensure that urban communities' investments are to be protected, nor does it provide guidance on how they can recover these investments if they are lost. Such guidance would require the policy to enhance the accountability of various actors who made the eviction possible – for example by initiating it, authorising it, carrying it out or indeed by failing to provide sufficient legal safeguards.

Identifying a lead ministry to manage forced resettlements is a Year 1 goal in the policy (p. 22). Currently, there is no current body in government that is capable of managing the broad range of conflicts and causes of forced displacement. As the lead agency in the development of the policy, the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) will naturally focus on natural disasters and climate change. Urban development-induced displacements are something different, and there is currently no body of government charged with managing them. We think that managing and avoiding peri-urban displacements will require a special working group or committee, which has expertise relevant to managing urban planning and customary land, in addition to issues related to climate change and disaster.

7.2. Prevent erroneous payments of land rent, or provide redress

After having their life savings destroyed at Destination, Mary and her family worked hard to pay off their share of the land payment at Etas. Now, like many members of their community, she has found that they may have paid more than half of their payments to the wrong land claimant. Mary and hundreds of others like her, have had had no redress.

In disasters and weather events, materials losses are nobody's fault. At Destination, poor execution of the eviction left people destitute, with many of their possessions still in the homes. These possessions included tools, cooking implements, and other items that people used to generate livelihoods. They also included significant investment in building materials, as people were not able to move the wood, concrete block, and corrugated metal components of their homes in the overnight exodus. This has left children perhaps permanently out of school, and significant investments in home and community flattened under a bulldozer.

In my interviews of communities facing possible future resettlement, one of my tasks was to help the community to assemble its questions for government. By far, the most-frequent questions by community leadership and members was how they would be compensated for the significant investments they had made in their neighborhoods – including schools, ablution blocks, community houses, and public spaces. The current policy, as framed with its focus on losses that are nobody's fault, does not provide guidance

on how to ensure that urban communities' investments are to be protected, nor does it provide guidance on how they can recover these investments if they are lost.

7.3. Consider location in displacement planning

In urban development-induced displacement, subtle changes in location matter. In Port Vila, urban livelihoods often depend on proximity to town, access to land for gardening, and access to transportation. A significant proportion of many families' caloric intake comes from subsistence gardening, and others generate incomes with garden surpluses. Most of the families interviewed for this study struggle to garden after leaving Destination – some because their locations lack water, and others because they live in backyard shacks, one-day houses, or with relatives in dense urban environments that have no space for gardening. Other communities have had access to their gardens and water supplies restricted or cut off altogether after their resettlement.

Dislocated families from Destination that planned to stay in Port Vila had a critical choice to make: move to unserviced land on the peri-urban fringe or stay in marginal situations in town. Some families opted to remain closer to town, citing school access and livelihoods as the major driver. One community of widows and single mothers sells 20-Vatu kakae (AUD 24 cent snacks) at a local market to generate cash for school fees. While their children are in school and there is a need to generate cash for school fees, they say, they choose the precarious and crowded existence of living with relatives in order to have access to the markets in town. Others chose to live on ancestral lands along riverbanks – areas that flood periodically. This kind of enterprise is less lucrative and less common in the more-remote peri-urban communities where some Destination families now live, like Elang Etas. It is in these more-remote communities where there are children under ten years old who are not in school and have not been since the dislocation in 2014. Families cite lack of cash incomes as the primary reason for children being truant from school.

By world standards, the distance between the community lacking water to garden and those staying precariously in town, is not far. As the crow flies, it is less than seven kilometers from the unserviced peri-urban community to the centre of town. Along the roads, the distance is under eight kilometres. From the main, paved road to the home of the schoolchildren, it is less than two kilometres. From the experience of people living there, however, the distance is forbidding. A normal bus fare to town can be up to range from 300 (AUD $3.60) to 1,000 Vatu (AUD $12) during nonpeak times, when travel to the community. With the minimum wage at 170 Vatu per hour, a worker can spend more than her daily wage on travel. Buses can be unsafe as well as unreliable, and this is enough to prevent many of my women interviewees from working to earn critical cash incomes.

The new policy does direct government to consider compensation, assistance with relocation, and replacement housing in its planning. It also directs government to consider provision of water, education, and other critical services. However, the policy does not explicitly direct government to consider the locational impacts of dislocation – those that result from, for instance, a loss of cash incomes:

Evictions need to involve meaningful consultation, provision of information, adequate notice, with a plan for adequate and suitable compensation, relocation and housing (p. 27, 49).

This language suggests that compensation, the physical move, and the physical home should be provided for. However, it does not explicitly direct government to consider the consequences of dislocation to insecure urban settlements or unserviced peri-urban ones. The Elang Etas experience of school attendance and work access illustrates the need for this to have an explicit focus.

7.4. Consult the urban community more broadly

The new policy does provide new protections for communities affected by displacement. There is still, however, much to consider. Community consultation is one of these issues. A partner in the drafting of the new policy has been the International Organisation for Migration, IoM (International Organization for Migration, accessed 2017). Author Day's discussions with people from this organisation suggest an extensive consultation process was undertaken in the development of the policy, including consultation

of two peri-urban communities that host survivors of recent forced displacements, Crystal Blue and Blacksands. Consultations have been occurring since at least March 2017 (National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, 2017), suggesting an effort to bring a range of stakeholders into the discussion.

However, not a single one of the interviewees from Destination or Elang Etas had been consulted about the policy – none had ever even heard of it before Author Day introduced it. This illustrates yet another problem with coupling urban displacement policy with rural disaster response. In the world's most-vulnerable country to natural disasters, where the population is still around 75 percent rural and scattered across more than 80 islands, there are too many constituents for an national focus to be representative of the cities. Future SOPs that operationalize this policy for urban areas should undertake more consultation to ensure representation of that the range of issues that communities across the peri-urban fringe.

7.5. Consult the vulnerable urban community

Another serious issue is how marginalised and powerless people are included in policy conversations. The SGDs require that women and youths be considered in policies like this one. However, in Destination, a vast majority of the people interviewed claim to have learned of the imminent eviction on that day – that Sunday evening when they began moving their belongings to the street after dark had settled and the community's men had been taken off to jail.

We understand the complexity of a claim that community members did not know about an eviction. It is in their interest to misrepresent the situation to me, or to misremember a string of clues and explicit notices that an eviction would be carried out. However, the consistency of their stories suggests that something else was occurring – a flaw in Vanuatu's processes of community notice and consultation that may also be present in those supporting the new resettlement policy.

The vast majority of my interviewees tell a remarkably-consistent story of surprise, indignity, dehumanisation, and humiliation of that day. They are not, however, unaware that court proceedings to evict them had been underway. They describe the on-going court proceedings as if at a distance. They contributed money for attorneys' fees – escalating amounts over the period of the dispute, starting with small amounts (2,000 Vatu; AUD $24) and increasing to lager amounts (10,000 Vatu; AUD $120). However, most simply trusted that the community leadership was handling the situation. They seem to have been convinced that the court processes would continue over some time, and that eviction was a distant threat. Most describe being utterly surprised when the VMF arrived to carry out the eviction.

The few people Author Day spoke with who had been involved with the legal proceedings describe the situation similarly – as if they never believed that an eviction would take place. Not a single person recalls seeing a written eviction notice, or having a social worker, government worker, or Member of Parliament visit the community. An online search of the public record indicates that media accounts only start at the eviction, but do not announce it in advance of 20 October, 2014 (Joshua, 2014; Pacific islands Report, 2014; Radio New Zealand, 2014). A review of eviction orders on the Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute's (PacLII's) website shows no relevant court order back, though these records may not be complete.

Our argument here is not that the eviction was unlawful. Our argument is that the community consultation processes used to inform the community that their court proceedings had been exhausted and that the eviction would occur on or before 20 October – these appear to have failed. Their experience signals that we may wish to ensure that future actions around evictions and resettlements should follow a better process – that is, a process that does a better job of making sure everyone from the chief to the elderly widow or the young person with a disability, understands them. The surprise of the Destination community should call our attention to the scope and comprehensiveness of current community consultation processes in Vanuatu – including, perhaps, those that underpin this new resettlement policy.

Author Day's ongoing fieldwork suggests that this problem is common, and was not isolated to Destination. In some communities where we have worked that are currently facing resettlement, women and youths have not been consulted – either by government, or by their own chiefs. Author Day has personally spoken at meetings of male community leaders while the community's women were excluded. This strongly suggests that we cannot rely on traditional structures to ensure that the SGDs' requirements are met in Vanuatu. Customary governance relegates women to a subservient, non-decision-making roles (Naupa, 2017). The GoV should establish its consultation plans in consultations with more agencies than IoM, including those representing women and youths. It should publish these plans and encourage wide participation across Port Vila, Luganville, and other places with urban characteristics – even if they are not technically designated as urban centres. As my previous work illustrates, relying on government designations can under-represent urbanisation by hundreds of percentage points (Day, Chen, Ellis, & Roberts, 2016).

A rural focus in this policy is perhaps an understandable mistake to have made. Like literatures in other parts of the world, migration studies in the Pacific often centre on migration inward, toward a capital or large city and away from an ancestral home, e.g., (Garschagen et al., 2016). These are very important concerns, as people without ancestral lands can struggle with identity (Joshua, 2014; Pacific islands Report, 2014; Radio New Zealand, 2014). Many of the interviewees from Destination felt angst for the Ambae evacuees, saying that if their island were to explode from the volcano, they would be people without a man ples – that is, without ancestral lands that would ground them as people.

7.6. Support community initiatives like EECA

Urban policy requires a localised approach. Urban lives make a separate policy for urban resettlement – with its own consultation process – a smart idea. Critics of this approach may argue that any policy that codifies the rights of displaced people is a mark of progress and that such policy should not be undermined by insistence on procedure. We agree that the mentions of development-induced displacement are better than what we have now, but also worry about the inertia that could settle in once some recognition is made of development-induced dislocation.

There is a substantial international experience on dislocation that has seen increasing focus on urban communities. Dislocation policy in China, for instance, has evolved over the years. From 1978 until about 2009, it became increasingly predatory, allowing land grabs of increasing scale. Dislocated communities were moved further and further from their site of origin to sites 30 or 40 kilometres away, disrupting social networks and livelihoods (Day & Cervero, 2010; Tiwari, Day, & Rao, p. Chapter 5). Since 2009, policy has attempted to address the abuses inherent in the Chinese "growth machine" (Zhang & Fang, 2004). Dislocation policy has been increasingly focused on improving focus on the rights of those facing resettlement. There is no reason that Vanuatu must trace the same path over three decades. It can learn from others' mistakes and develop better policy now.

States, including Vanuatu, have committed under Goal 11 of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development to upgrade all informal settlements and ensure adequate housing for all by 2030. The Agenda also commits States to work towards more peaceful, just and inclusive societies and to provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Goal 16) (United Nations 2015). Not only would a separate process contribute to the achievement of these SDGs, but also politicians will see benefits in terms of loyalty and vote counts. My fieldwork suggests that urban populations facing, or having faced, lawful involuntary resettlement tend to focus their distrust and frustration on the national government. They have expectations of their national leadership that have been unmet in recent evictions. Fortunately for governments in the Pacific, many of these would be easy to implement – including adequate notice, assistance with the actual relocation, humanising eviction processes, and follow-up to ensure the community is adjusting after an eviction. A new policy with appropriate community consultation and support, including assistance with water and other critical needs for communities that have faced involuntary displacement in the recent past, could provide the foundation for a healing process between GoV and the people of Destination, and trust between all urban people and the government. *The National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement* is

a fantastic start, but it is unlikely to result in enhanced protection of the rights of urban dwellers without further action to prevent and address displacement in cities.

We learned much from the interviews with policy-makers, humanitarians and members of the Destination and Elang Etas community about Vanuatu's new displacement policy, but one stark lesson stands out: the new policy will need to be supported by specific processes that operationalize displacement prevention and execution in the city.   From a legal point of view, the primary responsibility for the protection of human rights, including the right to housing, lies with the country where they are physically based – in this case, Vanuatu. As part of this responsibility, Vanuatu is obliged to adopt laws and policies necessary to protect people against human rights violations committed by public as well as private persons. However, the evidence suggests that the state of Vanuatu has failed to consider cities in a policy that will affect urban people's lives significantly. Places that do not have strong urbanisation or urban representation, where political alignment is to rural areas, may not operationalize international human rights guarantees relating to housing well for cities. Vanuatu appears to be such a case.

The concerns of the city are likely to become ever more pressing in forced displacement. Port Vila has no plan for urban growth and development control (Cullwick, 2017), and the evidence from Destination and more-recent evictions suggests that those who move to Vanuatu's cities and towns may be displaced again and again – like Alice and Brian, Mary, Roslyn, and Willie.

It is worth considering how displacement law and policy at the national level can ensure urban dwellers' protections from forced displacement. Right now, it is perhaps the case that Vanuatu does not have sufficient urban governance nor an empowered-enough urban population to demand urban representation in the new policy. Targeted measures to ensure meaningful and effective participation of urban communities in displacement law and policy are therefore needed to ensure that the overall legal and policy framework is in line with international human rights standards and the SDGs.

Civil-society organisations like the Elang Etas Community Association may be one avenue toward ensuring that government processes are consultative, representative, and communicative for peri-urban communities. EECA has mobilised its constituents and created a community identity that has moved Elang Etas further toward being a *place* in the city – rather than just a "dump where they throw out the trash, the people trash" as one interviewee said.

EECA and organisations like it may be the engines that drive community development in Vanuatu's emerging urban fabric. However, it is currently under-resourced. Its "office" is currently the briefcase of its treasurer, Wycliffe Tahil Tarilenga. The organisation aspires to provide a secure location for members of the community to store their payment receipts and land titles that is safe from theft and storm, and a library to organise them. They also wish to coordinate and network with community organisations around and outside of Vanuatu. This requires computing infrastructure and an internet connection. However, EECA relies on contributions by its members, most of whose livelihoods are insufficient for land payments, school fees, water and food – let alone community organising. Government could find ways to support these organisations so that they are able to fulfil their missions. Doing so would be to support smart, sustainable growth of Vanuatu's cities – so that all ni-Vanuatu thrive.

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9. THE RESEARCH TEAM

Jennifer Day has studied communities in Port Vila facing development-inducted displacement. Her past work on forced displacements has included welfare analyses of involuntarily displaced households in China (Day & Cervero, 2010), and with households involved in displacement disputes (Li, Wang, & Day, 2015).

Margaretha Wewerinke-Singh studies the role of law in framing and implementing responses to sustainability challenges, with a particular focus on rights and mobility. Her forthcoming book is, 'State Responsibility, Climate Change and Human Rights under International Law' (Hart Publishing).

APPENDIX A. ELANG ETAS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INFORMATION FLYER

Support EECA:
A Model of Resilient Civil Society in the Pacific
Port Vila, Vanuatu

Introduction. Cities in the Pacific were not designed to grow, and yet their populations are some of the fastest-growing in the world. This mismatch of design and reality creates tension about who has the right to the land where new communities are rapidly forming. In March 2018, a civil-society organisation was formed in the peri-urban community of Etas in the capital city, Port Vila, of Vanuatu. This example of resilience in the face of forced resettlement could provide a model for other communities facing existential threats. However, urban governance in the Pacific is not yet equipped to manage conflicts on customary lands. This note describes this problem and introduces the Elang Etas Community Association – a community-based initiative that seeks to address the growing problem of displacement of peri-urban communities in the Pacific. EECA now reaches out to other organisations around the Pacific and the world to seek help in growing and serving its community.

The Road to Etas. Heading out of Port Vila to the southeast, a few kilometres out of town, one cuts a sharp left and heads up the potholed road to Etas. The story of Etas starts when the road to the Bouffa landfill was cut through the jungle in the early 1990s. The landfill road is unpaved, but that has not prevented more than 300 people making Etas home. They have come from all around Vanuatu – including from other areas of Port Vila. Some have formal leaseholds, though those have recently been called into question. Some are informal settlers. Some are people who were displaced from other communities in Port Vila. Virtually all of the houses in Etas are *one-day houses* –built in a day to provide basic shelter, with dirt floors, roofs and walls made of corrugated metal. Hot in the sun and leaky in the rain, the community's homes are densely-arranged. Three small houses can be built on a 1/30-hectare plot, in addition to a toilet and kitchen. When the plots were first divided by Etas' first planner, they were meant to be temporary.

The Road to Etas

The Elang Etas Community Association. The EECA is a grass-roots community-development initiative, started by members of the Etas community when their community was threatened by a conflict between claimants to this customary land. EECA launched its constitution on 19 October 2018. Now, the organization has more than 200 families in its membership. The EECA Chairman, John Yasul, spoke excitedly to the assembled crowd of about 200 community

residents, about the government's plans to pave the road and provide piped water, sanitation, and street lighting. With the promise of infrastructure, many of Etas' residents are hopeful and excited about their community. Our goals are to:

- Promote community awareness and pride
- Identify and advocate for community needs
- Raise awareness of and provide information on issues that affect the community
- Provide the community with essential services
- Support business and economic development in the community.

March prior to EECA Constitution Launch, 19 October 2018

The Customary Edges of Pacific Cities. In Pacific countries, including Vanuatu, customary and introduced land systems exist side-by-side by virtue of their constitutions. The boundaries of Port Vila (and another town, Luganville, on the island of Santo) were delineated through the Land Reform Order No. 26 of 1981, which classified these areas as public land. Simultaneously, Land Orders No. 30 and No. 118 of 1981 established the Port Vila and Luganville Urban Land Corporations. In accordance with these laws and regulations – which are still in force today - the metropolitan area that comprises Port Vila consists of municipal land that is owned by the state, and also of peri-urban lands that are under customary ownership. The community where EECA operates sits on customary lands. This is an important feature of its story. A wide range of informal arrangements is available to customary landowners. These informal arrangements are much more common than formal leaseholds in Vanuatu and other Pacific island countries that maintain a system of customary land ownership. The arrangements can range in formality from oral permission with no financial exchange, historical arrangements with ancestors, exchange of non-monetary products such as garden produce, or monetary exchange. A significant drawback of these informal arrangements is that their features and indeed their very existence can be difficult to substantiate when a dispute over land ownership arises.

Displacement in Port Vila. EECA was not borne of a harmonious community development process. It was, rather, a product of necessity. In his speech on 19 October 2018, the EECA Chairman described the origins of this association. In early 2018, several of Etas' twelve zones were threatened with an eviction order – first, the entire community, and then a targeted threat at the seven members of the EECA Committee and their households. As this case illustrates, displacement around infrastructure and economic development is an under-recognised and serious problem in Port Vila – but it is a problem that members of communities like Etas understand too well. Communities are learning from the experience and developing protection mechanisms even in the absence of government action. For now, EECA is now recognised by government as a registered civil-society organization, and it now wishes to reach out to the rest of the world to share its experiences, network, and find help scaling up its community activities.

Supporting EECA. EECA is seeking to network with other CSOs and obtain start-up funds to support initial operations. We hope to learn from the experience of other similar organisations. Start-up activities will include establishment of an office to secure community records and provide a meeting place. Contact us as follows:

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