

Vanuatu is the **1st** country ranked in disaster risk worldwide (World Risk Report, 2020)

# Shattered Shelter

Vanuatu's Unequal Fight Against the Climate Storm

Visualizing the Fragile Balance Between Exposure, Vulnerability, and Resilience

Perched in the path of some of the most violent storms on Earth, Vanuatu is not waiting for climate change, it is living it. Cyclones have wiped out over 130% of GDP in a decade, this island nation is facing repeated climate disasters that test every layer of its economy, land, and people. This is not a cycle of recovery, but a spiral of vulnerability.

**Climate change is not tomorrow's threat. It's today's reality.**

## PAM 2015

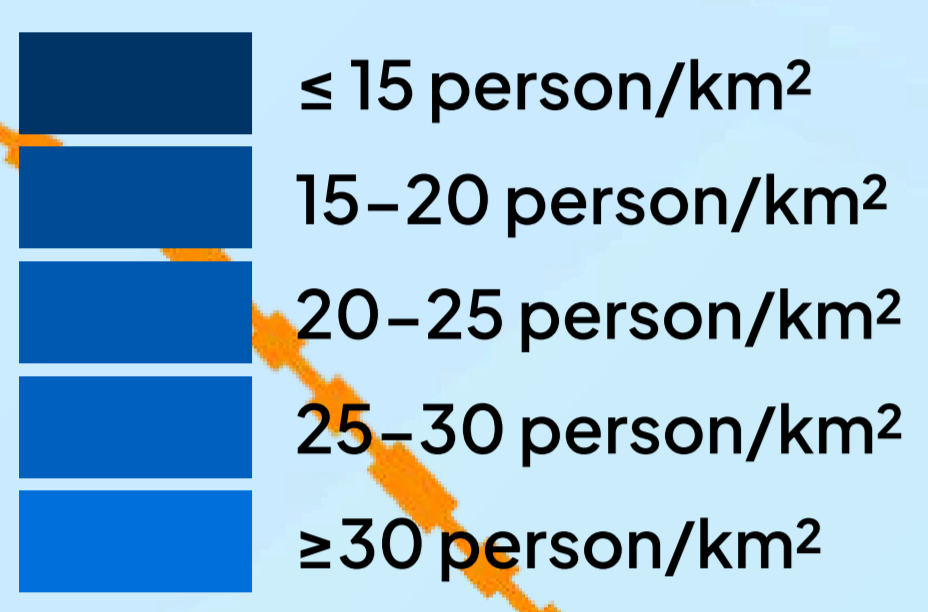
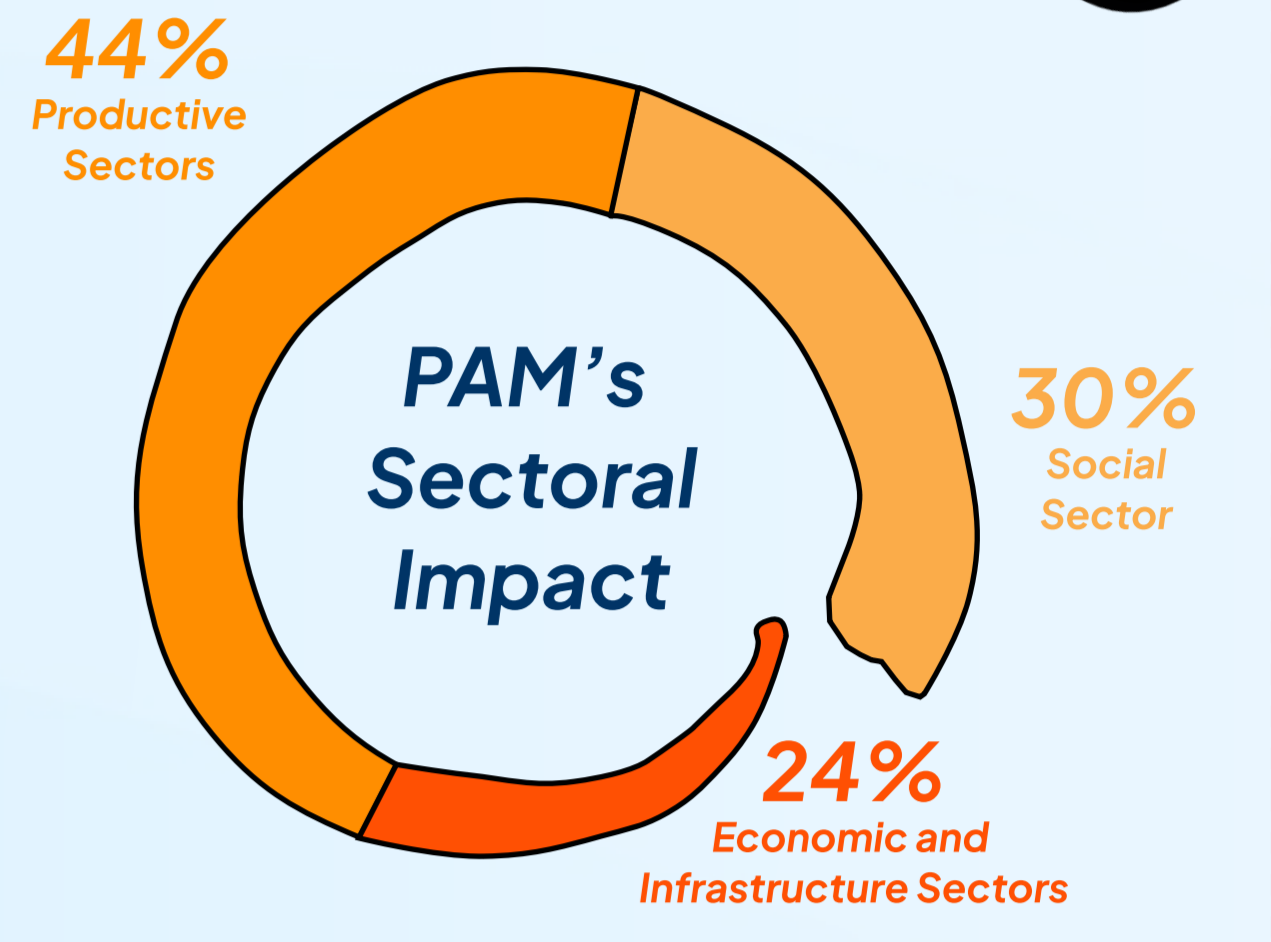
Spending 64% GDP

Cyclone Pam, a category 5 tropical cyclone, was the worst Pacific Ocean hurricane in history.

Cyclone Pam didn't just break infrastructure, it uprooted food systems, devastated rural livelihoods, and overwhelmed social support.

- 96% of food crops destroyed.
- Productive sectors bore 45% of the damage.

(Asia-Pacific Disaster Report, 2019)



## Dense Population?!

Time and again, the cyclones hit where the people are in provinces with the highest population density, like Shefa - making the damage even more devastating

## Vanuatu's Capital Under Threat!

Port Vila, Vanuatu's capital — dense, central, and vital — sits directly in the path of repeated cyclones, placing the heart of the nation at constant risk.

\*the circle represents the percentage of GDP spent

## HAROLD 2020

Spending 54% GDP

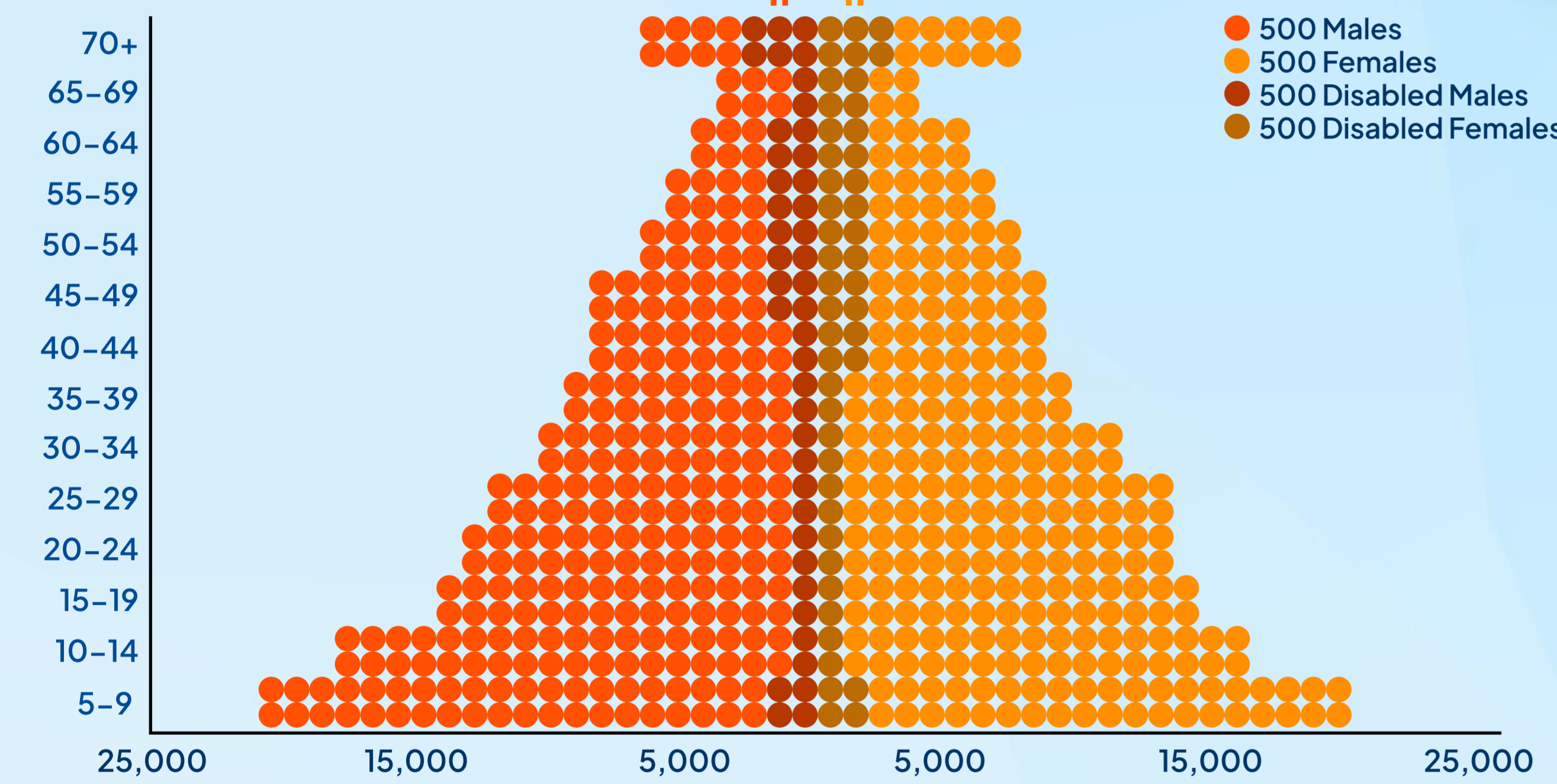
Productive sectors, such as agriculture and tourism, as well as the social sector, especially housing, are the main sectors affected (UN ESCAP, 2019)

## LEFT BEHIND IN THE STORM

Some cannot run. Some cannot hear the warning. Some cannot leave.

The elderly and people with disabilities are the most vulnerable, yet often the last to be considered in response planning.

Vanuatu's population pyramid reveals an aging, fragile cohort, asking: who will carry them to safety? (Vanuatu Thematic Report on Disability, 2020)



## JUDY & KEVIN 2023

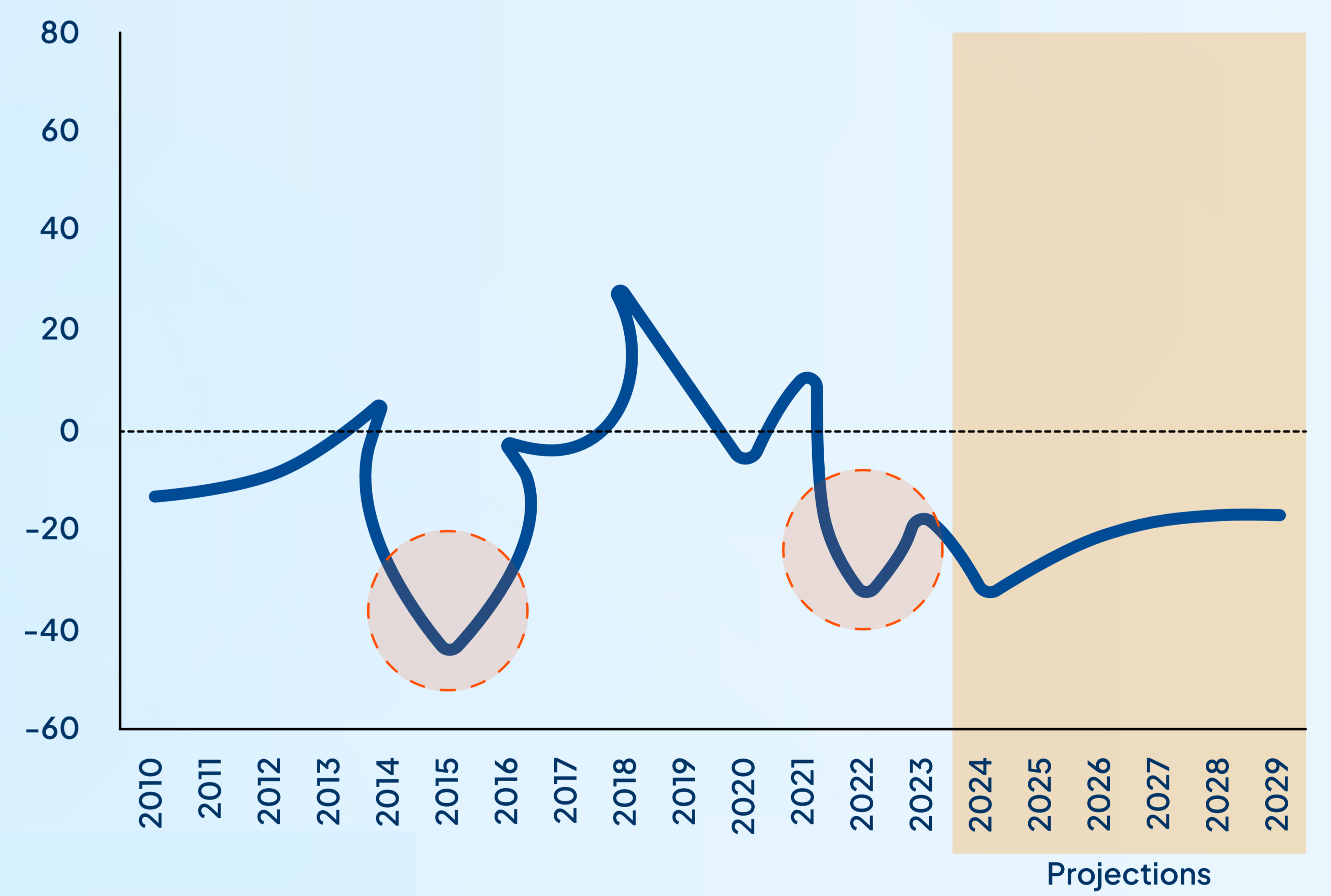
Spending 12% GDP

Agriculture and domestic supply chains are the main sectors affected (UN ESCAP, 2019)

## WHEN THE BUDGET BREAKS

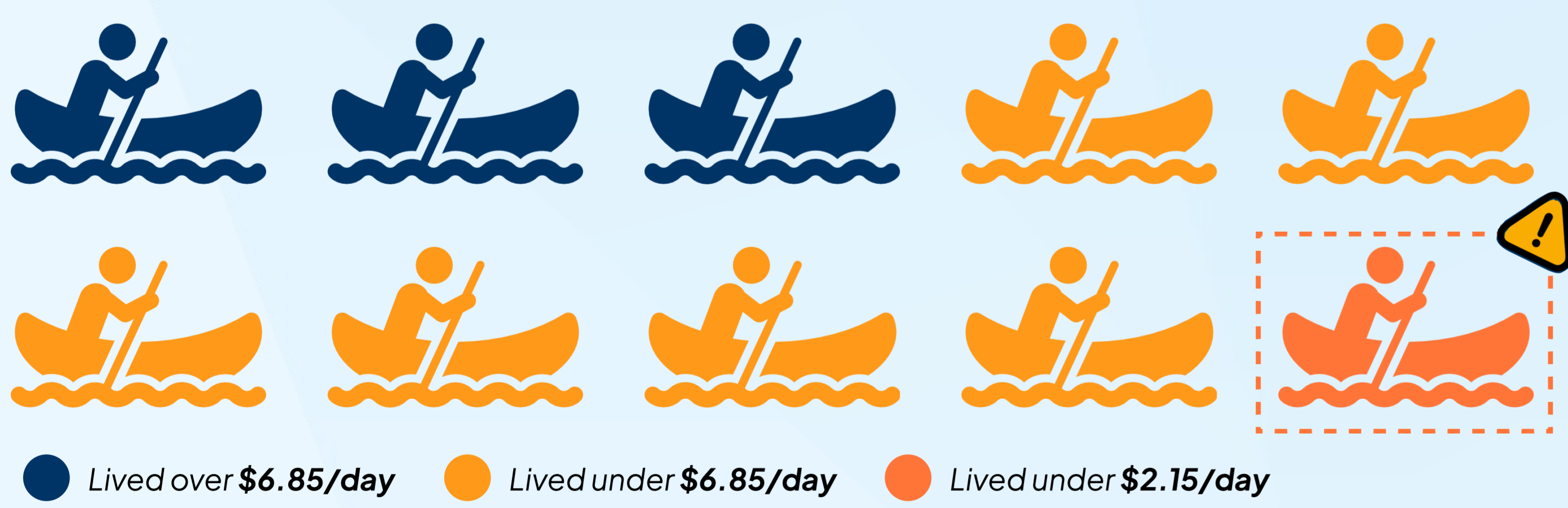
Disaster as economic despressors

Cyclones aren't just climate shocks, they're fiscal shocks. In 2015, government fiscal balance plunged to -42% of GDP. In 2020, it fell again with Harold. The storm surge doesn't stop at the coastline. it crashes into the national budget. (World Bank, 2021)



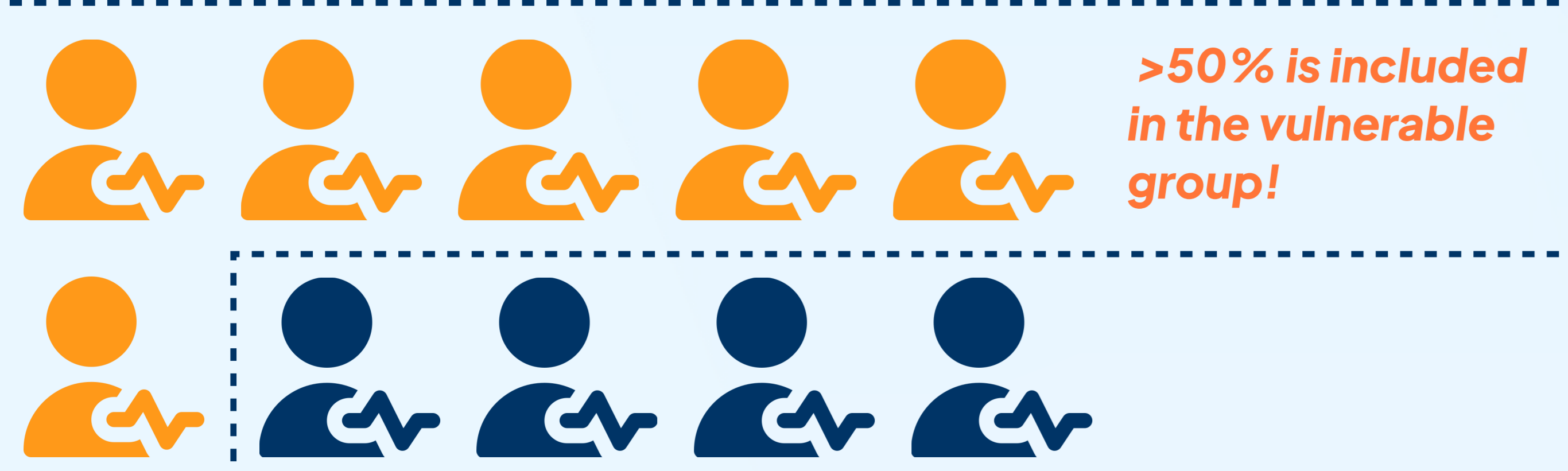
## ONE STORM AWAY FROM EXTREM POVERTY

In 2019, 77% of Vanuatu's population lived under \$6.85/day. When disaster strikes, the descent into extreme poverty is not just possible. it is expected. For many, rebuilding is never an option. (World Bank, 2024)



## NO CARE WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

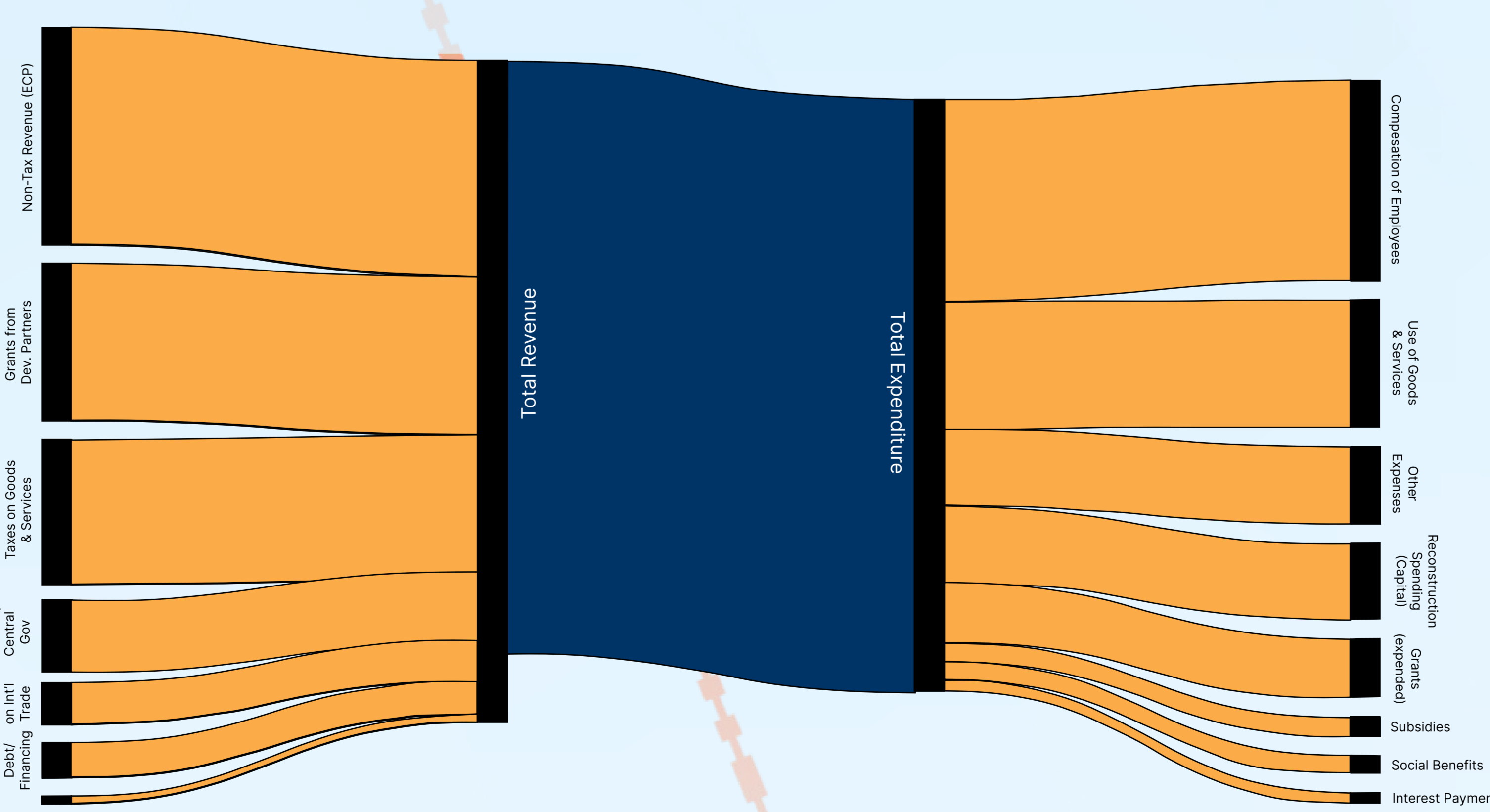
Only 4 out of every 10 people in Vanuatu can access essential health services, leaving the rest dangerously unprotected when disasters hit.



## FOLLOWING THE MONEY, MISSING THE RESILIENCE

In times of disaster, every dollar counts. But where those dollars go matters more.

During Cyclone Harold, most recovery funds were sourced from foreign grants, but disproportionately spent on salaries, not rebuilding. Infrastructure for resilience? A small fraction. We ask: Are we funding survival or just postponing the next collapse? (IMF, 2024)



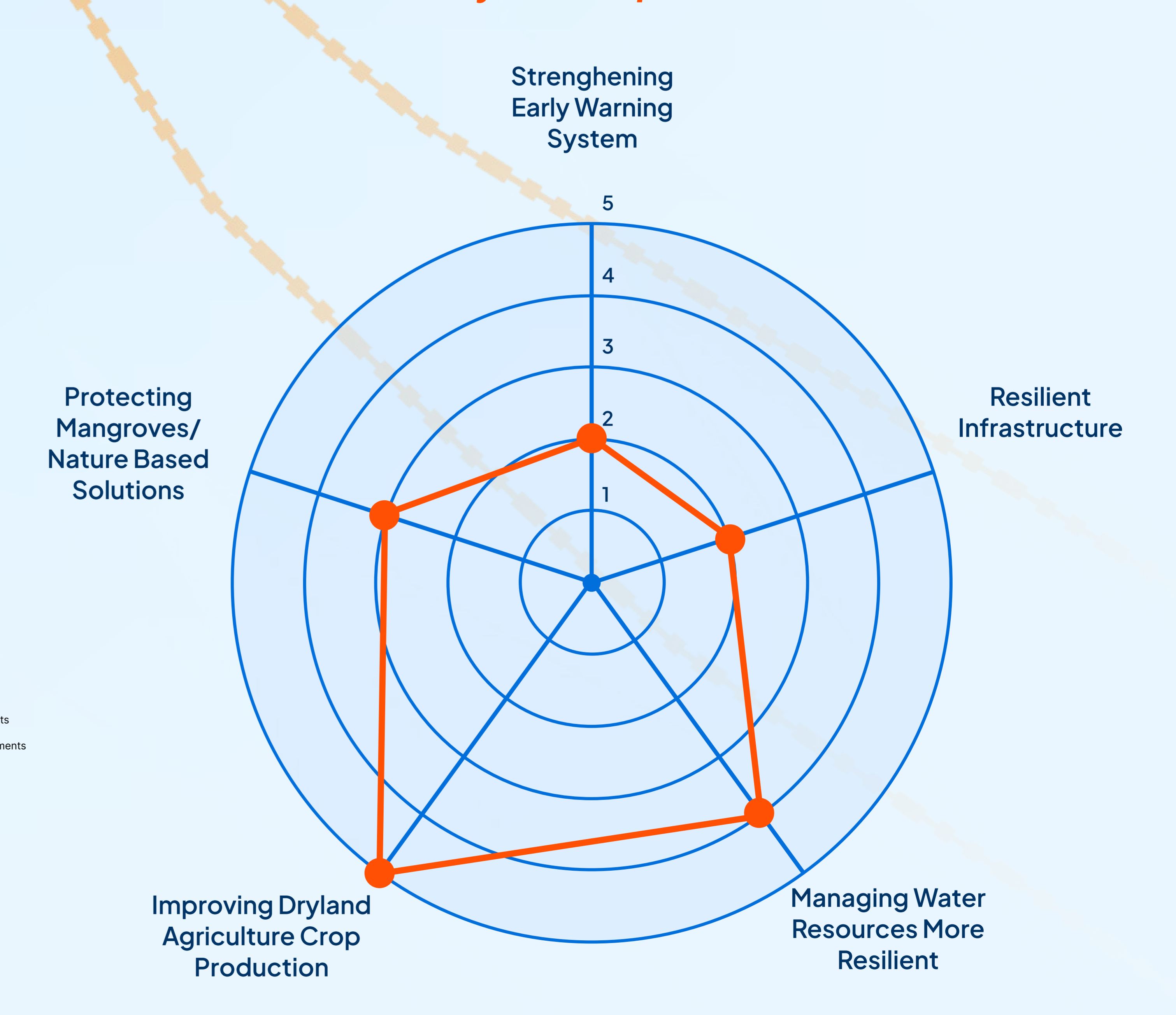
SCAN FOR SOURCE!  
Vanuatu stands on the frontline of climate disasters, but we are not standing still.

The future of the Blue Pacific isn't just about surviving the next storm. It's about ensuring no one is left behind when it hits.

## NATURE FIGHT WITH US!

But the story doesn't end in despair. Vanuatu has identified climate adaptation priorities: protecting mangroves, securing water systems, integrating nature into planning - from restoring ecosystems to climate-smart agriculture. Small steps, but crucial threads toward a disaster-ready Pacific. (UN ESCAP, 2025)

**The roots of resilience may run deeper than we think.**



People not served by essential health services, People served by essential health services

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