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End of 2019/ 2020 South Pacific Cyclone Season Report
Localisation during Overlapping Responses: COVID-19 Pandemic & Tropical Cyclone Harold

1. Executive Summary

- There were nine named tropical cyclones during this 2019/ 2020 tropical season. TC Harold was the first Category 5 cyclone since TC Gita (in February 2018), and was stronger than TC Gita.

- The 2019/ 2020 cyclone season had a number of additional disasters with both the measles outbreak in Samoa and the COVID pandemic across the Pacific region presenting concurrent emergencies.

- The global COVID pandemic led Vanuatu authorities to declare a state of emergency on 26th March. This placed restrictions on a typical international response from humanitarian INGOs, and the TC Harold response became a situation of '*forced localisation*'.

- INGOs understand at an intellectual and ethical level the imperative of localisation, particularly as operational necessity during a public-health emergency, such as COVID.

- While CID members have been able to effectively provide support through local partners during the TC Harold response, this does not necessarily constitute or address the concerns of localisation as identified by Pacific partners. Further work may be needed to clarify what an INGO localisation processes might actually involve operationally.

- The barriers that New Zealand INGOs experience in being able to implement a more effective localisation relationship can be catagorised into four categories: vision and clarity of definition, funding, power relations and global/ local perceptions.

- The experience of the overlapping crisis of COVID and TC Harold present five opportunities by which humanitarian INGOs can better support response activities that will progress a localisation agenda:
  1. The strengthening of partnerships and the improvement of complementarity,
  2. Support funding that allows national actors to directly support locally led responses,
  3. Support human resourcing solutions locally, particularly recruitment and local surge,

4. Adapt systems, policies and processes to accommodate new ways of working, and
5. Support national coordination processes and mechanisms.

2. Background and Context of the 2019/ 2020 Cyclone Season

The **_2019 World Risk Report_** ranks Vanuatu and Tonga as first and third respectively at the top of a list of 180 countries based on level of risk from natural disaster. Vanuatu in particular is no stranger to severe tropic cyclones, having experienced Tropical Cyclone (TC) Pam in 2015 and TC Harold during this latest (2019/ 2020) South Pacific cyclone-season.

Events surrounding TC Harold were considerably different to previous response contexts. The global COVID pandemic led Vanuatu authorities to declare a state of emergency on 26th March. This placed restrictions on what might have been a typical response from humanitarian INGOs to a cyclonic disaster of this scale.

With few options, the response effort became a situation of '_forced localisation_[1]', with Vanuatu experiencing what locally sourced emergency aid means in very real terms. However, if the situation provided some uncertainly and consternation for international partnerships, the concept a locally led response did not represent the emergence of a new priority for the Vanuatu authorities.

Following TC Pam previously, Vanuatu had seen an influx of international personnel and resources to support the response, which quickly complicated and overwhelmed the government's own localised initiatives. With this still in recent memory, and a new concern that an outbreak of COVID could quickly overwhelm their limited medical capacity, the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) took an expedient and definitive position. They decided that the response would be managed locally; declaring that, "_no foreign personnel are being brought to Vanuatu for response efforts at the present time; this will be an internally run operation_".

In April the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders also have evoked the Biketawa Declaration; a 2000 agreement on a coordination framework for a regional crisis. As an immediate priority and in consultation with senior officials, regional agencies and development agencies, Pacific Forum Foreign Ministers also established a Pacific Humanitarian Pathway. This was to ensure a supply-chain remained in lieu of traditional or commercial routes no longer being available for humanitarian assets via Australia and New Zealand.

The manner in which the Pacific region, and specifically Vanuatu, managed the response to TC Harold provides critical insight into what a national and locally led disaster response can be in the Pacific. The localised response in Vanuatu was explored in a rapid review '**_No Turning Back: Local Leadership in Vanuatu's Response to Tropical Cyclone Harold_**' undertaken by the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) and the Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO).

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[1] **_Vanuatu: A real test for local emergency response_** (Lowry Institute – July 2020)

3. Purpose of this Report

The localised response experienced in Vanuatu during the 2019/ 2020 cyclone season is not a unique case. International humanitarian responses to Cyclone Amphan in Bangladesh and India (May 2020), and monsoon-flooding in Bangladesh (July 2020), were restricted due to COVID restrictions. Pandemic restrictions also impeded emergency response efforts to Typhoon Vongfang in the Philippines (May 2020). Furthermore, it can be argued that, many of the lessons-learnt and opportunities for clarity that a localised response during a pandemic might also inform response support in other situations of limited access, such Myanmar and Syria[2].

In the following days of these events, a substantive amount of otherwise standardized international response actions were 'shut outside' coordinated localised initiatives. INGOs were somewhat left sitting on the side-lines to contemplate exactly what ongoing restrictions and limited humanitarian access might mean to traditional humanitarian programming partnerships and operating models. Yet, the concept of localisation is not new.

The concept of localisation has been discussed in numerous seminars and surveys both internationally and domestically (within New Zealand) by the sector, including two workshops and a survey facilitated by CID and the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO), and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). The feedback and findings from these suggest that the implementation and substantiation of 'localisation' appears to be at best inconsistent, and at worst somewhat guarded and non-committal

As such, the theme of the 2019/ 2020 South Pacific Cyclone Season Report is the 'enforced localisation' triggered in the response to severe cyclones like TC Harold. This report will not only provide a snapshot of the season itself but will also review the barriers and opportunities that restrictions - such as those relating to the COVID pandemic - might present to the implementation of localisation. A review of previous literature on regional localisation is further collated, to provide a broader summary of recommendations. These are particularly relevant to INGO partners who in future, wish to address access restrictions and genuinely support local response initiatives, including by remote.

4. TC Harold (1st – 11th April 2020) – Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga

*A meteorological overview of the entire season is attached as **Appendix 1 - Meteorological Overview of 19/ 20 Cyclone Season**.*

There were nine named tropical cyclones during this 2019/ 2020 tropical season, including those that originated in the Gulf of Carpentaria.
TC Harold was the first Category 5 cyclone since TC Gita (in February 2018), and was in fact slightly stronger than TC Gita. TC Harold tracked from 1st – 11th April 2020 and was the second strongest cyclone to impact Vanuatu after TC Pam (in March 2015).

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[2] *'All eyes are on local actors': Covid-19 and local humanitarian action* (HPG – July 2020)

TC Harold underwent what the NZ Met Service term 'Rapid Intensification' (RI), a rare transition from Category 1 to Category 4 within a 24-hour period. It sustained peak winds of 120 knots (or 222km/h) once over Vanuatu.

TC Harold also impacted the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga, and caused significant damage and destruction across all the four affected countries. Vanuatu was most heavily impacted in terms of infrastructure; however, the most significant number of fatalities were from the Solomon Islands. Tragically, TC Harold resulted in some 30 fatalities; 27 lives were lost in the Solomon Islands, two lives in Vanuatu and one in Fiji.

In Vanuatu alone TC Harold affected 160,000 people. The northern provinces of Samna, Mama and Panama were most severely impacted. In the country's second largest city Loganville, over 70% of structures were damaged. In some provinces of Vanuatu, 80-90% of the community received damage to, or lost their homes.

5. The Response to TC Harold

Governments of countries impacted by TC Harold stated that their emergency response would be led nationally, and restrictions were placed on any incoming personnel. All personnel going into Vanuatu were required to undertake a two-week quarantine. As a result, any 'boots on the ground' response options were off the table, which forced INGOs, MFAT and other organisations to recalibrate their package of assistance to affected countries.

Still CID member organisations were able to work through their partners on the ground. **_Oxfam_** worked with the National Disaster Management Office, to conduct remote surveying across impacted provinces to better assess and identify a suitable response, focusing on support incomes and livelihoods. **_World Vision_** was able to reach over 1,700 households to provide relief items. **_ADRA_** helped to distribute food packs, and hygiene and WASH kits. The Rotary network was able to provide emergency response kits.

At the same time, the number of operating traditional and commercial international travel routes were reduced, limiting supply-chain opportunities and further restrictions on movement of goods. As such there was a slower pace of response than might otherwise be expected. In Vanuatu, the fifth (and final) flight carrying relief supplies only got to Port Vila on 4th June – nearly two months after TC Harold.

MFAT allocated NZ$700,000 of contestable funding for NZDRP-accredited NGOs to support communities affected by Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold in Vanuatu. MFAT also allocated NZ$450,000 of contestable funding to support communities affected by Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold in Fiji. This round was called to support immediate relief needs and response and early recovery, although it was initiated much later than would typically be expected.

It is notable that the response to TC Harold was also occurring during a Level 4 lockdown within New Zealand, and so the management of the response from here was also different, including for MFAT. MFAT made the decision to stand up a remote Emergency Coordination Centre for TC Harold, which they had not done before.

The 2019/ 2020 cyclone season had a number of 'quirks', and COVID was not the only communicable disease or viral outbreak in the Pacific region that represented a concurrent emergency.

6. Concurrent Emergencies during the 2019/ 2020 Season

Measles Outbreak (November 2019 – January 2020) - Samoa, Tonga & Fiji

The measles outbreak started near the beginning of the cyclone season, in early November, and a state of emergency was declared by the Samoan Government. Samoa was hardest hit by measles in the Pacific, but there were also significant outbreaks in Tonga and Fiji, as well as risks to other countries due to gaps in vaccination coverage. This outbreak infected over 5,700 individuals and resulted in the deaths of 83 individuals, largely children under five (out of a population of approximately 201,000 within Samoa).

The response to the measles outbreak included elements of social distancing that would become more pronounced during the COVID response. All schools were ordered to close, and restrictions were placed on public events and gatherings. The government also imposed a curfew and other measures to limit movement.

At the beginning of December, the Samoan Government shut down everything to bring civil servants over to the vaccination campaign. The nation-wide curfew was lifted by mid-December when the government estimated that 90% of the population had been reached by the vaccination program. However, the state of emergency was extended to the end of December and in some ways, this segued through into the COVID pandemic.

COVID Pandemic (January 2020 – ongoing) – Pacific Region

As of mid-July 2020, 426 cases of COVID (including 7 deaths) had been reported across the Pacific region (excluding New Zealand & Hawaii). The majority of these occurred in wider Micronesian region.

There had not been any COVID-related deaths reported in Polynesia, and the majority of cases have occurred within French Polynesia (68) and Fiji (18). As of July, ten Oceania sovereign states have yet to report a case - Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated State of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Although numbers of known COVID-19 cases remain relatively low. Fiji and Papua New Guinea, with their relatively sizeable populations and economies, are the most visibly affected. One NGO estimates that half of all Fijians are facing "severe" financial distress.

The factors that make the Pacific resistant to infection – remoteness, scattered populations and the high cost of travel and transportation – are the very same elements driving the region deeper into economic distress.

Pacific Governments are still instituting large-scale measures to prevent the spread of the COVID, and to support recovery while preparing for future impacts. The duration and nature of the COVID pandemic has blurred the lines between public health, humanitarian and short to medium term development issues and support. As such, it has challenged INGOs to ensure their own thinking and operational models are aligned to deeper localisation aspirations within the Pacific, including emergency response during cyclone season.

7. Localisation Discussion Pre. TC Harold, & in the COVID Era

Over two years ago, PIANGO and HAG published their report '***Tracking Progress on Localisation: A Pacific Perspective***' (in July 2018). Reflecting on commitments made at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), this report looked at the development of ways to measure localisation as a key issue for humanitarian actors across the Pacific region. Critically it articulated how Pacific actors themselves seek to define 'localisation signposts' and measurable indicator to verify that changes towards a locally-led humanitarian system and response is happening.

Pacific stakeholders in the PIANGO/ HAG localization report emphasised that the process of localisation will have been successful when Pacific countries define how they respond to their own humanitarian needs, including when this is accepted by INGOs.

Pacific identified priorities for tracking progress on the 'localisation journey' included; leadership, participation, partnerships, capacity, coordination and complementary, and funding. The funding relationship as a key determinant of local-control/ localisation was most recently again articulated by PIANGO during the Centre for Humanitarian Leadership's '***No Safe Space: Crisis Response in COVID-19***' webinar (July 2020).

In partnership with PIANGO, CID facilitated two one-day workshops on localization in May 2019, at which all CID members were represented. Attending organisations included organisations directly involved in Pacific-based emergency response (as define by section B.5.1 of the CID Code) and who were members of the CID Humanitarian Network.

Proceeded by a small pre-workshop survey, these localization workshops were designed to start a structured and focused dialogue for CID members. Their goal was to identify steps towards a collective approach for a systemic shift towards localisation within the Pacific region. These workshops indicated that there are many unresolved questions on localisation, and which needed to be addressed by the NGO sector in New Zealand:
- What are the influencers of localisation?
- What are the actor roles of localisation?
- What protocols best support localisation?
- When will government funding change to support localisation, and in what way?
- How does localisation impact and change our 'business as usual' – what does it mean for INGOs, for programmes, and for reporting?
- How do we gather evidence and measure localisation and progress towards localisation?

In February 2020, a Localisation Baseline Survey was also issued to CID member organisations. Approximately only 35% of the membership completed the baseline survey. The lack of response may be due to an ongoing lack of understanding or confusion about localisation (it may also indicate a lack of firm commitment, plans, capacity or readiness to engage in the Localisation Agenda since the WHS four-years ago).

A subsequent ***CID Localisation Baseline Report*** (August 2020) provided a snapshot of CID member positioning vis-à-vis the concept of 'localisation', which were indicated as follows:
- Less than 50% of responders were signatories of protocols/agreements such as '*Charter for Change*' and '*Grand Bargain*' and less than half of these measure progress on the implementation of the standards,
- 64% of responders have reviewed programming practices due to localization,

- 43% have increased funding to local partners and 21% has developed a localisation strategy, and
- 71.43% reported a strong demonstrated commitment to localisation, including that approximately 80% of CID members have partnered with a Pacific partner.

The findings of the workshop suggest that at an intellectual and ethical level, the sector understands the essence of localisation and recognises that the vision and process of localisation is an inevitable consequence of the evolution of the sectors. However, it was recognised that further work is needed to clarify what an INGO localisation processes might actually involve. This is also reflected in the recent findings of the ***Grand Bargain annual independent report 2020***. That report found that only a quarter of NGOs self-assessed themselves as having made 'excellent progress' towards supporting the localisation of preparedness, response and coordination.

Participants at the CID workshops also acknowledged that agreement needs to be established upon how it should be measured in the Pacific, in spite of a Pacific perspective on this being identified in the PIANGO/ HAG '*Tracking Progress on Localisation: A Pacific Perspective' R*eport published over 2 years ago.

8. Localisation Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges/ Barriers to Localisation in Humanitarian Response

The CID Localisation Baseline Report grouped the barriers to localisation into four categories: *Vision*; *Funding*; *Power*; and *Perception* (as below):
1. **Vision:** Lack of clarity of what localisation is and how to do it,
2. **Funding:** Lack of funding and time to effectively engage communities, attract the right local talent, permit effective longer-term local planning,
3. **Power:** Donor agendas dictating program focus; INGOs letting go of total control, and
4. **Perception:** Local perception of overseas knowledge.

This 4-part catagorisation correlates and encapsulates barriers also identified in a localisation review specific to TC Harold; the recent Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) briefing note '***All eyes are on local actors': Covid-19 and local humanitarian action***' (July 2020):

- Humanitarian response during the COVID pandemic necessitates a greater acceptance of risk by *all* actors, but there appears to a continued lack of, or willingness to discuss risk and risk-sharing by all parties. This includes donors being reticent about the expedient release of funding to be able to support locally led actions.

- Humanitarian response still remains exclusive and centred around international organisations. In this regard, in spite of the localisation intentions of international staff and organisations, historical and colonial legacy still looks large, with structural dynamics and assumption still 'under-writing' any sense of trust, legitimacy and unequal relationships in funding.

- A key barrier to localisation is a funding trend that consolidates rather than shifts existing power structures away for donors.

It was notable in the CID localisation Baseline Report, that some current donor processes do not necessarily incentivise the adoption of localisation practices by NZ-based responders either. It could also be argued that addition legal requirements within NZ, such as new obligations under the Anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) legislation, further compounds the status quo.

The main ways in which NZ INGOs have supported localisation has been through employment of local staff, capacity development and increased funding. Capacity-strengthening support from INGOs, through the promotion and fostering of national/ local leadership in disaster response is certainly most prevalent. However, there is little evidence of consideration of a growth in human resource support, or opportunity for local partners to perform capacity assessment on INGO partners re. localisation.

Opportunities to/ Enablers of Localisation in Humanitarian Response

Immediately following TC Harold, PIANGO and the HAG completed a further topical review of the response in context of the pandemic, in their report '***Five Ways to support locally-led disaster response in the Pacific during COVID-19***' (April 2020).

This report established five opportunities for international support to adapt so as to better support responses during the COVID pandemic, and to progress localisation in general. The recommendations to support localisation during limited access such as during TC Harold include:

1. **The strengthening of partnerships and the improvement of complementarity:**

   - Establish some partnership principles to guide the way you will work in the limited context.
   - Ensure that partnership agreements include details of two-way commitments e.g. reporting to national partner on support provided / review at end of response by the national partner.
   - Identify and fund national and local consultants to work with partners on the design, monitoring and evaluation of programs. Buddy the national consultant up with head office M&E expertise.
   - Conduct joint activities with other partners and networks in order to minimise risks; for example, joint assessments and joint program monitoring between agencies will reduce travel, duplication and COVID-19 transmission risk.

2. **Support funding that allows national actors to directly support locally led responses:**

   - Clearly articulate how much funding will go to national partners, and better publicly track and report on this.
   - Agree with partners how funding can be used flexibly, such as during response and recovery in the case of TC Harold. Also consider funding provisions that can help partners to adjust activities and approaches in line with rapid changes in context (such as will be occurring in the ongoing COVID pandemic).
   - INGOs should consider risk transfer when working with national staff and partners and ensure this is covered in policy.

3. **Support human resourcing solutions locally, particularly recruitment and local surge:**

   - Establish budget lines for technical support for partners in areas such as accounting / HR.
   - Identify how technical support could be sourced locally or regionally. Agree with partners on how gaps in personnel can be filled remotely.
   - Consider resourcing mentoring or remote support to be provided between Pacific countries.
   - Discuss initiatives that can be supported or complemented by international support, and how this will work in practice.

4. **Adapt systems, policies and processes to accommodate new ways of working:**

   - Structure program plans and agreements to enable flexibility should the context change drastically (due to increasing cases of COVID-19 in-country, etc.)
   - Discuss and agree with project teams and partners about adapted processes for reporting and monitoring and evaluation. Consider whether waivers might be needed to account for gaps in some data or reporting limitations.
   - Amend measures, standard operating procedures and contingency funds to be able to quickly and flexibly respond to contextual changes.
   - Consider additional support improvement of partners' communications or system infrastructure, i.e. digital connectivity, to adapt to remote working or remote international support.

5. **Support national coordination processes and mechanisms:**

   - Ensure that coordination resourcing is considered in discussions with partners, and factored into program budgets, particularly where costs will be higher in responding to overlapping crisis.
   - Coordinate and share information about approaches that do and don't work.
   - Ensure that support to locally led coordination mechanisms also covers the safety of coordination forums.
   - Discuss how to strengthen and support remote coordination modalities if appropriate.

In the CID localisation Baseline Report, there was a commendable range of changes that New Zealand INGOs had made to strengthen their support and implementation of localisation, these included:
   - Employing nationals as country heads or Executive Director level,
   - Working with local partners to design a methodology that facilitates their planning,
   - Prioritising the recruitment of local staff,
   - Increasing funding to cover overheads and staff development for local partners,
   - Capacity building with local implementing partners, and
   - Shifting decisions and power from NZ/Australia to the Pacific, with autonomous Pacific entities setting own strategic goals/agendas.

In lieu of the lack of agreement or clarity around a definition of localisation, consideration might also be made for the definition developed by Pacific actors and included in PIANGO reports;

"Localisation is a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision-making by national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations."

9. Conclusion

It is still to be seen if the 2019/2020 Cyclone Season is in fact the 'penny-drop moment' when a genuine embrace of localisation becomes part of a 'new normal' within the Pacific Region. A cynical view might suggest that the TC Harold response may yet be viewed a point in time when the peculiarities of a COVID-related context 'allowed' localisation aspirations to be momentarily acted upon.

Through the acute experience of responding to TC Harold, the otherwise nebulous nature of the localisation debate has taken on a greater level of clarity, if not a greater degree of urgency. Humanitarian responders in New Zealand do understand at an intellectual and ethical level the essence of localisation, and recognise that the vision and process of localisation is an inevitable consequence of a maturing regional humanitarian sector.

The catalyst for 'enforced localisation' this cyclone season has been due to the directives and authority of Pacific leaders (in particular the Vanuatu Government and NDMO), rather than a decision to proactively shift operational engagement strategies from regional partners themselves. As such, the over-lapping responses to TC Harold and COVID has shone a light on the apparent failure or lack of speed by which the humanitarian system is embracing localisation regionally.

Current feedback suggests there is a degree of inability or unwillingness to move towards localisation by INGOs at this current time. However, INGO personnel are distinctly aware of the local response and the need to support their partners effectively. To the credit of the quality work and impact that INGOs in New Zealand do continue to provide (and contributed during the TC Harold response), organisations cannot be expected to shift their partnership approach in the middle of a crisis. So while the TC Harold response was not the time when a permanent shift to localisation might be established, it does serve as a harbinger for what further and future localisation could or should be.

Despite the localisation 'progress' (albeit enforced) during this seasons TC Harold response, major obstacles do remain to fast-tracking sustained engagement to a localised humanitarian system. Additionally funding mechanism beyond INGO control, and partnership trends, that consolidate rather than shift existing power structures also remain. As such, there appears to be a lack of incentivisation under the current configuration of donor/ INGO/ in-country partners across the region that would genuinely support localisation in humanitarian response, particularly as it is defined by Pacific actors.

Appendix 1 - Meteorological Overview of 19/ 20 Cyclone Season

The 2019-20 Tropical Cyclone Season ran from 1st November 2019 to 30th April 2020 inclusive and was set against an 'ENSO-neutral climate background', i.e. neither El Niño nor La Niña conditions dominated. During the season, tropical cyclones are officially monitored by the Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS), Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and New Zealand's Met Service.

This season was considered an 'average one'. The season began on 22nd November with the formation of Tropical Cyclone Rita (2018), which would later become a severe tropical cyclone. The season featured Cyclone Harold, the first Cat 5 severe tropical cyclone in the basin since Tropical Cyclone Gita, and one of the strongest since Cyclone Winston (2016). Eight cyclones were named east of Australia, and one within the Gulf of Carpentaria during the season, of which four were "severe" (Cat 3 or higher).
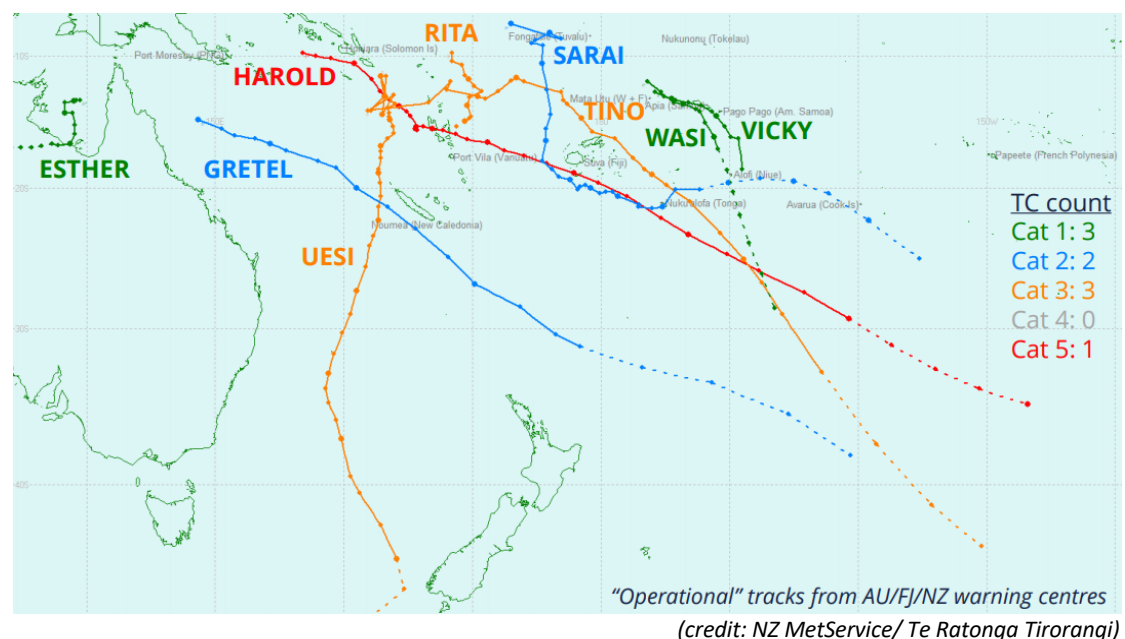
(credit: NZ MetService/ Te Ratonga Tirorangi)

There were nine named tropical cyclones during this 2019/ 2020 tropical season, including those that originated in the Gulf of Carpentaria:
1. **Severe Tropical Cyclone Rita** (Cat 3) - the first cyclone of the season in November, was unusually strong for a first system of the season, reaching Category 3.
2. **Tropical Cyclone Sarai** (Cat 2) - in late December passed close to Fiji as a Category 2 cyclone resulting in two fatalities.
3. **Severe Tropical Cyclone Tino** (Cat 3) - in January was a broad system, passing close to Fiji then over Tonga as a Category 3 cyclone.
4. **Severe Tropical Cyclone Uesi** (Cat 3) - in early February was also a Category 3 cyclone, and was the closest ex-TC to New Zealand this season after it passed New Caledonia and moved south over the Tasman Sea to approach Fiordland.
5. **Tropical Cyclone Vicky** (Cat 1) – formed near Wallis and Futuna early in February, but mainly impacted Samoan Islands.
6. **Tropical Cyclone Wasi** (Cat 1) – formed near Wallis soon after TC Vicky, and mainly impacted the Samoan Islands.
7. *Tropical Cyclone Esther (Cat 1) – formed in the Gulf of Carpentaria*
8. **Tropical Cyclone Gretel** (Cat 2) - formed in mid-March and reached Category 2 before moving out of the Coral Sea to track south of New Caledonia and north of New Zealand.

9. **Severe Tropical Cyclone Harold** (Cat 5) - formed at the start of April near the Solomon Islands and underwent "rapid intensification" to reach severe Category 5 before landfall in Vanuatu, then proceeding to also pass over Fiji and Tonga.

TC Harold relief supplies arriving in Fiji in April 2020 (Credit: © UNICEF/UNI323677/Stephen)