

Climate Change Resilience and Mitigation

The Vanuatu Skills Partnership recognises the importance of climate change management as a cross-cutting issue for consideration across all Partnership activity. To this end, the assistance of a skilled volunteer was sought through the Australian Volunteers for International Development program (AVID) program in order to develop collaboratively a strategy for mainstreaming climate change action. The new Climate Change Officer started work with the Partnership in November 2017. In the first six months of strategy development, activity has focused on: extensive review of all existing climate change information and training materials available for the specific region, interviews with key stakeholders working within the field of climate change in Vanuatu, a full review of related national and regional policies related to climate change and disaster risk reduction, initial training of internal staff in climate change awareness, and stakeholder engagement with the Provincial Government Training Boards and other key stakeholders in Malampa, Sanma and Torba (Tafea to be completed in June). This work was undertaken to determine the key climate change impacts and adaptation/mitigation strategies that are relevant for the productive sectors, the training needs of clients and productive sector officers in relation to climate change, and how the Vanuatu Skills Partnership can work together with other organisations to ensure relevant training is available and that the PSET sector is included in climate change activities and policies at the national and provincial level.

The Strategy will include a number of different components, including:

Climate Change Adaptation

- a) **Mainstreaming:** Consideration of climate change impacts and possible adaptation strategies will be included in every relevant training activity (i.e. those which concern raw materials, logistics, processes or physical assets which might be affected by climate change). Heuristic assessments have been developed to identify how climate change is relevant across each of the productive sectors, and trainers will be supported to include consideration of the impacts of climate change. This will include possible responses in training delivery plans, through the provision of training-specific guidance and briefing notes, as well sector-specific climate change risk assessments
- b) **Specific Courses:** In addition to mainstreaming contextualised climate change information into all relevant training, the Strategy will identify opportunities to run specific training in adaptation– for example, helping island bungalow and tour operators develop disaster and contingency plans
- c) **Internal Policies:** the Vanuatu Skills Partnership is developing internal policies and operational procedures in relation to disaster response and preparedness to ensure the safety of all staff, trainers and Skills Centres. While predominantly focused on disaster risk reduction, this analysis will also consider the slow-onset impacts of climate change on the physical assets and operations of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and the Skills Centres, where relevant.

Climate Change Mitigation

- a. **Internal Policy:** While the proportional emissions contribution of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership is small, a preliminary assessment is being undertaken of its emissions in order to inform the development of an internal mitigation policy. While the analysis is ongoing, fuel (transport and stationary) and electricity are the primary sources of Scope 1 and 2

emissions. However, the analysis will also include international and domestic flights required for the delivery of activity as a select Scope 3 source, due to the significant contribution of flight emissions to the overall footprint

- b. **Specific Training:** While mitigation is relevant to fewer existing training activities than adaptation activities, a number of specific training opportunities have been identified, particularly related to opportunities for clients to capitalise on grant funding or subsidy schemes that are available for the purposes of reducing emissions.

Building institutional capacity

The Vanuatu Skills Partnership has a long history of stimulating institutional reform within the Government of Vanuatu, and has negotiated respective Memoranda of Understanding with the Departments of Industry, Tourism Agriculture, as well with MoET and the Australia-Pacific Technical College. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership will continue to work at this institutional level with key partners to ensure that the PSET sector is actively included within climate change planning and policy-making at national and provincial levels. Furthermore, the Partnership has established relationships with the Vanuatu Climate Action Network and the Vanuatu Business Resilience Committee which can provide information on priority training needs and information resources as well as connecting the Partnership to potential trainers and clients.

At this stage, the procedures and protocols for mainstreaming are being tested with the productive sectors, and guidance materials are being developed to support the introduction of the formal Strategy. In mid-July, Skills for Tourism will be running a two-week accredited training on Vanua Lava (Cert 1 Tourism - Tour Guiding basic skills cluster) and this will be used to pilot key mainstreaming activities such as the development and provision of climate change information to the trainer, incorporation of climate change consideration into the delivery plan, training materials and assessments, and discussion of climate change issues in the actual training sessions. The Climate Change Officer will work with the Skills for Tourism Sector Coordinator and the trainer in the lead-up to the training, as well as attending the training to observe, provide input, and ‘train-the-trainer’ to incorporate climate change issues into training scenarios. This course was chosen as it is one of the primary accredited courses that is delivered through the Skills Centre, and will be delivered by an established partner provider (Max Zacharie and Torgil RTC).



Image: Vetiver grass and pandanus being planted on the foreshore to reduce coastal erosion in Sola, Vanua Lava

Piloting the integration of climate change material into courses in this way will assist the Sector Coordinator (in understanding how mainstreaming will practically impact the planning and delivery of training), the trainer (in his ability to understand and deliver contextualised climate change information in an integrated way), and the Climate Change Officer in fine-tuning the process of

mainstreaming. In particular, this will be in relation to the level of detail required in guidance material and specific content, materials or background that is necessary in delivery to ensure that learning objectives are met. It will further be a test-run of the effectiveness of jointly-delivered ‘co-

training' approach, where the Climate Change Officer attends training alongside the primary trainer in order to demonstrate how climate change material can be delivered, and in doing so, trains the trainers to deliver climate change-related material themselves in the future. This approach, along with combined 'train-the-trainer' workshops, are likely to be vital to the success of delivering the strategy in the absence of a dedicated climate change officer in the future, where trainers are supported (though initial training and activity-specific briefings/guidance) to incorporate climate change considerations into all of the relevant existing training activities of the Skills Centres. A similar pilot is currently being identified with the Skills for Agribusiness program.

While work has continued on the Strategy, a number of other needs relating to climate change have been addressed through the provision of briefing papers or advice. This primarily been focussed on the Skills for Handicraft program, through the provision of a briefing paper on the climate change impacts on pandanus production (a vital raw material for many handicrafts), advice on value chain resilience approaches to strengthen the handicraft sector, and the provision of a disaster management plan for the Malampa Handicraft Centre. Additionally, a guide for coastal adaptation options is currently being prepared for Torba Province, along with some advice on climate change considerations for the Sola market house, aquaculture ponds and schools on Mota Lava which are affected by coastal erosion.

While Vanuatu is one of the leaders in the Pacific at integrating climate change and disaster risk reduction into decision-making at a national level, and numerous climate change information resources exist, there remain significant barriers to practical adaptation at the local level. For climate change information to be useable by the majority of the population, it must be delivered and contextualised in ways which are accessible to all. Technical skills training is an important avenue for delivering contextual, relevant climate change adaptation and mitigation information, translating general trends and impacts into practical, sector-specific actions. The location and status of the Skills Centres at the provincial level and the strong working relationship with a range of local government and civil society partners provide an efficient and cost effective way for disseminating information and increasing knowledge and adaptive capacity locally in economic enterprises. The work that Vanuatu Skills Partnership has been undertaking in relation to climate change mainstreaming has been received positively by DFAT Canberra, recognised as a leading example of how the Australian Aid program and supported organisations can address climate change within DFAT and more widely throughout the region.