

# Disability Inclusion

## Progress Report January – June 2018

### Background

Inclusion and equity are central to the approach of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, which works towards achievement of long term outcome four: *The status of women and people with a disability is enhanced*. This contributes to the overarching goal of the Partnership and the National PSET Policy: *a sustainable and well-coordinated skills system that maximises access to relevant and quality assured qualifications leading to improved economic, social and cultural development opportunities for all*.

The efforts of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership support implementation of several international and national policy commitments to the protection and promotion of the rights of people with disability made by the Government of Vanuatu. These include:

- The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, which was ratified by the Government of Vanuatu in 2008 and states that people with disability must be included in education and training opportunities as an imperative (Article 24);
- The *National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018 - 2025*, which specifies that the rights of people with disability must be mainstreamed into education and training opportunities (Strategic Priority Area 1);
- The *Post-School Education and Training (PSET) Policy 2016 - 2020*, which specifies inclusion as a key guiding principle; and
- The *National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020*, which provides a roadmap for improving the supply of and demand disability inclusive post-school education and training opportunities.

In addition, the disability inclusion efforts of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership are guided by and in line with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) *Development for All 2015 – 2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia’s aid program*. Disability Inclusive Development Fund (DIDFund) resources were provided by DFAT to the Vanuatu Skills Partnership in 2016 to support and further its disability inclusion work, specifically to support the implementation of the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for TVET Sector 2016 – 2020*.

### Overview – Disability Inclusion within the Vanuatu Skills Partnership

Disability inclusion efforts by the Vanuatu Skills Partnership are guided by the twin-track approach, as outlined in DFAT’s *Development for All* strategy, and utilise both mainstreaming and disability-specific approaches.

Mainstreaming efforts seek to identify and overcome barriers to participation in all aspects of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership’s work and build access and inclusion across these. Mainstreaming requires strong collaboration with key stakeholders across a range of different sectors, professional development, and the joint identification of strategies to overcome barriers.

Disability specific activities promote equitable access by providing targeted support to identify and improve access to the particular accommodations and services required specifically by people with disability. These are often fundamental supports, without which inclusion might be challenging or even impossible, and can include provision of transport, accessible venues, a sign language interpreter, or caregiver support.

In order to operationalise its mainstreaming efforts, Vanuatu Skills Partnership collaborates with the provincial Skills Centres as well as its Skills for Tourism, Skills for Handicrafts, Skills for Agribusiness and Skills for Providers work streams, and with its partners across the education, training and key productive sectors. Particular funding has been made available to PSET Providers who are ready to include people with disability in their policies and practices, through the Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund (TPIIF). Decision-making regarding the TPIIF is governed by the Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund Steering Committee, which comprises representatives of the following agencies:

- Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA)
- Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS)
- Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA)
- Ministry of Education and Training (MoET)
- DFAT
- Vanuatu Skills Partnership

The meaningful engagement of people with disability is fundamental to the development of effective, appropriate and realistic mainstreaming and disability specific approaches. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership works in close association with Vanuatu’s Disabled People’s Organisation (DPO), Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association, as well as with Vanuatu’s main service provider, Vanuatu Society for People with Disability, and the government disability focal point, situated within the Ministry of Justice and Community Services. Formal partnership agreements exist with each of these key agencies. These agencies rely on a small number of staff, and limited access to funding that is often project-specific and time-limited, to achieve their objectives. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership recognises that effective collaboration with these agencies requires the investment of financial and technical resources (see “One stone, two pigeons” case story).

## Introduction

The Vanuatu Skills Partnership approach seeks to work in collaboration with Vanuatu stakeholders towards achievement of Vanuatu policy priorities. As such, this six-monthly report for the disability inclusion works stream outlines key achievements between January and June 2018, according to the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for TVET Sector 2016 – 2020*.

## Achievements

***Policy priority area 1: Strengthen and support Training Providers to enable the provision of institutional and decentralised skills development training that is inclusive of and accessible to people with all types of disabilities, and that is linked to the livelihoods goals, opportunities and training needs experienced by people with disabilities.***

- 1.1 In accordance with the TPIIF Steering Committee’s recommendation, Vanuatu Skills Partnership signed TPIIF agreements with two PSET providers – Vanuatu Agricultural College (VAC), and Pacific Vocational Training Centre (PVTC). Under the auspices of these agreements, Vanuatu Skills Partnership is supporting the two PSET providers to implement their disability inclusion action plans, through the provision of teaching and learning resources, and technical support. In order to support sustainability, both PSET providers are co-contributing to their initiatives. PVTC is undertaking a labour market survey to understand barriers to and facilitators of disability inclusion in work, as part of an effort to target disability inclusion within training providers. PVTC is currently in preparation for their first enrolment of students with disability.
- 1.2 To date, Vanuatu Skills Partnership’s Disability and Skills for PSET teams have worked together to develop PSET Provider Improvement Partnerships (PPIP) with two Rural Training Centres in

Malampa province, two Rural Training Centres in Sanma province and one Rural Training Centre in Torba. This involved joint visits to each Rural Training Provider along with MoET representatives, and identification of priorities for partnerships. Disability inclusion activities have been embedded within the signed PPIP agreements, and funding support has been provided to each PSET provider partner. The Skills for Providers and Disability Inclusion teams undertake regular joint activities to support disability mainstreaming and specific interventions, as well as other efforts that will support the Rural Training Centres towards registration with the VQA.

1.3 Vanuatu Skills Partnership is currently working with VAC to make some modifications to existing facilities to enable the enrolment and participation of students with mobility disability. Quotes from builders are in the process of being finalised ahead of construction work to be completed between July and December 2018.

1.4 Vanuatu Skills Partnership's Disability Inclusion and Skills for Handicrafts teams have worked to improve access to decentralised training and coaching in the **handicrafts** sector, with the following results:

- Specifications were provided to ensure disability accessibility is incorporated into the extension of the Malampa Handicraft Association building, which will enable handicrafts producers and visitors with disability to enter and use the building.
- Engagement of eight clients with disability in skills development activities, including training and coaching in weaving, textiles and jewellery in Torba, Sanma, Malampa and Tafea.



1.5 Vanuatu Skills Partnership's Disability Inclusion and Skills for Tourism teams have worked to improve access to decentralised training and coaching in the **tourism** sector, with the following results (see the Skills for Tourism case story for more details):

- Engagement of an Accessible Tourism Industry Coach, herself a person with disability with a Certificate III in Tourism, to educate other industry coaches and key business clients on best practices regarding accessibility and inclusion for visitors with disability.
- At the request of the Vanuatu Tourism Office (VTO), development of a Hotel Accessibility Checklist and auditing tool.
- Site visits, including access audits, conducted at 16 Hotels and Resorts, by VTO Information and Research Officers and Accessible Tourism Industry Coach in Port Vila and North Efate, with the information collected to be placed on the VTO website's accessibility page.
- Development of a bungalow accessibility checklist for use by bungalow operators who are rebuilding bungalows destroyed by Tropical Cyclone Pam under the auspices of the Tanna Tourism Recovery Project.



*Image: Accessible bungalow, mid-construction, Tanna*

1.6 National

*Disability Inclusion*

*Policy for the TVET Sector* was laid out, published, and together with MoET’s Tertiary and Education Directorate, disseminated to PSET providers across Vanuatu and other key stakeholders.

**Policy Priority area 2:** *Lead efforts to upgrade and implement pre-service and in-service education and training for trainers to enable them to lead skills development training with a range of people, including men and women with a range of disabilities, in an inclusive training setting.*

- 2.1 All Skills Centre trainers/coaches undergo disability sensitization as part of their inductions. All were informed about the support through Vanuatu Skills Partnership’s Disability Inclusion team for participants with disability.
- 2.2 The Disability Inclusion team was consulted by Vanuatu Institute for Teacher Education (VITE) to provide disability inclusion input into the newly developed Certificate IV program for TVET trainers. VITE’s TVET trainer agreed to co-facilitate professional development training in disability inclusive training approaches for PSET providers participating in TPIIF or PPIP efforts.

**Policy priority area 3:** *Facilitate equal access to TVET opportunities by undertaking awareness-raising and support activities which encourage the enrolment of people with disabilities from urban, rural and remote areas within Vanuatu in training activities, the completion of training and engagement in subsequent work.*

3.1 The Vanuatu Skills Partnership signed a partnership agreement with VDPA, under the auspices of which both agencies will work together to undertake activities which raise awareness of the right to enrol in PSET opportunities. Funding was provided for a dedicated Program Officer within VDPA, who has been hired and has participated in orientation activities, as well as for associated office costs. Funding and technical support for VDPA’s first ever retreat and annual planning workshop was provided, and assistance was provided by the Disability Inclusion team to facilitate and develop VDPA’s 2018 work plan in line with their strategic plan. This includes activities such as community awareness raising regarding the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and access to education and training, and morning tea get-togethers for deaf people, at which opportunities for training can be shared and discussed.



*Image: Signing of the MoU between the Partnership and VDPA*

3.2 Presentations on Disability Inclusion were incorporated into the Torba, Sanma and Malampa Roadshow visits made by representatives of various teams across the Vanuatu Skills Partnership.

**Policy priority 4:** *Resource the implementation of the policy by making funding available to support the reasonable accommodations which enable inclusion of people with disability in training activities, and capacity development of Trainer Providers and Trainers.*

- 4.1 Recognising the barriers to participation caused by limited access to mobility devices such as wheelchairs and crutches by those who need them, a Mobility Device Feasibility Study was completed on Malekula, by MJCS through the Malampa Disability Officer and VSPD with technical support from Motivation Australia engaged through the Vanuatu Skills Partnership. Outcomes of the study will determine next steps in regards to expansion of mobility device services in Malekula and eventually Malampa.
- 4.2 Under the auspices of the partnership agreement between the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and VSPD, one container of mobility devices was purchased to assist with the extension of mobility device services beyond Port Vila / Efate to Santo and beyond. This aims to support the provision of devices to Malekula.
- 4.3 Situation analysis regarding sign language in Vanuatu completed.
- 4.4 Technical and funding support provided to VDPA to:
  - explore financial literacy training for clients and potential clients with disability, and
  - approach other donors including the Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti program, to support VDPA with additional institutional costs.

**Policy priority 5:** *Lead efforts to implement, monitor and evaluate this policy in close collaboration with key government, non-government, private sector and other development partners.*

- 5.1 TPIIF Steering Committee gave approval to sign TPIIF Agreements with 2 PSET providers.
- 5.2 Formal partnerships with MJCS, VDPA and VSPD operationalised, through the establishment of three funded positions (one at each agency) and agreed joint work plans and budgets for 2018. Funded positions are responsible for leading implementation of joint activities as agreed through the work plan development processes.
- 5.3 Advice was provided to MoET to develop disability inclusive PSET module within the Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS). In the course of providing this, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership Disability Inclusion team was asked to provide advice, based on experiences in collecting disability data amongst clients in the PSET sector, regarding how the MoET could incorporate a disability data collection module within its primary and secondary modules within VEMIS. The Disability Inclusion team provided advice regarding a disability data collection tool, and process for the development, testing and institutionalisation of this tool, based on Vanuatu Skills Partnership experiences within the PSET sector. A tool has now been produced, translated into French and Bislama, and is awaiting consultation with key stakeholders.
- 5.4 Based on its experiences in disability inclusion, the Disability Inclusion team provided input to guide MJCS in its development of the *National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018 – 2025*.
- 5.5 Findings and recommendations from the Sign Language Situation Analysis informed Vanuatu's shadow report regarding the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

## Case Study: One stone, two pigeons: Collaborating to strengthen Disabled People's Organisations and disability inclusive skills development in Vanuatu



After successfully working together to deliver awareness raising activities regarding disability inclusive skills development opportunities in communities across Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA) established a formal relationship. Through this agreement, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) support each other towards shared goals. Recognising the limited funding opportunities available to Pacific DPOs, Vanuatu Skills Partnership also funds an appropriate proportion of VDPA's institutional costs. This joint work has resulted in increasing demand amongst people with disability for inclusive skills development, an improving supply of disability inclusive post-school education and training (PSET), and a stronger national DPO. These efforts have been recognised by the Government of Australia and internationally.

### 2014 - 2016

- ✓ Staff from VDPA, Vanuatu Skills Partnership and Skills Centres work together to lead 'road-show' style awareness-raising activities regarding disability inclusive skills development opportunities in communities across Vanuatu.
- ✓ Acting as a referral agency, VDPA connects interested people with disability with training opportunities through Skills Centres.
- ✓ On request from Skills Centres, VDPA members and staff speak with families of potential clients with disability, to help them understand the opportunities on offer, and provide reassurance regarding their concerns
- ✓ VDPA provides advice to Skills Centres regarding particular reasonable accommodations for individual clients with disability, modifications required to ensure Skills Centres are accessible, and adjustments required to ensure Training Provider venues are accessible and inclusive.
- ✓ VDPA members are invited to lead sessions at professional development workshops held for trainers from the skills development sector, sharing their stories and advocating for change
- ✓ VDPA provides input to the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020*.

### 2017

- ✓ VDPA's Coordinator becomes a standing member of two key skills development sector coordination committees – the Vanuatu Skills Partnership Steering Committee, and the Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund Steering Committee.  
The Partnership and VDPA sign a new Partnership Agreement, formalising areas of mutual interest, and also commits both organisations to a deeper alliance.

### 2018

- ✓ Recognising the limits on VDPA capacity to continue meeting requests for advice and support to strengthen demand for, and supply of, disability inclusive skills development opportunities, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership funds a VDPA Program Officer, as well as an appropriate proportion of VDPA's institutional costs. This latter commitment is made in direct response to the challenges Pacific DPOs often face in securing funds for rent, electricity and similar costs; without which they cannot operate.
- ✓ Vanuatu Skills Partnership provides technical and financial support to VDPA to develop its 2018 work plan.
- ✓ VDPA facilitates training for staff and members on the *Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, with financial support from Vanuatu Skills Partnership.
- ✓ Based on recommendations arising from a Sign Language Situation Analysis conducted through the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, VDPA establishes a regular morning tea which brings deaf people together and enables them to initiate communication. This is also an important referral opportunity for deaf people who are interested in skills development.
- ✓ VDPA works with Vanuatu Skills Partnership to explore and conduct financial literacy training to support people with disability who run or are interested in engaging in small business.
- ✓ VDPA and Vanuatu Skills Partnership establish a market stall in Luganville, at which people with disability can sell products on cruise ship days.
- ✓ Vanuatu Skills Partnership supports VDPA with advice regarding other donors who could be approached for support for institutional costs.
- ✓ Collaboration efforts by Vanuatu Skills Partnership and VDPA are presented at the high-level inter-governmental Global Action on Disability meeting in Helsinki, and acknowledged in a letter to VDPA from the Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific.

### Short term outcomes

- Through this partnership, VDPA has built relationships with mainstream training providers, and now has direct access to referral mechanisms which link prospective trainees with disability to skills development opportunities.
- Many people with disability, including VDPA members, have participated in skills development opportunities, which have enabled several to engage in paid work, and access markets with support from Vanuatu Skills Partnership.
- VDPA has access to funding support for administrative costs and annual work planning activities, which have proved difficult to source elsewhere.
- Vanuatu Skills Partnership works nationally with a range of stakeholders at the community, provincial and national levels. Engagement has built VDPA's profile

### Expected long term outcomes

- Enhanced sustainability of VDPA as Vanuatu's DPO, cementing its reputation as a provider of advocacy and awareness raising regarding the rights of people with disability.
- Training providers confidently promoting skills development opportunities to people with disability, and implementing their disability inclusion policies.
- Improved economic situation, social status and quality of life of people with disability in Vanuatu.

### Stakeholders

- Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association: advocacy, awareness raising and advice regarding the lived experience of people with disability.
- Ministry of Education (MoET) Skills Centres: accept referrals and enrolment from potential clients with disability who are interested in skills development, and seek advice from VDPA regarding particular inclusion supports required by clients with disability.
- Vanuatu Skills Partnership, through the Disability Inclusion team: advocacy and technical assistance.

### Lessons Learned

- ✓ Partnering with Vanuatu's DPO to raise awareness about disability inclusive skills development opportunities developed a solid relationship between Vanuatu Skills Partnership and VDPA, on which additional joint activities could be built
- ✓ Awareness raising activities led by VDPA are much more effective than efforts led by people who do not have disability. VDPA staff and members can share the lived experience of disability, which motivates and shifts negative attitudes
- ✓ The provision of funding for a dedicated Program Officer within VDPA, as well as other institutional costs and activities ensures that the DPO has the resources to provide advisory services without distracting from other organisational priorities
- ✓ Engagement of VDPA in key sector coordination mechanisms promotes disability inclusion amongst decision makers, and can influence broad-based change
- ✓ The relationship between the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and VDPA is bi-directional with mutual benefits: enhanced demand for skills development opportunities amongst people with disability, improved supply of disability inclusive post-school education and training, and a stronger national DPO.

### Policy Links

Policy Links	
<b>PSET Policy Principle</b>	Inclusion
<b>Vanuatu Skills Partnership LTOs</b>	Long Term Outcome 4. The status of women and people with disability is enhanced
<b>National Sustainable Development Policy</b>	3 Pillars: <b>Society</b> Environment <b>Economy</b>
<b>National Disability Inclusive Development Policy</b>	<b>Strategic Priority Area 1: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</b>
<b>National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020</b>	<b>Policy priority area 3:</b> Facilitate equal access to TVET opportunities by undertaking awareness-raising and support activities which encourage the enrolment of people with disabilities from urban, rural and remote areas within Vanuatu in training activities, the completion of training and engagement in subsequent work.

