



4th August 2021

SG Reynold Surmat
Secretary General
Torba Province

Dear Secretary General,

Provincial Skills Development Quarterly Report of April to June 2021

The Torba Skills Centre is also committed to supporting implementation of the Government’s National Recovery Strategy, *Yumi Evriwan Tugeta*, and the longer-term goals of the *National Sustainable Development Plan 2030*.

Yumi Evriwan Tugeta clearly outlines three priority objectives:

- Enhance lives and livelihoods.
- Repair the built environment.
- Restore and strengthen essential social services and protections.

Working together to enable high quality skills training and market access facilitation in our key productive sectors is essential to achieving these objectives. This requires collective action, innovation, and a determination to leave no one behind in the development of our province.

The Torba Provincial Government Training Board is pleased to share with you the results of our efforts in this quarterly provincial skills development report.

We look forward to our ongoing partnership for the recovery and prosperity of our communities and the nation as a whole – *Long God Yumi Stanap*.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Philemon Ling, Chairman, Torba Provincial Government Training Board

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Overview

Quarterly Participation of Individual Clients

	Activity Type	Women	Men	TOTAL	People with Disabilities	Couples
Skills for Agribusiness/ Food Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching x 4 Launch/Event x 2 Meeting x 2 Procurement/Budget Support x 7 Workshop & Coaching x 1 	30	27	57	16	9
Skills for Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching x 1 Procurement/Budget Support x 3 Workshop x 1 	1	25	26	2	0
Skills for Creative Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching x 1 Meeting x 2 Procurement/Budget Support x 2 	37	2	39	2	2
Skills for Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop x 2 	22	22	44	0	0
Training Provider Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LLN Assessment x 1 Meeting x 2 Professional Development x 3 QMS Development x 1 Workshop x 1 Procurement/Budget Support x 3 	7	5	12	0	0
Leadership & Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch/Event x 1 PGTB Meeting x 1 Professional Development x 1 Procurement/Budget Support x 3 	13	3	16	2	
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop x 1 	15	16	31	14	



Highlights

Enhancing lives and livelihoods

Skills for Agribusiness – Food Security

Name of activity: Farm to School Initiative Official Launch

Location: Baldwin Lonsdale Memorial School, Vanualava.

Total number of participants: 7 farmers (Leisara community)

- 3 women, 4 men, 2 couples (farmers)
- Over 200 community members also attended and witnessed the official launch.

Overview

May 6th 2021 marked another milestone for the province when it received a high Diplomatic Corps and Vanuatu Government delegation from the Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Forestry and Bio-Security, Australian High Commission and British High Commission. This was for the official launch of the first ever Farm to School Initiative established at Baldwin Lonsdale Memorial School (BLMS), in Torba province and Vanuatu as a whole. The delegation visited the different units of production which include a poultry brooder house, a tilapia fishpond, an integrated vegetable farm and a food crops and meat storage facility.

Two technical and business support coaching sessions, led by the Partnership's Agribusiness industry coaches, Leonard Vusilai, and Pierre Lecoeuvre, and the Department of Agriculture and Livestock officers in Sola, were delivered to enable a consistent and sustainable food supply chain from farmers to the school with agreed trading schedules in place. Additional support resulted in a proper completed safe kitchen set-up with basic kitchen equipment complemented with local cooking recipe development skills sessions delivered to the school cooks and selected students.

Key achievements/ outcomes

- The official launch ceremony witnessed and celebrated by the dignitaries and the community members has again clearly demonstrated the significance of building coalitions for change resulting from authentic and true partnerships. These have been established between national, provincial and community local actors who are collaboratively contributing to provincial development achievements. This is empowering for everyone and building pride in this collective effort and action for change in Torba province.
- Strengthened sustainable and quality food supply chain between farmers and the school.
- Kitchen is completely set up for operations with a proper storage room, improved kitchen sanitation systems, kitchen utensils, including freezers, that can be used to store meats and vegetables. The freezer was sponsored by the Honorable Member of Parliament for Torba province, Mr. Danny Silas.
- Director Antoine Ravo has pledged the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's contribution of VT 1 million investment to continue to support this initiative.



- Farmers' Cooperative Associations in Vanualava and Motalava will soon access a special grant to use as a start-up for farming tools and equipment sales through the association (with profit margin markups). This is another diversified business income activity of the Cooperatives to support farmers' access to working tools and equipment close to their communities.
- In collaboration with the Torba Provincial Government as the lead partner and the Torba Department of Agriculture, we managed to renovate the accessible ablution block for Sola market house and build a food stall for mamas to sell their finished products,
- Plans are underway to convert the unused school compound into a vegetable farming area to supplement the recurring grounds' cleaning and maintenance costs. There is also need for further support to provide a sustainable water reservoir of around 10,000 L to complement the daily operations of this initiative. Building strong local economic growth.

Figure 1 Delegation that attended the Farm to School Launching

Figure 2 BLMS chief cook and students in cooking coaching



Figure 3 Sola food stall, Vanualava



Figure 4 Accessible Ablution block for Sola market house, Vanualava



Name of Activity: Torba Provincial Government President's Visit to Merelava

Location: Merelava Island, Torba

Total number of participants: 11 farmers (Tasmat Community)

- 5 women, 6 men, 4 couples (farmers)
- Over 100 community members also attended and witnessed the official opening of the Tasmat community stage.

Quarterly Provincial Skills Development Report



Overview

April 15th, 2021, Mr Edmond Sovan, the Hon. President of Torba Provincial Government, led a delegation, which included Mr Reynold Surmat, Secretary General of Torba Province, Mr Eddy Woksen, Officer of Cooperatives, Mr Henry Wetul, Torba Health Manager, Mr Brunton Tari, Public Service Commission-HR Officer, and other personnel, visited one of the remote islands in Torba, Merelava Island. During this official visit, the President negotiated availability of land space to build the Merelava accessible Fish Market in Tasmata Village. This trip to Merelava has paved the way for another visit from the Torba Skills Centre Manager, Jimmy Kelvin, who conducted a scoping on a proposed building site. The proposed Fish Market Facility will improve food security in Tasmata and nearby communities by enabling them to access regular protein supply. It will also supply Gaua and Sola Fish market which will improve food security and sustain the food supply chain through inter-island trading within Torba Province.

Key achievements/ outcomes

- Created a strong partnership with the provincial government, other stakeholders, and the communities.
- Accessible fish market and aid post facility construction initiative will meet the existing demand on tilapia farming, coastal fisheries, and handicraft production. This is linked to the Torba FSAC response (Covid-19 and TC Harold).
- Improvement and expansion of sustainable business to remote areas.
- Strengthened inter-island trading of surplus food supply between Merelava, Gaua and Sola-Vanualava in Torba province. This will demonstrate a practical implementation of inclusive access – reaching the “unreachable” – remote areas through practical ‘partnership-based demand driven special infrastructure projects. This will also enable decentralised service delivery within different geographical and environmental contexts of Torba province. Promote and increase food production and improve food security using sustainable community-based food supply chains and market models.
- 3 trainees (young men) are currently enrolled to undertake Certificate II in Agriculture husbandry (June – October 2021) – this is supported by Torba Provincial Government subsidy to meet the two trainees’ tuition fees while the Skills Centre covers their return travel costs to Luganville, Santo. After successful completion of this course, their experience and expertise will be utilized as an ‘alternate’ to an Agriculture field assistant to support this ongoing agriculture support to farmers to supply the market facility.

“We must create a stronger partnership with the Government sectors, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and the community to ensure that the service delivery reaches the remote communities, and that the developments are maintained safe”

Torba Province President, Mr Edmond Sovan.



Figure 5: Torba President & SG witness the official opening of Fishpond in the Lequel village.

Figure 6: Hon President, Mr Sovan receives a letter from Merelava chiefs requesting for an accessible fish market with land space provided



Figure 7: Plan for the Merelava accessible fish market, which will also be a one stop shop for fishermen and farmers to access fishing gear and farming tools to sustain production. The building will also accommodate Tasmataid aid post.



Skills for Creative Industries

Name of activity: VanIPO meeting for awareness-raising

Location: Sola, Vanualava

Total number of participants: 63 participants

- 25 women, 38 men as well as 28 existing SfCI clients

Overview

On the 12th of April 2021, two officers from the Vanuatu Intellectual Property Office (VANIPO) arrived in Sola, Vanualava and conducted a provincial meeting on copyright. The President and Secretary General of Torba Province welcomed the two officers and performed the official opening of the awareness session. The presence of the VANIPO team shed light to the handicraft producers, tourism operators and community representatives to better understand the roles of the VANIPO office and comprehend the steps to take to protect their creativities. This meeting has helped this intellectual property (IP) knowledge to expand into the remote areas as the participants arrived from different islands in Torba Province and encouraged producers from remote communities to sell their products.



Key achievements/ outcomes

- The IP team met with Provincial TAG which created a better understanding of the purpose of the visit and helped the TAG committee to better support the producers in Torba province.
- The Provincial government played a leading role in this awareness which is the result of strong partnership.
- More producers from remote areas such as Merelava are selling their products to Torba handicraft Cooperative.
- High potential for high quality handicraft production and sales through new community weavers – Merelava producers (bush vines products). “Hemi fes taem blong mifala i luk mani olsem long vilij”
- Increased knowledge to better protect the cultural identity and strengthen the sustainable supply of products to business hubs.

“Creativity is given by God and when used positively it can turn ideas into products and services that have impact to improve the daily lives of the people and further improve the economy.”

Torba Province SG, Mr. Reynold Surmat.

Figure 8: SG Surmat giving his remarks during the opening of the VanIPO awareness raising session



SG Surmat giving his opening remarks

Figure 9 Group photo of participants during the session



Group photo of participants during the Session



Figure 10 More products coming from remote communities in Merelava



Skills for Tourism

Name of activity: Safe Business Operation Workshop

Location: Gaua, Motalava & Vanualava, Torba province

Total number of participants: 44 participants

- 22 women, 22 men

Overview

On May 25th – 26th, 2021, two (2) Tourism Industry coaches conducted the Safe Business Operation (SBO) workshop in Gaua, Motalava & Vanualava islands. The SBO workshops were held separately in these three (3) areas as part of preparedness for the business operators in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic. Most of the tourism business operators from these areas attended the workshop in their respective locations, there were 18 participants from Gaua, 17 in Vanualava and 9 in Motalava.

Key achievements/ outcomes

- Strengthened the confidence of the tourism operators to keep their business active despite the COVID-19 context.
- The operators learned more ways to keep themselves and their customers safe. They were helped to improve the standards of their business to meet the SBO criteria. Supported the business operators to comply with the standard measures to the path to be certified and achieve the triple 'C' sticker from the Department of Tourism (DoT).

“SBO training is essential in order to enable tourism operators to be better equipped with the skills required prior to the opening of borders and to also manage their business in a COVID business environment when borders are open”

Ms. Olivet Dorony, DoT



Figure 10 Participants in an activity during SBO workshop

Figure 11 Coach delivering during SBO workshop



Repairing the built environment

Skills for Construction

Name of activity: Department of Water Resources Village Workers Plumbing Workshop

Location: Vatrata, West Vanualava

Total number of participants: 26 Participants

- 25 men, 1 woman, 2 people with a disability

Overview

Department of Water Resources (DoWR) team in collaboration with Torba Skills Centre held a plumbing workshop for community-based interested plumbers from 31st May to 14th of June 2021 in Vatrata community – a remote area of Vanualava. 27 participants who attended this workshop are representatives from targeted islands of Banks including the Torres group. DoWR, APTC and ACOMVETS, through the coordination of the Torba Skills Centre, have also jointly conducted a pre-moderation visit. The participants have also completed LLN assessment in preparation for the next accredited course qualification training delivery on Certificate 2 in plumbing. This will provide another career pathway for trainees who will have their trade skills recognised and certified under the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA) and DoWR.

Key achievements/ outcomes

- Demonstrated a strong and successful partnership between the Government, Torba Province, APTC, ACOMVETS and the community.
- Building a sustainable human resource in remote communities in a high-demand technical area.
- Improved and upgraded the water system in Vatrata.
- Provided continued skills and career development support to a female trainee who is interested in plumbing industry work.
- Upgraded BLMS sanitation facility through the Certificate II in Plumbing training.



- 2 people with disabilities enrolled in the accredited plumbing course.

Figure 12 3 participants at the plumbing workshop going through practical pre-moderation visit from ACOMVETS & VQA

Figure 13 The trainees constructed a Ferro Cement tank and the EPS and it is fully functional.



Figure 14 Plumbing workshop participants having LLN Assessment

Figure 15 Pre-Moderation visit



Restoring and strengthening essential social services and protections

Training Provider Support

Name of activity: Vetimboso Vocational Training Centre Submission of Approval to Deliver

Location: Sola, Vanualava

Total number of participants: 5 participants (men)

Overview

Between 24 – 28 May, a consultation meeting was held between TED, VQA and Vetimboso Vocational Training Centre (VTC), with the training centre now having completed its approval to deliver application which has been submitted to the VQA. Governance arrangements for VTC are now in place and extensions are underway to expand capacity to deliver accredited training. Two Vetimboso trainers (2 men) will be attending the Certificate 2 Construction course in Gaua through the Torba Skills Centre to gain formal construction qualifications. This will allow Vetimboso to add construction to its scope of registration and deliver accredited construction skills for future activities in Torba. Until now, the province has had to rely on training providers from Sanma, Malampa and Shefa. Moreover, Power and Communication Solutions Ltd (PCS) has come over and installed the Quarterly Provincial Skills Development Report



solar system that the then MOET Honourable Minister, Seule Simeon, has handed over to Vetimboso VTC during his official visit to Torba in early March 2021.

A site visit to Gaua primary schools was also conducted to identify a central location for the establishment of VTC within the land lease agreement of existing schools. School principals and board were informed of the initiative.

Fisher Young ACOMVETS demonstrated interest in recruiting a Torres APTC Certificate 3 Building Construction graduate as manager and building construction trainer and will be supported with this by the Torba Skills Centre

Three construction graduates (3 men) from Torres are part of construction team building the Torba Skills Centre Manager house. This is contributing to expanding the number of skilled construction workers with industry-standard construction experience. There is potential for these three builders to establish individual businesses or a contractors' association like what is happening in other provinces.

Key achievements/ outcomes

- Capacity building on completing the formalities for the Approval to Deliver forms by Vetimboso VTC.
- Created a better understanding with the processes of the VQA.
- Helped develop training materials and resources for the training provider.
- Building human resource capacity in communities.
- 23 trainees (23 men, one trainee with disability) were assessed for the Certificate 2 Building Construction program in Gaua [to build Gaua Accessible Market House]. Trainee educational attainment ranged from no schooling to Year 11 completion.
- All trainees have some experience working in the construction industry. Majority of the trainees (12) were assessed at level 3. The LLN assessors engaged by the Torba Skills Centre recommended a bridging course for 8 trainees to assist them with completing the formal qualification.
- 27 trainees (1 women, 26 men, 2 trainees with disability) were assessed for the Certificate 2 Plumbing in Sola. 24 were assessed as ready for the course. It was noted training in Bislama would assist 50% of the trainees. Course will be delivered by Torgil ACOMVETS at Baldwin Lonsdale Memorial School.
- Torgil ACOMVETS and APTC conducted an LLN workshop through the Torba Skills Centre to launch in Sola a new LLN booklet for provincial LLN assessors.
- Mr Simon Seule, the then Hon. Minister of Education and Training, handed over solar system to Vetimboso VTC to upgrade training facility.



Figure 16 TED, VQA & Vetimboso VTC finalizing formalities for Approval to Deliver
Figure 17 Vetimboso VTC New Logo



Figure 18 3 Ureparapara & Merelava trainees to VAC
Figure 19 PCS Officer installing solar panels at Vetimboso VTC



Figure 20 LLN conducted in Gaua with Building Construction trainees
Figure 21 Meet with Losalava primary school principal to discuss Vocational Training centre initiative



Figure 22 APTC Building Construction Cert 3 trainees gaining industry experience with Aelan construction
Figure 23 Gaua accessible market house plan





Inclusion

Name of activity: Internship program to promote upskilling of young women in Torba province.

Location: Sola, Vanualava, Torba province

Total number of participants: 5 participants

- 3 women, 2 men, 0 people with disability

Overview and key outcomes

- Torba Skills Centre has in the last 6 months established an internship program which focusses on building up of skills of young women, who have finished from high school and live around Sola. The Skills Centre recruits the girls as interns and, when the opportunity presents itself, they enrol them in trainings or workshops so they can build up their work-related skills and expertise. Depending on how these young women perform and as per their preferences, they are then supported to apply for vacant positions advertised by the province or other organizations or are supported to enrol in accredited trainings. As of January, this year, we have already supported x1 girl through her internship program and are looking forward to identifying and supporting at least one more intern in the next 6 months.
- The association of people with disability on Motalava island - EDA (Edveglal Dede Association) - launched their virgin coconut oil product in June –a first of its kind and an exciting outcome of excellent collaborative efforts between Torba Skills Centre, the Provincial Disability Officer (an MJCS position that was established with financial and technical support from the Partnership) and the EDA Association members. During this period, procurement activities were undertaken to support the construction of the accessible Motalava market house washroom, and budget support for the launch of the EDA coconut virgin oil product. A total of VT 9,000 was earned from their first sales at the launch event.
- A few of the EDA members are now registered clients under the Agribusiness workstream in Torba and while now the Skills Centre is focus on assisting them with vegetable farming, they also receive support from the Skills for Agribusiness (SfA) coach and the Skills Delivery Officer for the development of their coconut oil product, which was launched last month. A workshop for the virgin coconut oil led by the disability committee in Motalava and supported by the Disability Desk in Sola and the Torba Skills Centre saw a number of people with disability participating. There are 19 registered (SfA) clients – 8 women and 11 men - that are part of the virgin coconut oil production, including 14 people with disability.
- As per report from the SfA coach, the farmers with disabilities on Motalava are performing well and there are now discussions on developing niche products as per their abilities, performance, and preference in the next 6 months.



Figure 24 Lily Dini in the internship program



Figure 25 EDA Coconut Virgin Oil logo

Figure 26 EDA Producers



Leadership & Governance

Name of activity: Torba PGTB Meeting in Motalava Island

Location: Motalava

Total number of participants: 15 participants

- 3 women, 10 men, 2 people with disability

Overview

The first Provincial Government Training Board (PGTB) meeting for this year was held in Motalava on the 15th to 16th April 2021. The members of the board had to travel from Sola to Motalava to attend the meeting. This was made possible by the commitment of the PGTB members. The reasons for the meeting to be held in Motalava is for the officers to have a quiet environment to discuss the matters for the board and to support the tourism business operators in Motalava during the period of crisis caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. All the members were present, and the meeting has produced some very successful results in the following months.



Key achievements/ outcomes

- Positive response from every department that reflects a strong partnership.
- The tourism operators were very pleased with the support from the PGTB.
- Increased confidence for the business operators
- PGTB meeting has elected a new Chairman, Mr. Philemon Ling, Torba PEO.
- In addressing governance issues, the Torba Skills Centre through the PGTB is supporting the Torba provincial government to implement 2 Area Council office building projects. One is in Gaua and the other one in East Vanualava.

Figure 27 PGTB members inside Motalava Gateway Lodge



Figure 28 PGTB newly appointed Chairman, Mr Ling, during PGTB meeting

Figure 29 Gaua Area Council Office building in progress

