

Australia and Vanuatu work together to boost tourism skills training

The governments of Australia and Vanuatu have embarked on a new phase of tourism skills training for ni-Vanuatu. On Tuesday 3 June, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to enhance cooperation between the Australian-funded Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector Strengthening Program and Vanuatu's Department of Tourism.

Since 2009, the TVET program has supported economic growth through targeted skills training and business development services. TVET centres in SANMA and MALAMPA coordinate training to respond to skill needs of small business and industry, helping people increase their income and productivity. A third centre will open in TORBA later this month.

Working with provincial tourism officers, the SANMA and MALAMPA centres have coordinated an integrated program of training and coaching support to improve the quality of local tourism operations and increase access to the tourist market.

The Australian Government has supported the establishment of call centres in Santo and Malekula. The centres act as an on-line booking and marketing hub to enable local tourism operators in their province to access the international tourist market.

"I have seen at first hand the positive impact the TVET program has had on the lives of trainees, their families and their communities. Australia is committed to working with the Vanuatu Government to expand the opportunities for ni-Vanuatu to enhance their skills and participate in the formal economy," said David Momcilovic, the First Secretary (Development Cooperation), at the Australian High Commission.

The MoU will assist in expanding skills training and support ni-Vanuatu to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Vanuatu's growing tourism industry.