

Annual Plan 2020

January 2020



Contents

Acronyms	3
1. Introduction	5
2. Activity Description	6
2.1 Background	6
2.2 Intended Outcomes and Program Logic	7
2.3 Partnership Approach	9
3. Work Progress	12
4. Work Program	14
4.1 Sphere of Change 1 – Leadership and Governance	14
4.2 Sphere of Change 2 – Quality Systems and Delivery	17
4.3 Sphere of Change 3 – Inclusive Access	19
4.4 Sphere of Change 4 – Sustainable Prosperity	21
Skills for Tourism.....	23
Skills for Creative Industries	23
Skills for Agribusiness	24
5. Program Management	24
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	25
6. Resource Schedule	25
7. Cost Schedules	26
8. Sustainability	26
9. Risk Analysis and Monitoring	27
10. Confirmation of partner government inputs	28
Annex 1: Organisational Chart	29
Annex 2: Risk Management Matrix	31
Annex 3: References	39

Acronyms

APTC	Australia Pacific Training Coalition
AVID	Australian Volunteers for International Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CM	Centre Manager
CO	Communications Officer
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australian Government)
DG	Director General
DID	Disability Inclusive Development
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DLP	Developmental Leadership Program
DoI	Department of Industry
DoT	Department of Tourism
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GfG	Governance for Growth
GoA	Government of Australia
GoV	Government of Vanuatu
IDD	Investment Design Document
IT	Information Technology
LLN	Language, Literacy and Numeracy
MALFFB	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Forestry and Bio-Security
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MHC	Malampa Handicraft Centre
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoJCS	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDSP	National Sustainable Development Plan
NHRDP	National Human Resource Development Plan
NTDC	National Trade Development Committee
PGTB	Provincial Government Training Board
PIF	Partnership Implementation Framework
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSET	Post School Education and Training
PTC	Provincial Training Coordinator
QMS	Quality Management System
RTC	Rural Training Centre
SDF	Skills Development Fund
SfA	Skills for Agribusiness
SfCI	Skills for Creative Industries

SfT	Skills for Tourism
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPSC	Skills Partnership Steering Committee
TED	Tertiary Education Division
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPIA	Training Provider Improvement Agreement
TPIIF	Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund
TTRP	Tanna Tourism Recovery Project
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWP	Thinking and Working Politically
VCPL	Vanuatu Coconut Products Ltd.
VDPA	Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association
VEMIS	Vanuatu Education Management Information System
VESP	Vanuatu Education Support Program
VIT	Vanuatu Institute of Technology
VITE	Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education
VQA	Vanuatu Qualifications Authority
VSA	Volunteer Service Abroad
VSPD	Vanuatu Society for People with Disability
VTO	Vanuatu Tourism Office

1. Introduction

This Annual Plan for the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, a bilateral development collaboration between the Government of Australia (GoA) and the Government of Vanuatu (GoV), covers the period January – December 2020 in line with GoV planning timelines. It details the approaches and activities that will be undertaken to contribute to the achievement of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership’s objectives. It is important to note that the national elections in Vanuatu in March 2020 may significantly affect the political economy of the Partnership’s operating environment, particularly if there is any change of leadership at the level of Prime Minister and/or Minister for Education and Training. The Partnership will continue to use its proven adaptive management ways of working to negotiate the evolving context and revise and re-strategise plans as required. In addition, the Partnership will also ensure it strategically utilises key national events planned for 2020, namely the 40th anniversary celebrations of Independence in July and Vanuatu’s hosting of the Pacific Island Forum in August.

This Annual Plan is intended to be read in conjunction with the 2020 Corporate Support Plan, which includes detailed information around the key function areas of the Partnership’s Support Contractor, Scope Global, namely: program management systems, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), and financial management.

The Annual Plan is informed by a number of key sources/factors:

- Decentralised planning processes, led by each provincial Skills Centre, with technical input and validation by the Partnership’s national sector Coordinators with key GoV departmental staff, during the last quarter of 2019.
- Whole-of-Partnership staff planning workshop/retreat in July 2019 and January 2020.
- Progress monitoring and reporting as detailed in the most recent progress reports (Jun 2019 and January 2020) and the Annual Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Performance Report (January 2020).
- Evolving political and policy context in Vanuatu and increasing opportunities for systemic reform impact through the developmental leadership coalitions stimulated through the Partnership.
- Evolving Australian political context and foreign policy priorities as articulated in the ‘Pacific Step-up’ agenda¹.
- Recent evidence-based research on the centrality of developmental leadership, adaptive management, and politically-informed implementation in the achievement of transformative development outcomes².
- Ongoing senior management liaison and strengthened relationships with key research bodies, namely the Department of Pacific Affairs at the Australian National University (ANU) and the Institute for Human Security and Social Change, La Trobe University and its Chair of

¹ <https://dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/engagement/Pages/stepping-up-australias-pacific-engagement.aspx>

² For example: *Inside the black box of political will: 10 years of findings from the Developmental Leadership Program* (DLP/DFAT, 2018); *Navigation by judgement – why and when top-down management of foreign aid doesn’t work* (Honig, 2018); *Why we lie about aid: development and the messy politics of change* (Yanguas, 2018). These types of approaches are commonly referred to in the international development sector as ‘Thinking and Working Politically (TWP)’.

International Development/Director, Developmental Leadership Program.

- Partnerships with other DFAT programs for maximum coherence, coordination, and coalition-building, specifically with Pacific Women and its Balance of Power initiative, the Disability Inclusion Development Fund, Vanuatu Governance for Growth initiative, the Australia Pacific Training Coalition, the Vanuatu Health Program and the Australia Pacific Climate Partnership.
- Practical learnings from the last year of implementation and research on organisational management related to the importance of 'right fit' personnel and the primacy of values-based recruitment and ways of working.

2. Activity Description

2.1 Background

The Vanuatu Skills Partnership is a **locally-led, politically-aware initiative to achieve service delivery reform for human resource development**, through the vector of the national Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system³. The Partnership is a long-standing co-investment between the GoA and the GoV, with a fourth phase of implementation agreed from 2017–2021. The Partnership has a Subsidiary Arrangement with the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), under which it has established provincial Skills Centres in Sanma, Malampa, Torba and Tafea provinces.

These provincial Centres act as the MoET's decentralised service delivery arms, functioning as **skills training brokers between demand and supply**: local training providers and industry coaches are contracted by the Centres to supply in-demand skills to support inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurship and employment in priority productive sectors, in flexible ways and at quality assured standards. A specific focus is on promoting access to skills by disadvantaged groups, in particular women, people with disabilities, and those living in rural and remote areas. Committed trainees are registered as Skill Centre 'clients', who enter into a **mutually accountable, long-term relationship** of training, coaching, on-the-job application and/or small business growth. Skills Centres and Partnership personnel at national level concurrently work with government, private sector and other development partners to **improve the enabling environment** in the target sectors, specifically in relation to facilitating market/labour access. Training and coaching costs are financed by the National Skills Development Fund, managed by the Partnership with **co-contribution** from GoV departmental partners, trainees and DFAT. On the supply side, the local providers delivering training through the Centres are supported and incentivised to improve the industry relevance, quality, recognition and accessibility of their training.

By strategically communicating the success of the Skills Centres and related initiatives, the Partnership aims to **influence** the emergence of an **effective, decentralised and inclusive skills system**, where training service delivery is managed to maximise the likelihood of environmentally sustainable business growth and employment outcomes, increased pathways to further training, and social inclusion/equality benefits.

The initiative directly supports Vanuatu 2030: The People's Plan - National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 –2030⁴ (NSDP), Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, and the Australia-Vanuatu Aid

³ The GoV refers interchangeably to both the *PSET system* and the *skills system*. The Partnership therefore uses both terms as well.

⁴ *Vanuatu 2030: The People's Plan – National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030* (DSSPAC, 2016).

Partnership Arrangement 2016-2019⁵ and operates at two complementary levels. From a technical perspective, it seeks to demonstrate, in target productive sectors, how **effectively managed skills training service delivery** can lead to locally relevant, **sustainable and inclusive economic growth outcomes at the provincial level**, in line with the GoV's decentralisation agenda. Demonstrating such results in collaboration with government departments enables the Partnership to influence **skills delivery systems and policies**, and advocate and build demand for wholesale human resource development system reform, including resourcing, based on these good management approaches. However, the Partnership also operates in a broader 'political' sphere. Consistent with DFAT's mainstreaming governance strategy⁶; it supports the emergence and **networking of a cohort of developmental leaders** committed and equipped to contribute to **broad-based governance reform** for the achievement of national development goals – stability, sustainability and prosperity. In this way, the Partnership aims to function as a '**leadership incubator**' – providing a 'safe space' for the equipping and nurturing of local change agents.

2.2 Intended Outcomes and Program Logic

Within this integrated approach outcomes are focused on i) achieving locally **sustainable economic and social improvements** through innovative approaches to skills development – in the target sectors through the Skills Centres - while simultaneously ii) **influencing reform of the skills system** through **embedding** successful approaches within people, policies, processes and institutions; and iii) mainstreaming **gender equality, disability inclusion** and **climate change management** across all areas. Target productive sectors continue to be: Skills for Tourism (SfT) - in partnership with the Department of Tourism (DoT) and Vanuatu Tourism Office (VTO); Skills for Creative Industries (SfCI) - in partnership with the Department of Industry (DoI); Skills for Agribusiness (SfA) - in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Forestry and Bio-Security (MALFFB); and Skills for Infrastructure (SfI) - as relevant to the aforementioned sectors and with links to the Ministry of Public Works. On the demand side, **Partnership Implementation Frameworks (PIFs)** are developed annually with each partner productive sector, with agreed priority activities, expected results and inputs required. On the supply side, **Training Provider Improvement Partnerships** are negotiated with select registered training providers, in conjunction with the Tertiary Education Directorate (TED) within the MoET, based on proven appetite for reform and potential to provide in-demand skills.

Throughout 2019, and under the guidance of its MEL Adviser, Partnership personnel undertook a process to revise the 'Program Logic' to ensure that the Partnership was **proactively adapting its focus in light of the evolving operating environment**. Key factors within this environment include:

- Expiration of the National Post School Education and Training Policy (2006-2020) and primacy of the NSDP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (2016-2030), as well as the National Human Resource Development Plan (2020-2030) under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the new 2019 Trade Policy Framework under the Ministry of Tourism, Trades, Commerce and ni-Vanuatu Business, as operational frameworks for national reform initiatives.
- Evidence-based research on the critical role of developmental leadership and governance in driving sustainable reform, and Australia's explicit prioritisation of supporting leadership under its 'Strengthening Pacific Partnerships' agenda⁷.

⁵ *Australia-Vanuatu Aid Partnership Arrangement 2016-2019* (DFAT, 2016).

⁶ *Effective Governance: Strategy for Australia's aid investments* (DFAT, 2015).

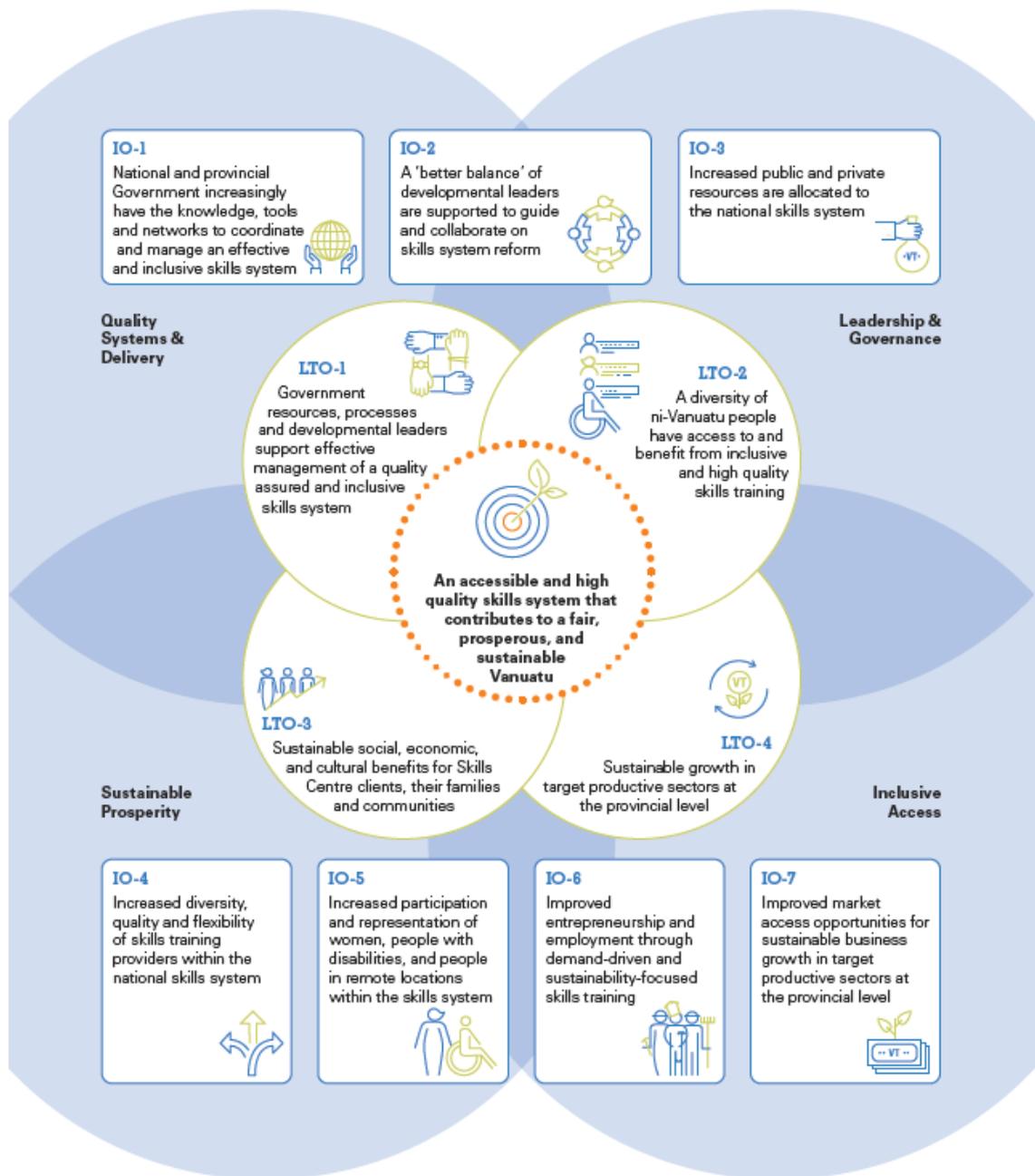
⁷ <https://dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/engagement/Pages/strengthening-our-pacific-partnerships.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0ITD8ZVUhgTjrRNtp4xiAMFd9LAXTb4mGibTdsJKtz6Ja7t5u0eLjvEEs>

- Renewed GoV vigour for coherence and coordination in decentralisation of service delivery and opportunities to work more closely with other development initiatives in this space.
- Recognition of the Partnership's 'best practice' work in the areas of coalition-building for developmental leadership, social inclusion, environmental sustainability⁸.

While maintaining the original aim and intent of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership Phase 4 Design, the revised 'Program Logic' has been framed to more explicitly reflect these new policy settings and crystallise focus around the Partnership's identified strengths.

Four spheres of change guide implementation towards the achievement of the four synthesised Long-Term Outcomes (LTOs), which each have associated Intermediate Outcomes. The four spheres of change, which will be used to guide activity planning, are: a) Leadership and Governance b) Quality Systems and Delivery c) Inclusive Access and d) Sustainable Prosperity. See figure 1 below:

⁸ As validated through the 2019 DFAT Disability Inclusion award, and research findings by the Department of Pacific Affairs, ANU and DLP.



These LTOs have been mapped against the 'Society', 'Economy' and 'Environment' goals of the NSDP, full details of which are provided in the MEL discussion paper Annex in the 2020 Corporate Support Plan, along with specification of indicators and tools for monitoring implementation progress.

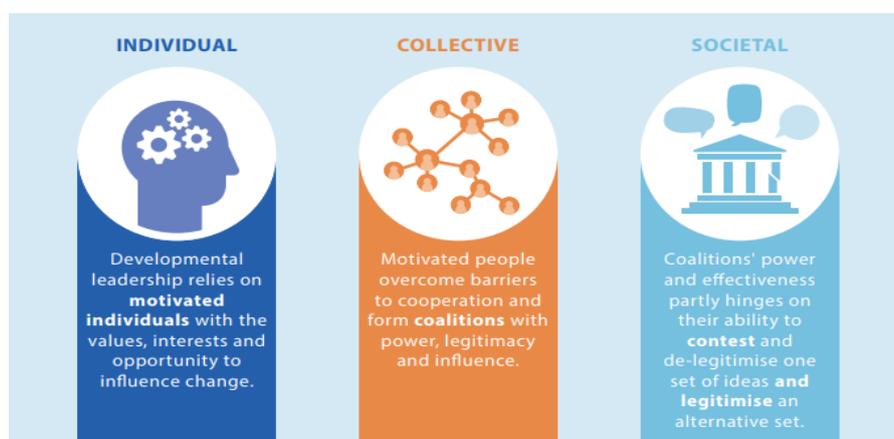
2.3 Partnership Approach

The approach and strategies of Partnership implementation are firmly based on an understanding of development as a fundamentally **political process**. As current research shows⁹ sustainable development impact – in any sector - is only possible when local actors are motivated and able to

⁹ As cited in footnote reference #2.

influence power shifts that enable a more equitable and rules-based system of governance and resource allocation.

Local empowerment is core to this perspective. All Partnership activity seeks to identify and cultivate agents of positive change, and to build networks between these agents to **create an increasingly influential local coalition for national governance reform** – see this reflected in Figure 2 below. Primacy is given to building positive relationships, grounded in a values-based approach that **‘works with the grain’** of deeply-held cultural and religious drivers of the local context to demonstrate **new models of the state’s service delivery functions and leadership**¹⁰. The team see this as an essential shift in approach from more conventional modes of technical ‘capacity building’ of externally-driven aid projects, with their sometimes-tacit paternalist undertones¹¹, establishment of parallel systems, and disregard for structural blockers of transformative social change. The approach seeks out and promotes individual potential, and pro-actively navigates complex political and emotional interests to maximise this potential and identify ‘win-win’ opportunities for **collaborative action across diverse stakeholders within local systems**¹². Innovation is encouraged with all team members encouraged to work creatively and opportunistically wherever **‘green shoots’ of reform potential** emerge. In this way, the Partnership aims to use its relatively small funding **catalytically** – identifying strategic entry points, or ‘hinges’ that will influence wider take-up and scale-up¹³. All these factors serve to attract to the Partnership local reformists seeking opportunities to contribute meaningfully to national development goals – to be part of an organisation/network that actively encourages and supports their own beliefs, values and motivation for positive change in service delivery and governance that is locally driven and locally sustainable¹⁴.



¹⁰ Independent Evaluation of the Vanuatu Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector Strengthening Program (Schofield et al, 2015).

¹¹ The white man’s burden: why the West’s efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good (Easterly, 2006).

¹² This coalition building includes facilitating coordination with other DFAT initiatives focused on inclusive prosperity and good governance. This is particularly the case for the Vanuatu Health Program and Balance of Power initiatives, whose designs have built in integration with, and lesson learning from, the Partnership’s approaches and networks.

¹³ See on this issue of scale-up the work of Larry Cooley – e.g.: <https://msiworldwide.com/our-impact/msi-leading-critical-thinking-scaling-development>

¹⁴ Fostering local leadership to drive a reformist agenda will be further strengthened through a number of the Partnership’s former ‘incubated’ senior staff members now being based within the GoV at senior provincial and national levels. Rather than seeing this trajectory as ‘leaving’ the Partnership, conversely, staff view this as an opportunity to expand the impact and influence of the Partnership and promote its reformist work within government systems from positions of increased power. Partnership staff have coined the phrase ‘stikfaea’ to articulate how they see themselves as catalysts for change within local systems. The analogy of the ‘Trojan Horse’ has also resonated strongly with the leadership team in terms of the desire to seek positions within the GoV - while still viewing themselves as core members of the Partnership - in order to have more power to progress reformist action.

Figure 2: Theory of social change underpinning the Partnership’s approach (source: DLP).

The **systemic reform** focus of the Partnership is critical to the local sustainability approach of the Partnership and its service delivery work through the MoET Skills Centres. All activity is undertaken to support the GoV to manage the **national skills training system** to deliver more effective and inclusive economic and social outcomes. In this way, the Partnership works **alongside** local departmental officers within productive sectors at provincial and national levels to improve identification and prioritisation of skill gaps, and to plan required inputs and resources. Based on this analysis, the Partnership, through the Skills Centres, works **alongside** local training providers and industry coaches to meet these skills gaps, using innovative delivery mechanisms – blended coaching approaches, ongoing on-the-job/in-the-business training, action plan accountability, linkages with markets – to concurrently a) enable ni-Vanuatu communities and businesses to achieve social and economic change through skills and b) strengthen the capability of ni-Vanuatu skills providers. The Partnership then proactively communicates the success of these approaches to **influence national policy and resourcing** relevant to the skills system, under the Tertiary Education Directorate (TED) of the MoET and the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA). In this way, all planning, coordination, quality improvements and monitoring of results facilitated by Partnership personnel is not undertaken through the lens of meeting the requirements of an external aid program. Rather, these processes are undertaken, improved upon, revised and adapted with the aim of building the service delivery capability of local officers and institutions for an **effective and sustainable national skills system**.

In addition to systemic sustainability, the Partnership is also focused on the **sustainability of the business growth and entrepreneurship** that the provision of skills is targeting. While the Partnership is supporting the development of a skills system that is accessible by all, it is the results of skills provided that is of greater importance than simply the number of people trained. For this reason, the Partnership’s approach prioritises robust selection processes of the productive sector areas in which skills training is directed, as well as the clients who receive the training. Key factors for selection include potential for economic growth, partner co-investment and multiple stakeholder buy-in, environmental and cultural protection, and ‘green shoots’ of opportunity within the broader market access/labour market environment.

The principle of **inclusion** is also at the heart of Partnership’s approach. The origin of the Skills Centre model is to enable access to quality-assured skills training within the national system for those people not based in urban centres, through modular, flexible modalities, in the communities and businesses where people live and work. This is of particular importance for women with multiple care and family responsibilities, as well as people with disabilities. The Partnership therefore incentivises and promotes training delivery that maximises effective participation by all with, again, the overarching intent of positive results influencing broader system policies and practices related to inclusion. The Partnership’s approach to inclusion is not, however, simply limited to inclusive ‘participation’; it aims to promote **inclusive leadership models** within the system, particularly influencing social norms around the capability and legitimacy of women and people with disabilities in leadership positions.

Finally, the Partnership’s implementation approach is premised on an **enhanced mutual accountability model** with the GoV and other key skills system stakeholders. In this way, co-contribution for increased system reform and sustainability is leveraged and incentivised in the following ways:

Demand-side	Supply-side	Overarching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All PIFs stipulate co-contribution arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any expansion of the Skills Centre network into 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to high quality leadership

<p>(financial and in-kind) with the respective GoV partner agency, including expectations of budgetary contribution into the Partnership’s national Skills Development Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Skills Centre clients are required to contribute financially and in-kind to subsidise the cost of training activities and demonstrate personal buy-in 	<p>additional provinces is categorically conditional upon the MoET fulfilling its agreed existing staff resourcing commitments, as detailed in DFAT’s Subsidiary Arrangement with the GoV for the Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Provider Improvement Partnerships are only entered into with providers that meet agreed co-contribution criteria and demonstrate reform appetite 	<p>and management training and professional development opportunities for GoV personnel is contingent upon demonstrated commitment to a reform agenda and financial/in-kind co-contribution</p>
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This authentic ‘partnership’ focus of the investment underscores the shift from a conventional model donor program, which may primarily be perceived as a disburser of funds, to a mechanism that **facilitates and brokers domestic processes of change**¹⁵.

3. Work Progress

Work progress for this Annual Plan is detailed in the following documentation:

- a) Partnership Progress Reporting Packs – January-June 2019 and June-December 2019.
- b) Pacific Women 2019 Update
- c) Two impact videos: i) Malampa Handicraft Centre – Empowering Rural Women; ii) Sanma Style – New Markets for Local Design
- d) 2019 MEL Performance Report.

Through the Partnership’s focus on strategically communicating results to domestic, regional and international stakeholders, the progress of the Partnership has been highlighted in the following forums and publications over the last 12-month period, in the main, by Partnership personnel:

- i. Recognition of the success of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership in the Meta-evaluation of DFAT’s support for skills development (Pacific and Timor-Leste), Office of Development Effectiveness, December 2019.
- ii. Participation and presentation on How the Malampa Handicraft Centre is contributing to economic and social change in Vanuatu at the Pacific Research Colloquium, Department of Pacific Affairs, ANU, Canberra, November-December 2019.
- iii. Presentation on Skills for Sustainable Tourism at the Sustainable Islands Tourism Conference, Santo, November 2019.
- iv. Presentation of the Partnership as a best practice example of climate change action in the aid program by the Australia Pacific Climate Partnership at DFAT’s Big Meet conference, Canberra, November 2019.
- v. Presentation on Supporting market-readiness in the local tourism industry in Vanuatu at the Pacific Update Conference, Suva, July 2019.

¹⁵ As articulated in Getting Real about Politics – From Thinking Politically to Working Differently (Rocha-Menocal, 2014).

- vi. Participation and presentation at the UNEVOC TVET Leadership Programme, Bonn, Germany, June-July 2019.
- vii. Panel Presentation on Developmental leadership for systemic reform - case study of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership at the Research for Development Impact Conference, La Trobe University, Melbourne, June 2019.
- viii. Presentation at the APTC Skills Summit on Future Skills – Next Generation Entrepreneurship and Leadership: Lessons from Vanuatu Suva, June 2019.
- ix. Presentation at the Pacific Women Annual Learning Forum on Working with the grain to achieve women's economic empowerment and gender equality, Suva, May 2019.
- x. Article by the Partnership on Getting more tourists to Vanuatu's outer islands on the Devpolicy Blog, April 2019.
- xi. Vanuatu Skills Partnership highlighted as a success story case study in Australia's Aid Budget Summary 2019-2020.
- xii. Recognition of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership by the CEO of the Pacific Disability Forum and Australia's DHOM to Fiji at the Pacific Disability Forum, Nadi, March 2019.
- xiii. Panel seminar at DFAT, hosted by Assistant Secretary Melanesia Branch, Jeff Roach, on the Partnership's success factors, Canberra, February 2019.
- xiv. Presentation on the research paper Thinking and working politically in the Vanuatu skills sector: supporting local leadership and building a political constituency for change by Dr Julien Barbara, Department of Pacific Affairs, ANU, at the Australasian Aid Conference, ANU, Canberra, February 2019. Publication of the research in numerous inter-aid agency networks.
- xv. Regular coverage of Partnership results and stories of change in the Pacific Women Newsletter/website, Daily Post newspaper and one story by Pacific Island Living Magazine (radio and web-based).

4. Work Program

During the full staff strategic planning workshop in January 2020, the themes of **consolidation**, **replication** and **sustainability** were strongly endorsed. In this light, throughout this year the Partnership will direct its focus to building on, and deepening the impact of, existing high-potential initiatives, while maintaining the ability to adapt flexibly to opportunities linked to ensuring the overall sustainability of Partnership operations.

4.1 Sphere of Change 1 – Leadership and Governance

Activity to support IO 1 - National and provincial Government increasingly have the knowledge, tools and networks to coordinate and manage an effective and inclusive skills system

Strengthening GoV skills service delivery management processes

This Annual Plan period will continue the roll-out with productive sector GoV partners of the full cycle of PIF development, implementation, monitoring and revision through the Partnership's decentralised approach – i.e.: identification and prioritisation of skill gaps in the target sectors aligned with national sector plans and policies, and reflecting the specific requirements of each province's context. PIFs and their associated work-plans for the SfT, SfIC, and SfA work-streams in each of the provincial Skills Centres were finalised in January 2020 at the Partnership planning retreat, following a process of national/provincial consultation. These are available on request.

Partners will present results against the PIF work-plans at the next Skills Partnership Steering Committee (SPSC) in July with discussion focused on whether demand is being adequately met through the skills training delivered in line with planning and what changes (if any) need to be made to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges. Similarly, during this Annual Plan period, the Partnership will also work to support the Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA) Board to analyse progress and priorities in skills delivery, particularly with reference to the newly launched National Human Resource Development Plan (NHRDP). The Partnership will aim to strengthen connections between the VQA Board and the PMO to increase accountability and leverage for skills system management reform, particularly in the area of in-demand course accreditation. The Partnership's new Management Information System (MIS) to be launched in the first quarter of 2020 (see Corporate Support Plan) will be utilised to support GoV stakeholders identify strengths and areas for improvement and stakeholders responsible.

The Partnership will also commence its pilot holistic approach to supporting service delivery management at the provincial level through the engagement of a Provincial Planning Adviser to support the Sanma Provincial Government. This position will assist the provincial government leadership team in its objective to develop and implement a Corporate Plan that captures strategic priorities articulated across key sectors, and is aligned with the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) and its indicators. This initiative reflects the opportunistic, 'green shoot optimisation' approach of the Partnership; the previous Torba Skills Centre Manager is now the Secretary General of Sanma province and he is motivated to apply the good management practices of the Partnership across the service delivery operations of provincial government, including in strengthening human resource development. The Partnership will also leverage its relationships with other relevant DFAT-supported initiatives to support this approach, in particular the new Vanuatu Health Program, which shares the aims of the Partnership to improve leadership and management, specifically at the provincial level for improved human resource development and inclusive prosperity outcomes. This

will also include exploring with APTC the development of a customised management course to support provincial government service delivery implementation and governance. Successful initiatives and approaches will then be incrementally expanded into other provincial government settings, depending on appetite for reform and co-investment commitment.

The Partnership will also explore opportunities specifically to build the leadership and management capability of provincial Area Secretaries in relation to skills planning and implementation. This is particularly relevant in light of the GoV's decentralisation agenda and priorities. Linked to this, the Partnership will continue discussions with the PMO and DFAT's Governance for Growth (GfG) program, in conjunction with the Department of Local Authorities, around greater coordination and streamlined efforts to support decentralisation in line with GoV policy.

Strengthening GoV strategic leadership and reformist networks

Building on its initial successful efforts in bringing together key service delivery leaders across the GoV, at provincial and national government levels to engage in leadership training and networking, the Partnership will develop a program of strategic leadership support, in collaboration with its partners at the Department of Pacific Affairs at ANU, DFAT's Women's Leadership Initiative and CLA International Development¹⁶. Focus will be directed on a) building staff and key GoV stakeholders' capability in strategic leadership and adaptive management techniques to negotiate long-standing barriers to reform and progress a reformist agenda and b) building networks and support mechanisms between reform-minded GoV stakeholders to strengthen local coalitions' change efforts.

In addition, the Partnership will continue to build on its previous efforts to build strategic leadership and more effective teamwork within its partner productive sector departments. With this intent, the Partnership will develop and deliver customised professional development programs respectively for DoT, DoI and DARD staff that are geared to address key technical management issues, while at the same time build national/provincial relationships and a shared vision for each sector.

The Partnership, through its Strategic Management Team, will also continue its practice of conducting leadership-focused professional development for senior Partnership personnel, drawing upon tools and processes of applied political economy analysis.¹⁷

Activity to support IO 2 - A 'better balance' of developmental leaders are supported to guide and collaborate on skills system reform

Supporting improved leadership within the national skills system directly implies supporting more inclusive leadership, whereby all ni-Vanuatu are fairly represented, including women and people with disabilities. This will include a renewed emphasis on working with provincial and national level government to achieve a better representational balance on key sector governance bodies, including the Provincial Government Training Boards (PGTBs), the VQA Board, and the SPSC.

Following its brokering of a formalised partnership with DFAT's new Balance of Power initiative, under Pacific Women, the Partnership will be a member of the latter's Strategic Advisory Committee. In this capacity, it will support the identification of strategies and building of networks focused on institutionalising inclusion principles and processes into the management of the skills system, and proactively foster the participation and promotion of women in leadership positions. The Partnership

¹⁶ The Partnership entered into relationship with CLA when it proactively supported the latter's leadership in education initiative in Sanma province in 2018-19 as part DFAT's Innovation Xchange activity.

¹⁷ See, for example, Everyday Political Analysis, (DLP, 2018).

will also explore possible collaboration with CARE's Young Women's Leadership program as well as the Wilkins Family Foundation's scholarship program in Malekula.

The Partnership will also continue to purposively facilitate professional development for female managers, trainers and coaches within the skills system, including access to formal qualifications and participation in networking forums, especially relevant regional conferences. This will also be the case for female staff members within the Partnership, in addition to dedicated leadership mentoring and network-strengthening with a specific focus on confidence-building within male dominated environments. Linked to this, the Partnership will continue and expand upon its 'Homework Club' and 'Pikinini Kona' at Partnership/Skills Centre offices to enable women to have assistance with child-rearing responsibilities while taking on increasing professional responsibilities.

In a similar vein, the Partnership will identify opportunities to support the leadership potential of people with disabilities within the skills system. Key to this will be the development and implementation of a new Disability Inclusion Policy for the Education and Training sector, in collaboration with the MoET and the Ministry for Justice and Community and Social Services.

To target the negative social norms and attitudes around inclusive leadership – a key barrier to achieving a 'better balance' of leadership in Vanuatu - the Partnership will prioritise communications activities that work to address these by framing messaging that promotes the capability, legitimacy and social contribution of women and people with disabilities in leadership positions.

Activity to support IO 3 – Increased public and private resources are allocated to the national skills system

The MoUs that have been signed with each GoV productive sector and skills agency (DoT and VTO, DoI, MALFFB, VQA), and the respective PIFs, stipulate agreed co-contribution arrangements. At each six-monthly reporting period, and as discussed at the SPSC, a key part of the assessment of progress in the agreed areas of activity is an analysis of the resource contributions of all parties. Before the end of the Annual Plan period, this analysis will form the basis for a re-negotiation of partnership arrangements for the next Annual Plan period, with levels of contribution determining the level of Partnership investment into each respective sector. The Partnership will purposely use the forum of the SPSC to create 'constructive competition' between sectors and, through the quarterly Provincial Skills Development Progress Reports and media promotion, will advocate for the benefits of increased GoV investments.

The Partnership will also work with the PMO, in particular the M&E Unit, to ensure that the Partnership's reporting of results can be used to influence budgetary allocations within both the MoET – in terms of Skills Centre and TED staffing - and partner productive sectors - in terms of ear-marked contributions to the Skills Development Fund. The Partnership will also continue to broker financial partnerships with potential private sector partners, other government departments and other donors, building on the financial partnerships to date including the GoV Tanna Tourism Recovery Program (TTRP), GfG, and Pacific Women. In this way, the Partnership will continue to strongly advocate for the efficiency and effectiveness of the Skills Development Fund as a national mechanism for targeted skills development service delivery, financially managed by the Partnership, but operating within the structures and priorities of the GoV.

The Partnership will also continue with its strategy of building pressure for resourcing reform using the leverage of expansion of the Skills Centre network. As noted, any expansion of the Skills Centre network into additional provinces is conditional upon the MoET fulfilling its HR obligations in the existing Centres. Based on the positive results achieved by these Centres, growing numbers of

stakeholders at provincial and national levels are requesting that new Centres be opened in Shefa and Penama provinces. The Partnership will therefore continue to support these stakeholders to advocate for action by the MoET in terms of its staffing responsibilities so that the conditions for sustainable expansion are met.

Following the national elections in March 2019, should there be governance stability within the MoET, the Partnership will also explore with the MoET its appetite for, and viability of, a discrete feasibility study into improved sector financing. This would be conducted in light of the new National Human Resource Development Plan and informed by lessons learned from the unsuccessful initiative conducted on this subject independently from the Partnership in 2014-15.

4.2 Sphere of Change 2 – Quality Systems and Delivery

Activity to support IO 4 – Increased diversity, quality and flexibility of skills training providers within the national skills system

During this Annual Plan period the Partnership will continue to build on the working relationship established with the Tertiary Education Division (TED) within the MoET. This collaboration aims to support selected training providers to meet registration quality standards, course accreditation requirements and deliver skills training in line with the priority areas identified in each sector PIF in each Skills Centre province, contingent on provider commitment and co-investment. Technical assistance will be provided directly to TED and training provider staff through the Partnership's Training Provider Support Adviser. A key initial activity will be revision of the Training Provider Improvement Partnerships. In addition, depending on co-contribution and partner appetite for reform, the Partnership will prioritise support to areas outside of the PIFs that have been identified as in-demand training needs by the NHRDP and through the PSET Provider Support Committee.¹⁸

Key planned activities to support increased diversity and quality of registered providers and qualifications include:

- Quality coach support for Vetimboso Rural Training Centre (RTC) in Torba, and Napil RTC in Tanna to facilitate registration, and support to Marven RTC in Malekula to deliver Certificate 2 in Agriculture (Crop Establishment) and Green Hill City Trade School in Tanna to deliver Certificate 2 in Tourism (Accommodation Services).
- New courses to meet growing demand in priority sectors to be scoped and developed. This includes working in partnership with the Vanuatu Health Program in the development of a Certificate-level bio-medical course.
- Partnership with APTC to:
 - Develop spa massage accredited course;
 - Support Torgil RTC (ACOMVETs) to expand its delivery of the first-ever nationally

¹⁸ This group was established through the DFAT Post to bring together representatives from different DFAT programs supporting key national training institutions – eg: Vanuatu Health Program/Vanuatu Nursing College; APTC/Vanuatu Institute of Technology; Law and Justice Program/Vanuatu Police College

- recognised plumbing qualification; and
- Develop accredited LLN bridging courses in line with the National LLN Strategy and Implementation Plan, working closely with the national LLN Working Group and the new AVID LLN volunteer.
- In line with the revised Training Provider Improvement Agreements, provision of ongoing support to select providers in Quality Management System development (registration and approval to deliver courses under VQA, VQAF & NSPR standards, internal audit compliance) and financial and governance systems strengthening, following a formal capacity assessment jointly led by TED/VQA with Partnership assistance.

In terms specifically of increasing quality-based diversity of local training supply to meet priority skills gaps, the Partnership will continue its strategy of expanding the pool of local industry coaches and supporting their professionalisation and small business growth. Industry coaches across the three work-streams (SfT/SfCI/SfA) will receive more formalised and regular professional development training, and affiliations will be brokered between these coaches and institutional training providers. In line with its explicit local empowerment agenda, the Partnership will continue with its stringent recruitment and performance management processes to ensure international coaches engaged by the Partnership demonstrate commitment to, and expertise in, skills transfer with their local coach counterpart.

Importantly, in relation to strengthening quality systems, the Partnership has restructured its technical management group (see Organisation Chart Annex 1) to better support the management systems that ensure priority skills gaps at the provincial level are met with quality-based and inclusive training delivery. This group - comprising the Productive Sector Manager, Provincial Service Delivery Manager, Disability Inclusion Manager, Finance and Administration Manager and MEL Coordinator - will work closely together, using newly developed streamlined processes in the planning, implementation and monitoring of skills training by coaches and providers facilitated through the Skills Centres. An important focus of this group will be monitoring the 'quality of implementation' of skills delivery from the perspective of relevance, quality standards and compliance and inclusion, and monitoring of post-training results.

From an institutional reform perspective, the Partnership will proactively seek out opportunities to increase advocacy efforts and build pressure for greater accountability with regard to the large national training providers, in particular the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT) and Vanuatu College of Nursing Education (VCNE). While it is still unclear what direction the MoET will take in the establishment of the Vanuatu National University and/or Institute of Higher Education, the Partnership will strategically lobby for performance improvements, utilising its forums including VQA Board meetings, PSET Provider Support Committee, Trade Policy Framework monitoring meetings and the tripartite MoU with APTC and VIT.

4.3 Sphere of Change 3 – Inclusive Access

Activity to support IO 5 - Increased participation and representation of women, people with disabilities, and people in remote locations within the skills system

Increasing women's participation

The Partnership has now developed its new gender equality strategy – the ‘Better Balance Strategy’ in collaboration with the Department of Women’s Affairs and DFAT’s Pacific Women initiative (see relevant infographic in the January 2019 progress reporting package). This Strategy will guide activity related to increasing the participation and representation of women within the skills system, and in particular, through all skills training activity and business growth facilitated by the provincial Skills Centres. In summary, key actions to be taken in this regard during this Annual Plan period are as follows:

- Ensure the Skills Centre planning processes - at national and provincial collaboration levels - involve women who are able to represent women’s perspectives into these processes.
- Purposeful promotion of male champions who advocate for and model ‘better balance’ principles.
- Ensure that the growth of key Partnership-supported market access initiatives, which purposefully support women’s empowerment – e.g.: provincial Handicraft hubs and Sanma headwear industry – maintain and respect women’s leadership and perspectives, while broad-based buy-in increases.
- Provincial Training Coordinators and productive sector partners to build awareness of Skills Centre opportunities, specifically targeting messaging to women, including women with disabilities, through liaison with DPOs. Provincial Training Coordinators to endeavor to reach gender parity when finalising participant lists.
- Trainers/coaches to proactively identify women for further training opportunities, with a particular focus on accredited training pathways.
- Skills Centre personnel to ensure that the timing, location and phasing of skills training activity takes into account women’s workloads and constraints on travel, and provide reasonable accommodations for female participants to enable participation - including child-minders and breast-feeding areas. In addition, Skills Centres will systematise proven successful approaches around provision of spaces for female clients to meet together to practice their skills after and between training sessions.
- Facilitation of access to financial services such as banks, small grants and savings schemes.
- Strategic communications that demonstrate the broad-based economic and social benefits of women’s participation in skills development and business growth.

The Partnership will also increase its efforts to more systematically address issues of gender-based violence minimisation, particularly with regard to the nexus between women’s increased economic

empowerment and increased vulnerability to domestic violence. This will include integration of 'motivational messages' within Skills Centre activity by Church leaders/Chiefs with the explicit intent of condemning gender-based violence, and formalised partnerships/MoUs with faith based organisations to jointly develop approaches to mainstream actions against gender-based violence. Discussions initiated with ADRA's Blossom Project will be progressed in this regard. In addition, Centres will pro-actively target survivors of violence to participate in training activity.

The Partnership will also build upon proven successful approaches of purposefully engaging with non-supportive partners of female clients through social nights and other strategies that build understanding of the broad-based benefits of women's upskilling and leadership, particularly within the family context. The Partnership will also draw from these approaches to engage with partners of Partnership staff (particularly women) to foster appreciation of the value of the latter's work with the Partnership and, conversely, to help them feel valued by the Partnership as co-contributors to all success.

Increasing participation by people with disabilities

The Partnership will continue to implement its activities in line with Vanuatu's National Disability Inclusion Policy for the TVET Sector 2016 – 2020, which also provides a framework for the Partnership's implementation of the DIDFund with its specific focus on strengthening the inclusivity of training providers through the Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund (TPIIF). The DIDFund is currently scheduled to conclude in June 2020. Efforts are underway to source funding to continue the Partnership's momentum in this key area of institutionalising inclusion within the skills system. Despite this uncertainty, the Partnership is committed to prioritizing disability inclusion using the proven twin-track approach and in key areas as follows.

Priority activities in close conjunction with MoET include:

- Ongoing support to current TPIIF training provider partners to implement Disability Inclusion Action Plans and support to new training providers to develop these plans.
- Undertaking of accessibility audits at new TPIIF providers and procurement of accessibility modifications as necessary.
- Provision of technical support to MoET and VQA as they develop a disability inclusive PSET module within the Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS) and the incorporation of a disability data collection module within its primary and secondary VEMIS modules.

Priority activities in close conjunction with the Skills Centres include:

- Continued support to the Tourism, Creative Industries and Agribusiness workstreams to implement disability inclusion action plans.
- Review and consolidation of disability inclusion within Vanuatu Skills Partnership tools and

processes, including provision of reasonable accommodations in skills development activities.

Priority activities in close conjunction with key national partners, Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS), Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) and the Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA) include:

- Support VDPA as it implements its 2019 - 2020 work plan, to embed organisational processes in awareness raising regarding inclusive skills development, and as an essential stakeholder in the identification, referral and support to people with disabilities who wish to engage in skills development and work.
- Support VSPD to strengthen services in Sanma Province.
- Support VDPA and VSPD efforts to engage with the Deaf community and establish sign language, and work with the national Sign Language Forum to develop a national sign language implementation plan.

The Partnership also aims to play a key role in supporting the review and redevelopment of an Inclusive Education and Training Policy 2020 – 2025 and to potentially complement this with a strategic communications campaign around the broad-based benefits of disability inclusion and contribution to national development aspirations.

The Partnership will also proactively ensure that any construction activity undertaken through the Skills for Infrastructure workstream models inclusive access and widely communicates and promotes the benefits.

Finally, building on its strong foundations with creation and operations of the National Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Working Group, the Partnership will continue its work supporting the implementation of the National LLN Framework to increase access to accredited training opportunities. Priority focus will be directed to developing the LLN bridging programs for Certificate I in Tourism (Tour-guiding) and Certificate II in Building and Construction.

4.4 Sphere of Change 4 – Sustainable Prosperity

Activity to support IO 6 - Improved entrepreneurship and employment through demand-driven and sustainability-focused skills training

Activity to support IO 7 - Improved market access opportunities for sustainable business growth in target productive sectors at the provincial level

Skills Centres will continue to focus on the implementation of the Skills Centre work plans for the three target sectors (and Infrastructure as linked to these) in line with the sector PIFs, provincial priorities and emerging inclusive economic growth opportunities. They will work in close consultation with their national and provincial level counterparts through the processes and tools documented in the Partnership's new Systems Management Guidelines. Additional support will be provided through the role of Provincial Service Delivery Manager. Delivery will follow the proven integrated methodology comprising: a) a value chain approach that positions skills training activity as part of a larger economic growth plan, with a clear focus on market access and environmentally sustainable small business development; b) blended delivery that integrates formal training delivery with customised industry

coaching; c) planning, delivery, analysis and learning conducted collaboratively with partner departmental officers at national and provincial levels; and d) mainstreamed inclusion and climate change management.

The use of Client Partnership Agreements will continue to be systematised and rigorously monitored by each Centre. Reflecting a 'client' dynamic, engagement in the Skills Centre work-streams will be conditional on agreement to a comprehensive program of skills training and ongoing coaching – defined by the Skills Centre work plans - with increased levels of participant accountability and investment. The agreement will detail co-contribution arrangements as well as requirements for the collection of performance measurement and monitoring and evaluation data. The Partnership will also prioritise a 'quality not quantity' balance in its support to businesses in sectors where there has already been considerable investment; for example, in the tourism sector, focus will be on prioritising those businesses showing clear commitment to reaching international market-ready standards, and which can function as demonstration models for others.

The Partnership will also explore opportunities to link Skills Centre clients with Australian Government funded business development initiatives in the Pacific, including the Pacific Investment Facility and the Business Partnerships Platform, so that local entrepreneurs can potentially access financing sources and larger Australian firms with a social impact agenda. The British High Commission has also approached the Partnership to discuss complementary support to small business clients and this will be followed up.

In all work to support business growth, considerations of sustainability will be mainstreamed, with a particular focus on environmental sustainability, in line with the new Skills Centre Climate Change Management Strategy. This will include expansion of the pandanus re-planting program, linked with the Creative Industries workstream, as well as ongoing partnership with DARD in supporting farmers to plant climate resilient crops. Sustainability also means the promotion of sustainable industries from a values-based, ethical perspective where the quality of the work environment is factored into economic growth considerations. This is particularly important in supporting production work in the creative industries, where women will be supported to increase their income generation potential, while also acknowledging their rights to be able to manage other aspects of their family/community life.

The development of market access aggregation hubs will continue to be a priority during this Annual Plan period, namely the handicraft centres in Malampa, Torba and Tafea, as well as the travel centre on-line booking network. In terms of the latter, the Partnership will work with the VTO and DoT to implement the recommendations of the travel centre review undertaken in 2019. Market access will also be supported by complementary construction projects, where on-the-job construction training can result in business-critical buildings such as a market house in Gaua and a food staff facility in Sola, Torba province.

In addition, the Partnership will continue the implementation of the Ambae Recovery Initiative, 'Building Back Livelihoods Better', focusing initially on the provision of skills for improved livelihoods for Ambae evacuees on Santo, and then exploring longer-term prosperity opportunities in both Santo and Ambae, and the associated priority skills needs. Potential for leveraging opportunities for evacuees through other programs - e.g. PHAMA Plus and the Pacific Labour Scheme – will also be tested.

Finally, during Annual Plan period, the Partnership will build on its successful cross-sectoral initiatives, - namely the 'farm-to-table' initiative, linking local farmers to local tourism businesses in Sanma, and the 'farm-to-school' initiative, linking local farmers to school catering services in Torba. In addition to

these initial programs, a new initiative, ‘farm-to-hospital’, linking farmers to hospital catering services will be explored in Malampa province, in conjunction with DFAT’s new Vanuatu Health Program.

The detailed service delivery plans for each of the sector workstreams can be found in the respective work plans for each Skills Centre. Below is a high-level summary of key focus activity to achieve client/sector prosperity outcomes in each of the Skills Centre provinces:

Skills for Tourism

- Continued focus on building the ‘market readiness’ of committed local accommodation and tour businesses and compliance with national and international standards to enable global marketing by the VTO and other marketing channels. This will include continued facilitation of managers’/owners’ participation in nationally/regionally accredited tourism courses.
- Supporting the growth of quality restaurant services as part of accommodation offering with a focus on providing local and organic ‘farm to table’ products, in partnership with the SFA work-stream.
- Working with the VTO to strengthen the operations of the Travel Centre network, as well as supporting clients in their own marketing efforts.
- Supporting clients to promote environmental conservation within their businesses.
- Continued support to DOT and VTO to grow Vanuatu as a disability accessible and inclusive tourism destination, building on the progress made to date at the national level.
- Improving Ports of Call sustainable business practice, with a priority focus on Mystery Island.

Skills for Creative Industries

- Continued focus on improving producers’ business skills to increase understanding of the importance of a) handicraft as part of an integrated value-chain; b) business planning/management skills; c) formalised operations; and d) productivity and competitiveness improvement.
- Analysing key creative industries’ production processes and identifying potential productivity gains using different techniques, equipment and work organisation. This will also include identifying possible partnerships with other donors, NGOs and micro-funding projects to provide adequate commercial equipment where needed.
- Improving local design skills to meet demand with a focus on building the capacity of lead producers to design products adapted to domestic/international demand and quality standards while maintaining respect for culture and tradition.
- Improving market access through the strengthening of sustainable operations of the handicraft hubs in Malampa and Torba, and undertaking a feasibility assessment in Tanna. While these are all at the different stages of development, the Partnership is exploring opportunities for linkages across the hubs to ensure that lessons learned in the different contexts are shared and drawn from. Marketing efforts across provinces will also aim to capitalise on the single use plastic ban introduced by the GoV in 2019.
- Development of the headwear industry production/training hub concept in Sanma province and exploration of options for enhancing success to date in the broader textile area.

- Supporting the professional development of local creative industries' coaches and trainers and providing them with exposure to and networking opportunities with successful models of local and sustainable production, as well as formal qualifications.
- Expansion of the pandanus re-growing program initiated through the Malampa Skills Centre with the Malampa Handicraft Centre.

Skills for Agribusiness

- In close collaboration with SfT, strengthening the implementation of the 'farm-to-table' and 'farm-to-school' models through linking farmers with local restaurants and schools, as well as exploring option for a similar 'farm-to-hospital' model, and upskilling farmers to improve their practices to meet the demand and quality standards of these businesses/establishments.
- Continued development of high potential value-added products through technical and business skills – e.g.: virgin coconut oil in Malampa, vanilla and pepper in Tafea, coconut, pepper and honey in Sanma. The focus will be on improving competitiveness, branding and market access. This will also include brokering partnerships for production and storage equipment and packaging of value-added products.
- Improving agri-tourism attractions and tours, particularly in Tanna and Santo.
- Continuing the cocoa production Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) in Malekula between the Malampa Skills Centre, DARD and VCPL, with a focus on building a sustainable 'family farming' model, and using lessons learned to inform other potential agriculture-based PPPs.
- Partnering with the Department of Forestry to develop replanting skills of high-demand products including weaving vines, pandanus and tapa trees.

5. Program Management

The bulk of Program Management support activity falls under the purview of the Support Contractor and therefore a detailed work program is covered in the 2020 Corporate Support Plan. However, as strategic planning and decision-making has informed the restructure of the Partnership's Organisational Chart (see Annex 1), a summary rationale for key changes within the full-time local staff has been provided below. ToRs for all new positions are available on request.

- The Provincial Service Delivery Manager/ Malampa Centre Manager will become the full-time Provincial Service Delivery Manager.
 - The current Malampa Skills Centre Deputy Manager has proven herself to be highly competent in her role over the last six months and has been promoted to the position of Malampa Centre Manager. This will mean that there is now a woman in a Centre Manager position, which is a very positive development for 'better balance' leadership modelling. The previous Manager will now be dedicated full-time to this role of supporting quality planning and implementation systems for service delivery across all Skills Centres, with all Skills Centre Managers reporting directly reporting to him. This role is critical, given the growing strategic management responsibilities of the Senior Management Team, and the need for Centre Managers to be supported with technical assistance, including facilitation of cross-provincial learning and approaches. Given the recent recruitment of the new

Tafea Centre Manager after a long period where this position was not filled, the position of Provincial Service Delivery Manager will be based within the Tafea Skills Centre to support induction of the Centre Manager, team-building, and strengthening of stakeholder relationships and Centre activity.

- A new position of Disability Inclusion Manager will be created, to which the current Disability Coordinator will be promoted, and an additional Disability Inclusion Officer created.
 - The expanding nature of disability inclusion within Partnership operations, - at policy, training institution and service delivery levels – means that a single local officer is an insufficient resource to manage the work-load, particularly in regard to institutionalising the gains made to date within training provider processes. The current Disability Inclusion Coordinator is now very experienced and able to function in a more strategic, managerial capacity.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

As Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) is under the responsibility of the Support Contractor, details of MEL plan for this Annual Plan period are included in the 2020 Corporate Support Plan.

6. Resource Schedule

In addition to the full-time local staff engaged on the Partnership across the four provincial Skills Centres and head office in Port Vila, DFAT's Strategic Adviser and Support Contractor personnel, the Partnership will engage strategic Short-Term Adviser (STA) inputs for this Annual Plan period. Following advice from DFAT, a key focus of the Partnership's Mid-Term Review (MTR), scheduled for April 2020, will be a re-assessment of the resourcing requirements of the Partnership. Until this time, the Partnership will continue to engage international advisers as follows over the next six-month period:

Training Provider Support Adviser – 45 days – Anthony Bailey

In close collaboration with staff within TED and the Skills Centre Managers, STA activity will focus on the revision, implementation and monitoring of Training Provider Improvement Agreements, including the development of accredited courses to meet priority in-demand skills gaps. Work will be undertaken collaboratively with the Disability Inclusion team to ensure an integrated approach to training provider improvement. The Adviser will also work closely with the CEO and staff of the VQA to improve processes and policies for a more demand-driven, flexible, inclusive and quality-assured system, as well as support the increase in training provider diversity.

Disability Inclusion Adviser – 30 days to be allocated through the DIDFund grant – Sally Baker

Working in close collaboration with, and supporting the professional development of, the Disability Inclusion Manager and the new Disability Officer, Adviser activity will concentrate around providing strategic guidance in the systemisation of successful models to date within national institutions within the skills system, and brokering strategic alliances. The role will also include supporting the review of the National Disability Inclusion Policy for the TVET Sector in order to develop an integrated national disability inclusion policy for the education and training sector.

Private Sector/Market Access Adviser - 20 days – Pascal Gavotto

The Adviser will support the work of the local Productive Sector Manager in his oversight of the Skills for Tourism, Skills for Creative Industries and Skills for Agribusiness work-streams. He will provide strategic advice in relation to private sector collaboration and market access facilitation.

National Policy Adviser - 10 days – Peter Morris

The Adviser will support socialisation of and planning for the new NHRDP as well as ongoing strengthening of the VQA Board.

Creative Industries Adviser - 50 days - Chris Delaney

Working closely with the Productive Sector Manager, and in consultation with the Skills Centre Managers, the Adviser will focus on assisting the Skills Centres with contextually appropriate handicraft design improvements and market access facilitation in line with national priorities, provincial comparative advantages, and market demand.

7. Cost Schedules

Full estimated costings for implementation of this technical Annual Plan are provided as part of the 2020 Corporate Support Annual Plan.

8. Sustainability

The Partnership's fundamental focus on 'local solutions for local problems', and the provision of support to developmental leaders as drivers of internal processes of change, is, essentially, to ensure that all activity leads to reform that can be locally sustained in the long-term as it is intrinsically motivated. Integral to this is the embedding of all Partnership investment within the policy framework of the GoV, through mapping activity and reporting against the NSDP and undertaking all planning, implementation and monitoring in collaboration with GoV partners.

From a practical perspective, key sustainability elements of this locally-driven and developmental leadership approach to implementation include:

- Priority focus on 'leadership incubation' - identifying local potential, and fostering and promoting this to support the growth of a cohort of confident drivers of change within local governance and service delivery systems.
- Inclusive economic growth priorities to be supported through skills development are identified by local stakeholders at both provincial and national levels and informed by evidence.
- Sector partnerships and client agreements are based on rigorous validation of economic return on investment, to ensure sustainable viability and economic impact of the businesses and individuals supported.
- Consideration of environmental sustainability is promoted throughout implementation, particularly with regard to building skills in climate change resilience and broader prosperity outcomes.

- Local training providers and local industry coaches are engaged and strengthened to deliver skills development to clients through the Skills Centres.
- Local productive sector officers are provided with technical and managerial professional development and mentoring to improve sector management.
- Improvement agreements with training providers are led by the local partner and are determined by levels of reform appetite.
- The Subsidiary Agreement with the GoV for Phase 4 is intended to lead to Partnership systems and personnel being embedded within GoV structures, and the Partnership itself becoming a coalition for positive change within local systems. The Partnership will continue to use incentives to expedite the agreed human resource financing transition process.
- Resource co-contribution from beneficiary stakeholders is a necessary pre-condition for all Partnership investment. This includes Skills Centre clients, productive sector agencies, private sector businesses and training providers.
- Advocacy of the economic and social benefits of SDF activity is leading to increased contribution to the SDF by other financial sources (GoV departments, other donors, private sector), with the ultimate aim of the SDF transitioning into a key national financing mechanism for the skills sector.
- Local leadership of all Partnership activity and alignment with Melanesian values are foundational commitments of implementation. This means that all external advisory and support inputs are directed by the local management team, adapted to the local context, and that empowerment of local staff – particularly women – to drive the development agenda is promoted and mainstreamed.

9. Risk Analysis and Monitoring

There are inherent risks in Partnership implementation given the complexity of the operating environment. While risks such as political instability, changing macroeconomic conditions and natural disasters are beyond the scope of a single development program to control, it is possible to mitigate negative impacts through a flexible and responsive approach to risk identification and management.

Clearly the occurrence of a natural disaster of the scale and impact of Cyclone Pam in March 2015, the political events leading to the jailing of sixteen MPs for corruption in 2016 and the ongoing concerns of a lack of PSC recruitment transparency affect Partnership operations in ways that cannot be wholly anticipated or mitigated. However, risk management is an integral element of the ‘TWP’ adaptive and flexible approach to implementation. This enables the Partnership to pivot adeptly when faced with unexpected barriers, drawing on its local leadership for contextual savvy and effective mitigation and/or alternative strategies. The trust and collaboration developed between the Partnership, DFAT and counterpart stakeholders is the essential ingredient for the identification and analysis of risks as they emerge and the development of effective management strategies¹⁹.

While focusing on tangible outcomes across the four spheres of change of its ‘Program Logic’, the Partnership will, as discussed above, continuously seek to integrate all activity into local processes, systems and structures and to have the building of stakeholder relationships, at the provincial and

¹⁹ Schofield et al., 2015.

national level, at the heart of its approach. In this way, 'Partnership' risks are not perceived solely as risks to be borne and managed by a 'DFAT aid project'. Rather, given the investment which has now been made by local stakeholders and the local ownership of Partnership success, responsibility for risk management is widely shared and accepted.

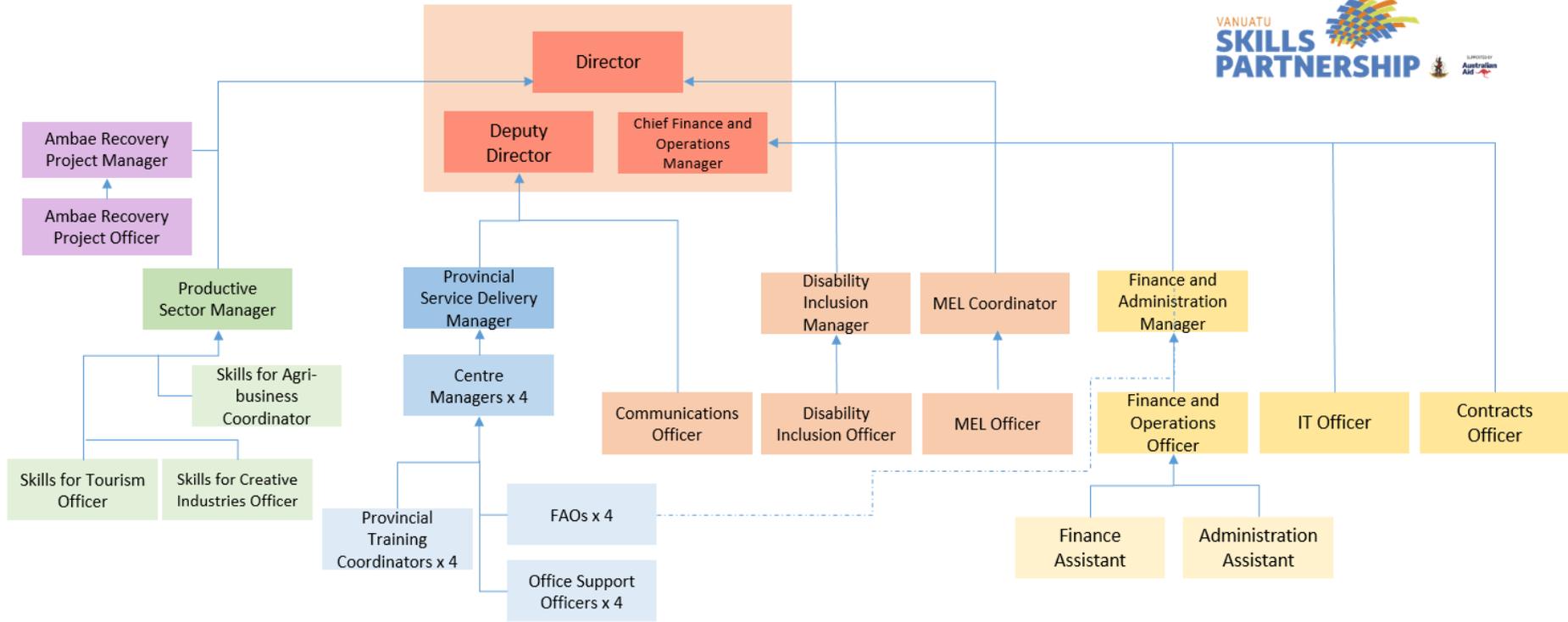
The Risk Management Matrix at Annex 2 categorises risks under four broad headings – Political, Financial, Technical and Institutional and details the proposed risk treatment. Monitoring and Evaluation risks and their treatment are found in the Corporate Support Plan.

10. Confirmation of partner government inputs

The Subsidiary Agreement for the Phase 4 investment has been formalised between the GoA and the GoV and sets out the fundamental mutual accountability principles of the Partnership. Specifically, the Agreement specifies the structural reform milestones in terms of Skills Centre/head office personnel salary transition to the GoV through the MoET, and the associated performance-based payments to further support skills sector reform activities. Status of mutual investments to the sector, as per the Agreement, should be discussed at the annual High Level GoA-GoV Partnership Talks.

The co-investment arrangements agreed with each of the productive sector departments in the implementation of the SfT, SfIC, SfA work-stream PIFs will be assessed in the lead-up to the Skills Partnership Steering Committee with changes to relative investment if agreed co-contributions are not forthcoming.

Annex 1: Organisational Chart



Advisory Support: Partnership Strategy | National Policy | Private Sector | Creative Industries | Disability Inclusion | Training and Curriculum

Contractor Support Hub: Support Coordinator | Systems Management | MEL

Annex 2: Risk Management Matrix

Risk Assessment Criteria

LIKELIHOOD (L)	CONSEQUENCES (C)				
	Insignificant (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Severe (5)
A (Almost Certain)	M	H	H	VH	VH
B (Likely)	M	M	H	H	VH
C (Possible)	L	M	H	H	H
D (Unlikely)	L	L	M	M	H
E (Rare)	L	L	M	M	H

RISK (R)

- VH: Very high risk; immediate action required
- H: High risk; senior management attention needed
- M: Moderate risk; management responsibility must be specified
- L: Low risk; manage by routine procedure

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
POLITICAL RISKS						
Political instability and dysfunctionality causing lack of GoV focus and altering the dynamic of commitment to support skills system reform agenda - particularly in light of current MoET focus on a National University, and the unknown political environment following the March 2020 national elections.	- Insufficient political will and direction to integrate Partnership's reform strategies and successes into national and local GoV structures and processes. Long-term sustainability and impact of the Partnership undermined.	C	4	H	<p>The likelihood of this risk is at C, as although there is broad-based recognition within all sides of Government of the value of the skills system, the Skills Centre model and the work of the Partnership, the political system itself remains fragile.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Partnership will continue its politically-savvy national advocacy/communications strategy. - The Partnership will continue to identify and build alliances with reform-minded champions and decision-makers with shared interest to build leverage and demand for skills system reform. - The Partnership will use the Phase 4 Subsidiary Agreement and DFAT high level engagement to leverage increased GoV commitment to, and buy-in for, the reform agenda. - The Partnership will continue its 'Trojan horse' agenda to influence government system for reform from within. 	DFAT, Partnership Director (PD)/Deputy Director (DD), Centre Managers (CM), Partnership Strategy Adviser (PSA), Communications Officer (CO), DFAT
Partnership and DFAT perceived to be favouring provinces with a Skills Centre over others.	- Reputation of the Partnership and DFAT damaged among key stakeholders.	D	3	M	<p>The likelihood of this risk is at 'D-unlikely' given that the Partnership has now established Skills Centres in four provinces and there is growing understanding that GoA funds are limited and that GoV financial contribution is required for sustainable operations.</p>	PD/DD, SA, CO, CMs, DFAT, Productive Sector Manager (PSM), Provincial Service Delivery Manager (PSDM)

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Partnership will continue communicating the central message that the Skills Centres are part of the MoET structure and require resourcing from the MoET for sustainable expanded operations. The relative small budgetary amount required by the MoET to meet the requirements for Skills Centre expansion will also be widely – and strategically – publicised. - The basis of the Sector Partnerships will also be emphasised – i.e.: financial co-contribution is required for the effective disbursement of the SDF across an increased number of provinces. 	
FINANCIAL RISKS						
GoV departmental budgets unable or unavailable to provide counterpart contribution to proposed skills system governance and the SDF.	- The sustainability of the work of the Partnership is compromised.	C	5	H	<p>This is 'C- possible' as although the agreed initial contributions in the form of some PTC staff transfer to the PSC has now taken place, there has been slow progress with all other positions within TED.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The incentive budget support arrangement with the MoET will provide leverage for GoV allocation of financial resources to the Skills Centre network. - The Partnership will continue to make the establishment of a fifth Skills Centre conditional upon GoV budget allocation, creating a further incentive mechanism. - Monitoring of PIF co-contribution 	PD/DD, SA, DFAT, PSM, PSDM, CO, MEL team

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
					<p>arrangements will be rigorous, with SDF investment into a sector relative to the evidence of partner government contribution and mutual accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Partnership will build on its financial partnerships successes with a range of other aid activities and donors, including the Pacific Women and DIDFund initiatives and GfG, by continuing to demonstrate to other donors and the private sector the efficiency of the SDF as a mechanism to support targeted skills development service delivery. 	
<p>The continued high reliance of the Partnership on DFAT funding, creates risk of growth and sustainability of the Vanuatu skills system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sustainability of the work of the Partnership is compromised. 	B	3	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Partnership will potentially support a 'Skills Sector Financing Feasibility Study' to provide clear direction for sectoral financing priorities and opportunities, and to provide justification and leverage for increased GoV investment. - Partnership communications and the MEL team will ensure GoV productive sector stakeholders understand the benefits of the Skills Centre model to promote investment into the SDF and the skills sector more broadly. - Sustainability of the Partnership beyond the current phase, and with consideration of the long-term commitment of DFAT to the skills sector, to be a key area of analysis in the Mid Term Review that is 	<p>PD, DD, PSA, National Policy Adviser, MEL team, DFAT</p>

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
					planned to take place in April 2020.	
Cessation of DID funding in June 2020 compromises the Partnership's ongoing impact in disability inclusion	- Loss of momentum and depletion of gains made to date in disability inclusion.	B	3	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Partnership will prioritise advocacy work within DFAT and with other donor partners to continue funding the Partnership's growing scope of work in disability inclusion. Specific focus on the ramifications of cessation of DID funding and resourcing options to be considered as part of the MTR. 	DFAT, PD, SA, Disability Inclusion Adviser
The Partnership's current overall budget is inadequate to cover the breadth and depth of its growing scope of work and demand by key national and provincial stakeholders.	- Partnership unable to meet priority skills training demand, as well support to developmental leadership and other cross-cutting national priorities where the Partnership is recognised to be making tangible impact.	C	3	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority focus of the MTR to be review of DFAT's resourcing to the Partnership in light of its recognised impact and alignment with DFAT's 'Pacific Step-Up' agenda. 	DFAT
Costs for training provider registration, course accreditation and approval to deliver courses remain high, particularly for smaller providers.	- Limited numbers of accredited courses available, preventing pathways to further employment and training through certification	B	4	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the larger providers to encourage them to take on an expanded role supporting smaller providers. Examine options for incentivizing the larger providers. Continue to advocate for the benefits of more flexible and contextually feasible regulations with the VQA. 	Training Provider Support Adviser (TPSA), PD, National Policy Adviser

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
TECHNICAL RISKS						
VQA systems, policies and procedures limit delivery of quality-assured, demand-driven, flexible skills development services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trainees’ lack of certification prevents further education and training pathways. 	B	4	H	<p>This risk level is at ‘High’ due the ongoing obstacles associated with quality assurance services managed through the VQA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continued TA advice and support to the VQA and its Board to establish efficient and financially sustainable accreditation policies and processes. – Fostering of demand by senior GoV stakeholders through the VQA Board and the SPSC for increased accountability of the VQA to improve its processes and policies related to registration of new providers. – Continued TA support to TED to support training providers build capacity to meet VQA accreditation requirements. 	PD/DD, National Policy Adviser, TPSA
Insufficient number and quality of training providers to meet productive sector demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Productive sector expectations not met due to lack of quality skills training. – Reduced impact on economic development. 	C	4	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ongoing implementation of dedicated Training Provider Improvement Agreements with TED to incentivise training provider reform, with a focus on smaller, more flexible providers with appetite for change. – Continued work with APTC in the delivery of Cert IV TAE to increase pool of qualified trainers and assist with their affiliation, and ongoing support to VQA to develop a feasible option for a nationally accredited training qualification. – Expansion of industry coach pool to complement training provider delivery. 	PD/DD, TPSA, CMs, PSM

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for new initiatives from the private sector to establish training institutions. 	
Challenge of determining the level of growth of scale and scope of skills training activities that is feasible to satisfy demand while retaining and improving quality, and that the Partnership can effectively support and that can be sustained locally by GoV and other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overambitious planning and limited human resource capacity means activities approved and budgeted are not being delivered, and sometimes low quality of activity management. 	C	3	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued strengthening of operational management systems that support staff planning and budgeting Ongoing enhancement of MEL system including access to real time information on delivery, through the MIS, and greater emphasis on reflection and learning to support program adaptation and improvement. Growth, resourcing and sustainability considerations are included as part of the MTR. 	PD/DD, PSA, MEL team, Support Contractor (SC), DFAT
INSTITUTIONAL RISKS						
As staff progressively transition to employment under the MoET, performance may be compromised due to organisational and management constraints within the MoET.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership unable to fully control and manage staff performance. Staff feel vulnerable and constrained in achieving Partnership's objectives. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All local staff contracts to include clauses limiting liability in the case of factors due to transition of personnel to the more volatile and politically complex MoET environment. Transition of staff to MoET to continue to prioritise junior and middle management positions so management control is retained. Clear messaging to TED by the Partnership around PTC ToRs and reporting lines. 	DFAT, PD, SC
MoET and VQA insufficiently or inappropriately staffed to manage the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability of Partnership compromised. 	B	4	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue advocacy work with the SPSC and the VQA Board to increase MoET and VQA accountability. 	PD/DD, PSA, National Policy Adviser, TPSA

Risk	Effect on Program	L	C	R	Risk Treatment	Responsibility
skills system and lack of priority placed on strengthening of TED.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continued planning, implementation and monitoring with TED and VQA personnel to build capability. – Support applications of Partnership personnel into key GoV positions to expand the influence of Partnership’s reformist drive within key skills sector-related institutions. 	

Annex 3: References

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