



Image 1: Group 1 of the second cohort of the Northern Provincial Hospital's Disability Sensitisation workshop, Santo

DISABILITY INCLUSION

6-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

July – December 2024



INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018 - 2025 (NDID) and the Vanuatu's National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP), Vanuatu Skills Partnership works in close collaboration with key partners to 'make the rights of people with disability real', through skills development opportunities.

Our priority areas for July – December 2024 continued to focus on:

1. **Strengthening national and provincial disability inclusion coordination systems** through the National Disability Committee and Disability Desk and supporting Provincial Disability Officers to undertake their roles.
2. **Strengthening national disability inclusive education and training systems** by supporting the completion of the Ministry of Education and Training's (MoET) Disability Inclusive Education and Training Policy; and establishing disability data collection within the Open Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS) Post School Education and Training module.
3. **Strengthening planning and delivery of skills development that includes and benefits people with disabilities** through support to productive sector partners, Skills Centre staff, trainers and coaches to understand and use disability inclusive approaches.
4. **Provision of specific support to enable participation of people with disabilities** through supporting VSPD and VDPA to deliver advocacy and services to enable inclusion of people with disabilities.

Notable achievements in this period include:

- The finalisation, endorsement and launching of MoET's Inclusive Education and Training Policy.
- The handover of responsibility for all Provincial Disability Officer salaries to the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS), and support for additional Compliance Officers to support these roles.

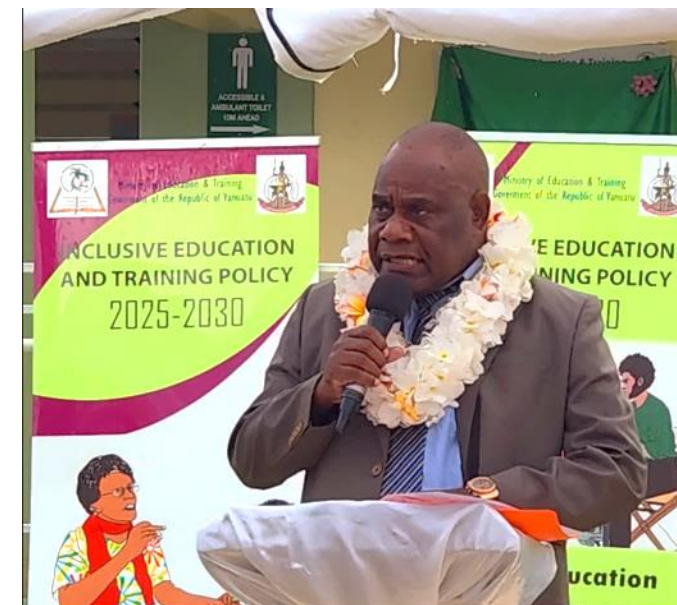


Image 2: Minister of Education and Training, Hon Simil Johnson, launching the Inclusive Education and Training Policy, 27 November 2024

CONTEXT



Image 3: International Disability Day celebrations with partners VSPD and VDPA

While progress has been made over the last six months, our work has been impacted by various factors, including:

- Ongoing Air Vanuatu issues limited opportunities for the inclusion team to provide in-person support to the delivery of activities in the provinces. While flights partially resumed around late October, there were limited flight schedules available, especially to Torba, Malampa and the outer Tafea islands.
- Budget and time constraints experienced by MoJCS delayed the signing of a new Partnership Agreement, and delivery of joint activities including a National Disability Committee meeting during this reporting period.
- The extremely damaging earthquake on 17 December resulted in cancellation of final activities for 2024, including support for the delivery of the Vanuatu Australia Health Partnership's Inclusive Health Retreat (scheduled for 18 – 19 December).

PARTNERSHIP STATUS AND CO-CONTRIBUTIONS

- Partnerships with MoJCS, and Civil Society Organisations, Vanuatu Society for People with Disability (VSPD) and Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA) are governed by agreements that are renewed on a yearly basis. These agreements outline our shared priorities and specify the contributions from both the Vanuatu Skills Partnership and our partners, including financial, technical and in-kind co-contributions.
- In June 2024, MoJCS took on responsibility for paying the salaries of six Provincial Disability Officers – five of which were previously funded by the Partnership. This collaboration has led to sustainable decentralisation of government support to people with disabilities in the provinces. Building on this success, in July – December 2024, the Partnership supported the National Disability Desk within MoJCS with their 2025 planning, and collaboratively drafted a new partnership agreement under which the Partnership will fund three new compliance officers. These officers will work alongside the Provincial Disability Officers in Sanma, Penama and Tafea provinces to promote implementation of provincial work in alignment with MoJCS policies on disability inclusion. Plans are in place to have the agreement finalised in early 2025.
- Partnership support to VSPD and VDPA in Jul – Dec 2024 included funding a proportion of their operational costs, human resources, financial support for awareness and advocacy activities and provision of technical support. This enabled sustained support for institutional costs, enabling delivery of key disability advocacy and services, particularly following the earthquake in December 2024.



Image 4: A renewed partnership agreement between the Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP) and VDPA was signed in July 2024

QUANTITATIVE DATA (JUL-DEC 2024)

PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN PARTNERSHIP-SUPPORTED SKILLS TRAINING

Province	Male	Female	Total (number and proportion) from 2024
Torba	0	6	6 (4%)
Sanma	0	1	1 (1%)
Malampa	1	1	2 (2%)
Penama	0	0	0
Tafea	0	3	3 (3%)
Shefa	1	0	1 (1%)
Total	2	11	13 (2%)

Total proportion of clients with disabilities is lower in July – December (2%) compared to January – June (10%), as two activities which specifically targeted people with disabilities were held in January – June 2024.

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

Finalisation and launch of MoET's Inclusive Education and Training Policy

- As part of our ongoing support to the MoET, the Partnership worked closely with MoET to review and finalise MoET's Inclusive Education and Training Policy and Implementation Plan, which was launched on 27 November 2024. This followed three years of consultations at the national and provincial levels, undertaken with Partnership support.
- This policy mainstreams the rights and requirements of learners with disabilities across all levels of education, from early childhood care and education, through to skills development offered by training providers.
- Implementation of the Policy will be guided by the Implementation Plan, which was developed in collaboration with the Inclusive Education and Training Policy Working Group and is annexed to the Policy.
- The Policy considers the effects of climate change through its procedures relating to disaster preparedness and response.
- This activity contributes to Priority Area One (mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities) of the NDID Policy and to achieving Society Pillar objectives Two and Four of the NSDP.



Image 5: Launch of the Inclusive Education and Training Policy, 27 November, 2024

“The Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training values its partnership with VSP. VSP has provided both financial and technical assistance to MoET during the consultation phase of the inclusive education and training policy to the launching of the policy. VSP has also indicated it will assist MoET in the roll-out of the policy. MoET is very grateful and acknowledges VSP’s support in all inclusive activities ensuring that students with disability receive quality education.”

**Angelinah Virah, Inclusive Curriculum Officer,
MoET**

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

Support to MoJCS for 2025 planning

- In collaboration with MoJCS' National Disability Focal Point, the Partnership co-funded and co-facilitated the MoJCS 2025 planning workshop which was held on Pele island in November. For the first time, the activity brought together national and provincial disability officers, and three new provincial compliance officers.
- The Partnership was represented by its Inclusion Team and Quality Systems National Manager. The Partnership's team facilitated a session which aimed to clarify joint ways of working and the importance of these, and to highlight key areas for collaboration in 2025.
- This achievement assisted MoJCS and the Partnership to set strategic shared objectives for the year ahead. This is critical given the increasing opportunities and demand for collaboration from multiple other partners experienced by both the Partnership and MoJCS.
- As a result, MoJCS's national and provincial disability officers now have work plans for 2025.
- This activity contributes to Priority Area One (mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities) of the NDID Policy and to achieving Society Pillar objectives Two and Four of the NSDP.



Image 6: MoJCS 2025 Planning Workshop: Group discussion – identifying strengths and gaps

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

Disability sensitisation workshop at Northern Provincial Hospital (NPH)

- Following a disability inclusion refresher training with the Sanma Skills Centre team, the Partnership's Skills for Health Coordinator, in discussion with the NPH Medical Superintendent, identified a need for disability awareness training for all NPH personnel, to enable the implementation of future disability inclusion plans.
- Two workshops were held, in September and November. For each workshop there were two cohorts/groups. Each group participated in two days of DI training. 57 NPH staff (40 women, 17 men), including support staff as well as doctors, attended the workshops. Partnership personnel facilitated the workshop in collaboration with partners VSPD, VDPA and the Sanma Provincial Disability Officer.
- This collaboration with NPH was a breakthrough for the disability sector. The engagement of the health sector in disability inclusion has been minimal for a number of years, despite the advocacy efforts of disability partners. A key workshop activity invited participants to identify areas needing disability inclusion attention, and strategies to address these. The Partnership will collaborate further with NPH to follow up on and support implementation of these plans, which incorporate changes to policies and practices which will be extremely beneficial for people with disabilities.



Image 7: Way forward planning at the NPH disability inclusion sensitisation workshop

“VSPD had been trying for so many years to get the health services providers to recognise that health is a vital service for people with disabilities and it should be accessible. This workshop not only highlighted the many barriers that exist within the service of NPH but provided a snapshot of the overall barriers within the health sector in Vanuatu. This workshop was a validation that we need to raise more awareness on the rights of people with disabilities and overall understanding around disability inclusion.”

Judith Yanhambath, Program Manager, VSPD

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

Strengthening civil society leadership in disability inclusion

- The partnership has reviewed and extended its commitment to supporting the efforts of local disability organisations through the signing of renewed agreements with VDPA and VSPD. The agreements were developed following reflection exercises with both organisations, including consideration of ways of working. These enabled the Partnership to identify key areas for financial, technical and strategic support.
- Partnership support in 2024 enabled VDPA to engage one staff member, contributed to rent, and implementation of activities to strengthen provincial and community level Organisations of Persons with Disabilities. The Partnership supported VSPD through the provision of office space for an officer in Tanna, salaries for 6 field officers in Santo and Shefa to enable the delivery of outreach services, including early intervention, to people with disabilities, and security services for the Port Vila Office.
- VDPA and VSPD are the two main organisations for people with disabilities in Vanuatu. Their collaboration is regularly sought by potential partners with an interest in supporting activities to progress the rights of people with disabilities. However, without financial support to institutional costs, delivery of activities is challenging. The Partnership seeks to meet these foundational funding requirements as a critical enabler of activities, including supporting readiness to respond to disasters, and to role model this approach to other potential partners. The Partnership's support to VSPD's institutional costs – and its strong collaborative relationship with VSPD – enabled VSPD to immediately respond to the needs of people with disabilities following the December earthquake.



Image 8: Signing of the agreement with VDPA

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

Celebration of the International Day of People with Disabilities

- The Partnership supported the celebration of the International Day of People with Disabilities on the 3rd of December in multiple ways. This year for the first time since its establishment, the Partnership supported the celebration in all 6 provinces, including the national celebration held in Port Vila.
- The Partnership played a central brokering role, facilitating the participation of the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) in national celebrations, and supporting VDPA and the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) to facilitate dialogue between disability organisations and donor partners on gaps in implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- In Penama, the new Skills Centre supported clients with disabilities to attend a parade and celebrations. Tafea Skills Centre supported the Provincial Disability Officer to organize an event for people with disabilities in Eastern Tanna. Torba Skills Centre supported the Provincial Disability Officer to bring various partners and the community together to celebrate disability day on Mota Island.
- Celebrating International Day of People with Disabilities is an important awareness raising opportunity, which strengthens the collaboration between the MoJCS and the Partnership, and between Skills Centres and provincial disability officers, while connecting people with disabilities into skills development opportunities.



Image 9: Paama Celebration of International Disability Day

LESSONS LEARNED AND ACTIONS

Lesson 1: Due to multiple commitments, some Skills Centres lacked time to co-deliver agreed work plan activities (e.g. support to Rensarie Training Provider; disability inclusion refresher and profiling in Malampa, Torba and Penama). Prioritisation of infrastructure skills development activities limits opportunities for people with disabilities in mainstream skills development in other sectors, and is reflected in low participation data during this period.

Action:

- Work with Skills Centres and sectors to utilise a careful approach to work planning that considers other provincial priorities in order to determine realistic plans.
- Deliver online refreshers on the disability toolkit for all staff. Support Penama Skills Centre to register clients with disabilities.

Lesson 2: Training for Training Providers in the incorporation of the Washington Group Short Set into enrolment forms did not enable Training Providers to amend their forms and embed agreed changes.

Action:

- Review approach and together with MoET's Tertiary Education Directorate, develop and implement a staged approach to supporting 3 Training Providers to pilot this work.

Lesson 3: The graduate tracer survey (2024) found that all trainees with disabilities require longer practical sessions.

Action:

- Review this finding with Skills Centres, Training Provider Support team, and relevant sectors, and explore opportunities for tailoring courses with additional practical time for trainees with disabilities, and others who may need this.

Disability Inclusion Work Plan Summary for 2024

WORK PLAN PRIORITY AREAS &/OR GREEN SHOOTS	END OF YEAR STATUS UPDATE (no progress, limited progress, adequate progress, good progress, excellent progress)	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
<p>Strengthening National and Provincial Disability Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support coordination of the National Disability Committee and Disability Desk. Support Provincial Disability Officers to undertake their roles. 	<p>Good progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support provided to MoJCS' National Disability Desk to hold a National Disability Committee meeting, reflection meeting and annual planning for 2024 and 2025. Induction training and work planning support was provided to Tafea's Disability Officer and Disability Committee. In collaboration with Provincial Disability Officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A disability rights awareness campaign was implemented and opportunities to support agribusiness skills amongst people with disabilities explored (Paama). A house was constructed for a person with disability affected by Cyclones Judy and Kevin (Futuna). An accessible toilet and ramp were built at the area council building (West Tanna). The disability desk office was renovated (Malampa).

Disability Inclusion Work Plan Summary for 2024

WORK PLAN PRIORITY AREAS &/OR GREEN SHOOTS	END OF YEAR STATUS UPDATE (no progress, limited progress, adequate progress, good progress, excellent progress)	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
<p>Strengthening National and Provincial Disability Inclusive Education and Training Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to finalise the Disability Inclusive Education and Training Policy. ▪ Establish disability data collection within Open VEMIS Post School Education ▪ Professional development for health personnel to strengthen disability inclusion in Sanma’s health sector 	<p>Good progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaboration with MoET to hold consultations, regarding the Inclusive Education and Training Policy and Implementation Plan, finalise and launch it in November. VSP’s extensive support acknowledged in the Policy, and in all speeches at the launch. ▪ Collaboration with MoET and Vanuatu Qualifications Authority to incorporate the Washington Group Short Set into the Open VEMIS PSET module, and to train Training Providers in the incorporation of the Washington Group Short Set into enrolment forms. ▪ 3 professional development sessions for Sanma health partners including Tasmalum, Vanuatu Australia Health Partnership (VAHP) and Northern Provincial Hospital personnel in disability inclusion approaches.

Disability Inclusion Work Plan Summary for 2024

WORK PLAN PRIORITY AREAS &/OR GREEN SHOOTS	END OF YEAR STATUS UPDATE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
<p>Strengthening disability inclusive skills delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to sector partners and Skills Centre staff to understand and use disability inclusive approaches. ▪ Disability inclusion refresher support to trainers and coaches. ▪ Establish a disability inclusion unit of competency in collaboration with Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA). ▪ Develop and socialise preventative and responsive processes to target bullying and harassment 	<p>Adequate progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disability inclusion toolkit and training refresher and socialisation commenced with industry coaches, Sanma & Tafea Skills Centre staff and Port Vila staff. ▪ Internal consultations held regarding redevelopment of the Partnership's Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy; working group established. ▪ Development of a disability inclusion training unit of competency paused after VQA began development of a similar product. ▪ Collaboration with Samna Skills Centre and Vanuatu Agricultural College (VAC) to establish a resource room to support students with disabilities. ▪ Incorporation of accessibility into the tourism product readiness audit. ▪ People with disabilities participated in training and coaching in agribusiness (backyard gardening in Tanna, farming coaching in Mere Lava, pepper farming in Malo) creative industries (weaving on Vanua Lava and Mota Lava, headwear and bag development in Santo, Teri Dyeing in Tanna, construction (plumbing in Malekula), and financial literacy in Mota Lava, Malekula and Santo.

Disability Inclusion Work Plan Summary for 2024

WORK PLAN PRIORITY AREAS &/OR GREEN SHOOTS	END OF YEAR STATUS UPDATE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
<p>Provision of specific support to enable participation of people with disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to VSPD to enable service provision to people with disabilities. Support to VDPA to enable advocacy and awareness to promote inclusion. Support to Skills Centers to enable participation of people with disabilities in skills development activities Develop a profile tool for Skills Centre clients with disabilities. 	<p>Good progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Partnership Agreements developed and signed with VSPD and VDPA, enabling disability advocacy and service delivery, including following the December earthquake. Disability profile tool piloted with seven clients with disabilities in Tafea and nine in Sanma to enable monitoring support to assist in achievement of goals, and to test the profile tool in order to finalise it. Collaboration with VSPD to conduct disability refresher training for VSP staff (Sanma, Port Vila and Tafea). Technical supported provided to Tafea and Sanma Skills Centre on provision of reasonable accommodations to enable participation of people with disabilities in the backyard farming and financial literacy workshop. Support to partners (MoJCS, VDPA and VSPD) to collaboratively celebrate International Disability Day on December 3 at the national and provincial levels. Support to link individual clients with disabilities with services provided by Provincial Disability Officers, as an enabler of involvement in skills development (Ambae)

ANNUAL QUANTITATIVE DATA (JAN-DEC 2024)

PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN PARTNERSHIP-SUPPORTED SKILLS TRAINING

Province	Male	Female	Total (number and proportion) from 2024	Total (number and proportion) from 2023
Torba	1	7	8 (4%)	4 (3%)
Sanma	6	5	11 (6%)	11 (4%)
Malampa	3	1	4 (2%)	4 (2%)
Penama	0	0	0	0
Tafea	6	12	18 (9%)	3 (3%)
Shefa	2	0	2 (2%)	2 (2%)
Total	18	25	43 (4%)	24 (3%)

Disability inclusion has increased slightly from 3% in 2023 to 4%. This is in part due to the delivery of two specific interventions targeting clients with disabilities in Tanna and Santo.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN 2024



- Good progress in disability inclusion has been achieved in 2024:
 - MoJCS national and provincial coordination of disability inclusion was significantly strengthened, through support for provincial disability officer salaries (now covered by MoJCS) and now compliance officers; technical induction and training for provincial officers; support for a National Disability Committee meeting, and for 2025 planning.
 - The Partnership provided significant support to enable the finalisation and launch of MoET's new Inclusive Education and Training Policy and Implementation Plan, which provides a framework for action to enable the rights of learners with disabilities.
 - Refreshed supports were put in place to enable disability inclusion by Skills Centres, training providers and coaches, including training in disability inclusion principles and approaches; a renewed disability inclusion toolkit; a disability profile tool; and collaboration with VAC to establish a resource room.
 - A graduate tracer study of participants in trade training found that all 4 surveyed participants with disabilities were employed following the training, compared to only 2 beforehand. The same survey found that 47% of trainees agreed or strongly agreed that the skills development training improved their understanding of disability inclusion.
 - Partnership Agreements were developed and signed with VSPD and VDPA, to enable disability advocacy and service delivery, including following the December earthquake.
- Further action is required to further improve participation rates of clients with disabilities and revisit the development of a disability inclusion training unit of competency, which was paused after VQA began development of a similar product.

2025 PRIORITIES

Strengthen national and provincial disability coordination systems

- Support MoJCS to: lead one or two National Disability Committee meetings; hire 3 provincial compliance officers; undertake induction for provincial disability committees (Penama, Sanma, Malampa); support provision of office space for provincial disability officers in Penama and Torba; join reflection and learning opportunities; undertake planning for 2026.
- Collaborate with Provincial Disability Officers to: provide services to people with disabilities; link people with disabilities into skills development opportunities; undertake reflection and planning.
- Finalise and launch renovated accessible Provincial Disability Officer office in Malampa.

Strengthen national disability inclusion education and training systems

- Strengthen skills and tools for disability data collection within Training Provider enrolment systems and PSET module within Open VEMIS.
- Collaborate with MoET to raise awareness of the new Inclusive Education and Training Policy and Implementation Plan in Torba and Shefa.
- Collaborate with health partners (VAHP, NPH, Tasmalum) and others (UN Women) to support disability inclusion awareness raising, planning and implementation, including support to NPH to implement disability plans developed in 2025.

2025 PRIORITIES

Strengthen planning and delivery of skills development that includes and benefits people with disabilities

- Train tourism coaches in disability inclusion approaches, including disability sensitivity and accessibility.
- Support Skills for Infrastructure work stream to ensure work environments are accessible, infrastructure projects are designed in an accessible way, and people with disabilities and women are involved in this.
- Support Skills for Creative Industries to use activities (eg weaving) as opportunities for storian on FLE, women's leadership and disability inclusion.
- Provide disability inclusion awareness and refreshers to productive sector partners.
- Support national and provincial Partnership staff to strengthen understanding of disability inclusion approaches through bi-annual online refreshers on the use of the disability inclusion toolkit, and disability inclusion planning and reporting requirements.
- Support Penama, Malampa and Torba Skills Centres to understand and use disability inclusive approaches through providing disability inclusion refresher training and support to complete client profiles with the Provincial Disability Officers.
- Support VAC to launch and utilize their disability inclusion resource room and materials, in collaboration with VSPD and VDPA.
- Support Rensarie Training Centre in designing, contracting and procuring construction of accessible facilities.
- Explore establishment of a disability inclusion unit of competency in collaboration with VQA.
- Develop and socialise PSEAH Policy.

2025 PRIORITIES

Provision of specific support to enable participation of people with disabilities

- Support to VSPD to deliver outreach community based inclusive development and early intervention services to the provinces, through support for staffing, security and activity costs.
- Support VDPA to strengthen community-based and provincial Organisations of People with a Disabilities and refer people with disabilities to Skills Centres, through support to staffing, rent and activity costs.
- Support Skills Centres to develop and use profiles for Skills Centre clients with disabilities to enable strengthened monitoring and follow up support, including to enter skills pathways and entrepreneurial activity.
- Support participation of clients with disabilities in skills development activities through the provincial Skills Centres, particularly in the tourism and construction sectors.

KEY RISKS TO CONSIDER FOR 2025

RISKS	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
Competing priorities amongst existing partners results in slow delivery of joint activities. This is likely to be particularly the case following the December 2024 earthquake.	Organise regular meetings (storian) to review joint work plans and prioritise activities.
High demand from existing and new potential partners puts pressure on Partnership and Skills Centre human and financial resources and puts achievement of the existing work plan at risk.	Take a cautious approach to exploring 'green-shoot' activities, considering existing priorities, and consider realistic timeframes and strategic sequencing.