



Image 1: Two female graduates from the Certificate II in Plumbing standing proudly with their certificates during the graduation ceremony at Melsisi.

PENAMA SKILLS CENTRE

Quarterly Report
Q2, 2025



SKILLS FOR AGRIBUSINESS

Priority area: Farm to School – Accounting and Management refresher for local farmer cooperatives

Achievement/Outcome:

- The Penama Skills Centre supported the delivery of an Accounting and Management refresher in April 2025 to members of five local farmer cooperatives in West Ambae. The training was delivered by ORCBDS Manager Jimmy Alick, in partnership with Penama Skills Centre and the Tokatara Area Council.
- The refresher built on training previously delivered in late 2024 and focused on strengthening and consolidating participants knowledge and skills in financial management. In particular, the refresher aimed to support participants to keep better records of their produce and sales. It also provided an opportunity to review product pricing and address issues related to the operations of the cooperative.
- The training was needed to ensure the cooperative is well-positioned to sell its produce to local schools and other markets in nearby communities.



Image 2: Members of farmer cooperatives from West Ambae who attended the Accounting and Management refresher.

SKILLS FOR AGRIBUSINESS

Priority area: Farm to School – Ambaebulu partner meeting and guidebook discussions

Achievement/Outcome:

- In early April, the Partnership facilitated a series of meetings to support implementation of the Ambaebulu Farm-to-School (F2S) initiative. The meetings provided an opportunity to 'check-in' on progress, particularly in light of recent changes in school leadership at Ambaebulu.
- During the meetings, it became clear that the new principal of Ambaebulu Junior Secondary School (JSS) had not been fully briefed on the F2S model or the respective roles of the school and other partners in supporting its delivery. In particular, the practice of sourcing fresh fruit and vegetables from local farmer cooperatives was no longer being followed as consistently as in previous years. The meetings also highlighted gaps in record-keeping at the school, including the absence of up-to-date data on food expenditure and sales of value-added products.
- The Partnership agreed to work with the Principal of Ambaebulu JSS to reestablish the F2S initiative and has also worked with ORCBDS Manager Jimmy Alick to develop a simple monitoring tool for the Ambaebulu bursar to track expenditure and sales of fresh food.
- Separate to the partner discussions, the Partnership presented a draft F2S 'guidebook' to the Penama Provincial Education Officer (PEO) and other key stakeholders. The guidebook outlines the necessary 'pre-conditions' for a successful F2S project, details the steps involved in implementation, and clarifies the roles of key stakeholders. When finalised, it will shape the implementation of new F2S initiatives across Penama, including on Maewo and Pentecost.

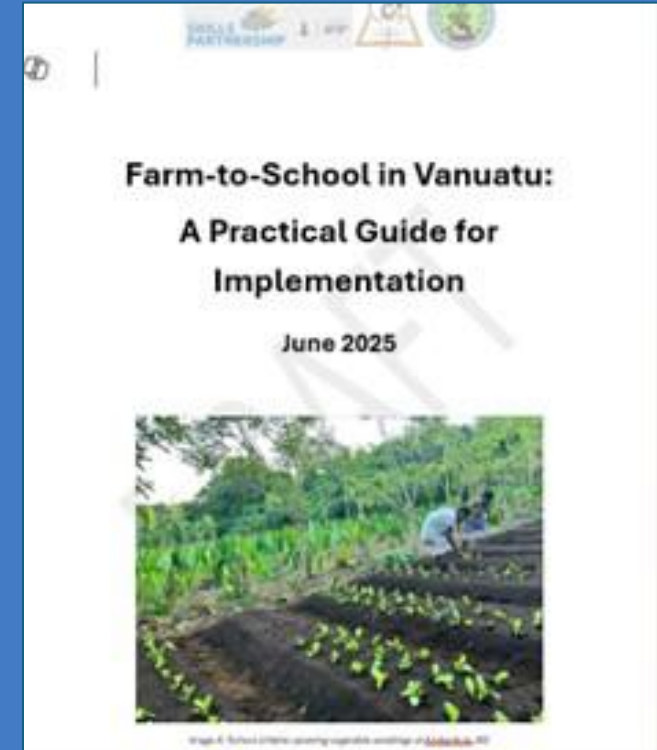


Image 3: Front page of the draft F2S Guidebook.

SKILLS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE



Image 4: Members of the local community at Ambanga who participated in community consultations ahead of an upgrade to the local water system.

Priority area: Projects of Provincial or National Significance – Community Consultations and Technical Assessments at Ambanga and Vandue

Achievement/Outcome:

- In April 2025, the Penama Skills Centre, with support from the Partnership's Skills for Infrastructure workstream, facilitated community consultations and technical assessments in the communities of Vandue and Ambanga, North Ambae. These activities were delivered as part of preparations for the implementation of two new gravity-fed water systems in these communities.
- The consultations provided an opportunity to share important information about the project timeline and to clarify roles, responsibilities and co-contributions from each partner, including 'in-kind' contributions from the local community. This partner meeting is a direct response to previous findings that roles and responsibilities for the delivery of community infrastructure projects were not always clear.
- As part of the upgrade, the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) will be delivering community plumbing training to help build the skills of community members to manage and maintain the new systems. In 2026, the Partnership is planning to facilitate the delivery of a Certificate II in Plumbing in these communities.

SKILLS FOR TOURISM



Image 5: Tourism operators from West Ambae who attended the basic bookkeeping training.

Priority area: Tourism Product Readiness – basic bookkeeping for West Ambae Tourism Operators

Achievement/Outcome:

- In April, the Partnership supported ORCBDS and the Department of Tourism to deliver basic bookkeeping training for a selection of tourism operators and bungalow owners from West Ambae.
- The purpose of the training was to equip participants with foundational bookkeeping skills, knowledge of tourism accommodation and booking charts, and essential business planning and legal requirements. This is expected to benefit tourists who travel to Ambae as well as local and provincial government officials who need accommodation while they are working in the area.
- There were nine participants in total, including five women. Three of the participants currently operate their own tourism businesses or bungalows in West Ambae while the other six are still in the planning stages of their business activities.

TRAINING PROVIDER SUPPORT

Priority area: PSET Sector Delivery - Certificate II in Plumbing graduation, Melsisi

Achievement/Outcome:

- In 2023, the Ambae Recovery Office supported the delivery of Certificate II in Plumbing at Melsisi on Pentecost. 28 trainees (26 men and 2 women) participated in the training which was delivered by the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vocational Education Technical School (ACOMVETS) in collaboration with the DoWR, Penama Provincial Government and Area Councils in Pentecost.
- The training was delivered around the construction of the Melsisi water system, which was officially opened in October 2024 by the Prime Minister, Hon Charlot Salwai Tabimasma, alongside Minister for Land and Natural Resources, Hon Rick Tchamako Mahe, Australia's Head of the Office of the Pacific, Elizabeth Peak, and Australia's High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Max Willis. The system is now providing more than 5,000 people in the local community with access to clean and reliable water.
- A graduation ceremony was held for the 28 graduates (26 men and two women) in April 2025. Graduates were awarded their Certificate II in Plumbing certificate as well as a set of plumbing tools, while four new companies have now been registered with the VFSC, representing the four Area Councils of Pentecost.



Image 6: Graduates of the Certificate II in Plumbing Course delivered at Melsisi, Pentecost, attend their graduation ceremony.

LESSON LEARNED AND ACTIONS

LESSON 1: Delivering activities in remote communities is challenging because of difficulties associated with transport and logistics, and it is hard to provide effective oversight without a dedicated on-site presence for the duration of the activity.

NEXT STEPS:

- Penama Skills Centre will recruit two coordinators to support implementation of the water system upgrades at Ambanga and Vandue on Ambae.

LESSON 2: It has proven difficult to secure co-contributions from government partners and other stakeholders for the water system upgrades, as well as the upcoming delivery of village plumbing training.

NEXT STEPS:

- Penama Skills Centre will ensure that consultations with partners are held early and cover co-contributions, and that these are captured in formal agreements.
- For future projects (i.e next phase), government partners should be encouraged to include their proposed contributions in their business plans.

LESSON 3: Regular partnership 'check-ins' are important to effectively manage complex activities, such as F2S, accredited training and infrastructure development. This is especially the case when there is a turnover of key staff (e.g. the Principal of Ambaebulu JSS).

NEXT STEPS:

- Schedule another partnership check-in meeting for Ambaebulu F2S before the end of the phase.
- Organise check-in/reflection meetings for the work being completed in Ambanga and Vandue to ensure they stay on track.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR QUARTER 3

Skills for Agribusiness: Farm to School

- Refresher workshop for school chefs/ cooks at Ambaebulu JSS, plus distribute kitchen equipment to schools setting up new F2S initiatives.
- Continue to review and revise monitoring tools and approach for Ambaebulu F2S, in collaboration with ORCBDS.
- Finalise the F2S Guidebook and organise official launch

Skills for Infrastructure

- Support upgrades to two community water systems in North Ambae (Ambanga and Vandue)
- Support DoWR with the delivery of basic village plumbing training in Ambanga and Vandue.

Training Provider Support

- Participate in PSC Day celebrations on Maewo to raise awareness of PSET training.

Skills for Creative Industries

- Organise the Island Basket Festival.
- Facilitate craft producers from Penama to participate in 'Vanuatu Made' in Port Vila.

Inclusion

- Continue to support entrepreneurs with disabilities to grow their small businesses.

PARTICIPATION IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING*

SECTOR	WOMEN	MEN	TOTAL	PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Skills for Tourism	5	4	9	0

**Participants in skills training activities only- this data excludes market access activities, consultations and events.*