



Image 1: Community leader with a tap stand connected to the new water system at Lolopuepue in North Ambae.

PENAMA SKILLS CENTRE

Quarterly Report
Q3 2025 (July-October)



SKILLS FOR AGRIBUSINESS

Priority area: Farm to School (F2S) scale up in Penama province

Achievements/Outcomes:

- The Penama Skills Centre has continued its support to roll out new F2S initiatives in partnership with the Penama Provincial Education Officer and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).
- In August, a workshop was delivered by an Industry Coach and DARD for chefs, principals, bursars and provincial education staff from five Penama schools who will be implementing new F2S initiatives.
- A total of 21 participants attended the workshop (11 men and 10 women) which aimed to strengthen school kitchen operations, budgeting and procurement processes, nutrition and hygiene practices, and menu planning using local produce.
- As part of the workshop, each school developed a clear set of priorities and agreed actions to strengthen their F2S initiatives, while participants also built their networks and connections. Bursars and principals also received an Excel template to help them track food purchases, value-added production, income from produce sales and wastage.
- At the closing ceremony, the schools were provided with kitchen utensils, farming tools, and solar freezers to support improved meal preparation capacity, garden expansion, and safe storage of perishable foods.



Image 2: Agriculture Development Officer, Mr Wari, explaining planting sessions to his Assistant Coach, the Londua School Board chairman and the school bursar as part of Farm to School planning activities.

"The breakdown of the budget was very crucial. From the flipcharts, I could see many of the kitchen gaps in our schools being addressed, and I was very happy to see real solutions being developed."
– Claude Vusilai, Agriculture Development Officer, East Ambae"

SKILLS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Priority area: Ambanga and Vandue Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) systems upgrades

Achievements/Outcomes:

- Working in Partnership with the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) and the Penama Provincial Government, the Ambanga and Vandue WASH system projects aimed to deliver gravity-fed water supply to key communities in North Ambae.
- After initial scoping activities in April, two basic village plumbing workshops were conducted in July (one in each location) facilitated by DoWR. This included a week of theory and then two months of practical on the job experiences supporting the water system upgrades.
- Participants came from 10 communities along the planned water systems and included 58 participants (10 women and 48 men). As a result of the workshop, the two water systems were installed between August-November including 59kms of piping and 155 tap stands.
- Local partners including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education & Training and North Ambae Area Council, as well as community members, contributed to the project through the procurement of water tanks, sand, coral and in-kind labour support. Communities also provided workshop venues, participant accommodation and catering for free.
- As a result of the work, over 2,500 people now have access to safe, clean and sustainable water supply in addition to five schools and three health facilities.



Image 3 (above) Village Plumbing participants at the Vandue workshop site . Image 4 (below) Water flowing at Lone Community in mid November.



BETTER BALANCE

Priority area: Value Addition and Financial Literacy

Achievements/Outcomes:

- Penama Skills Centre supported the Penama Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) to implement a workshop on Pentecost, following a request arising from the 2024 Island Basket Festival. A total of 22 participants (all women) from communities across Central Pentecost took part in the skills activity.
- The workshop focused on two objectives:
 - Building women's capacity to transform raw agricultural products into market-ready items (e.g. dried fruits, jams, packaged root crops) to increase income and reduce post-harvest waste.
 - Strengthening basic financial literacy—including budgeting, saving, and managing small business income—to support household and cooperative economic growth.
- At the end of the workshop, participants acknowledged the practical value of the training and noted that the skills gained will help them generate small income for their families and prepare for times of disaster.
- During the closing program, participants showcased their value-added products to the community, receiving positive feedback and strong community support.
- Mr Kevin Tapi, Assistant Secretary General of Penama Province attended the closing event and acknowledged the partnership between Penama Skills Centre, DoWA, ORCBDS, and the facilitator for contributing meaningful skills to local women's economic empowerment.



Image 5: Value addition workshop Participants with local coach Mr Ray Tari on Pentecost.

INCLUSION

Priority area: Supporting entrepreneurship for people with disabilities

Achievements/Outcomes:

- Toa Lanson is a baker, and an entrepreneur who is deaf. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership, through the Penama Skills Centre, has supported him to strengthen his business by engaging a coach to support him to improve his baking skills and grow his business.
- Support was provided to Toa Lanson through a good working collaboration between the Penama Disability Desk officer and a coach engaged through the Penama Skills Centre to provide phased business set up and baking advice. Additionally, the Partnership supported Lanson by procuring two ovens, some ingredients and assistance in building a natangura house.
- Lanson is now baking bread and selling bread around shops in Saratamata and as far as the Lolowai hospital. He has been able to open a bank account with the support of the Penama Skills team giving him coaching in basic financial bookkeeping. His sales have steadily increased.

*“Lanson is now empowered and happy with his bakery business.
After coaching he is doing well on his own ”*

Nancy Swua, Penama Disability Desk Officer



Image 6: Lanson (left) standing with coach Graham after removing bread from the oven.

TRAINING PROVIDER SUPPORT

Priority Area: Skills System and delivery

Key achievements/outcomes:

- In partnership with the Penama Provincial Education Office, ACOMVETS (Torgil) VTC, and the Penama Skills Centre, a skills promotion activity was delivered during the Public Service Commission Day celebration on Maewo in July.
- Over the four-day celebration, trainees from ACOMVETS (Torgil) VTC showcased their skills across multiple trade areas, including tourism and hospitality, construction, plumbing, and automotive. The Penama Skills Centre contributed by covering the costs of transportation of the trainees and catering.
- The activity increased community awareness and understanding of Post-School Education and Training (PSET) as a viable and valuable pathway for students, while also promoting the Torgil campus. Following the event, a number of attendees completed enrolment forms to attend training at Torgil campus next year.
- The event provided a platform for individual trainees to demonstrate their skills and talents, motivating other young people to view PSET not as a “second chance” but as a meaningful pathway to skills and employment.



Image 7: Provincial Training Coordinator with Torgil trainees and Mr John Garae, Tourism Trainer.

“This event was really motivating for us, the Torgil trainers to have the opportunity for our students to display their skills and talent to the community.”

Mr. John Garae, Tourism Trainer, Torgil VTC

SKILLS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Priority area: Workforce Development

Achievements/Outcomes: Graduate Tracer Survey - Trainee Outcomes

- The 2025 Graduate Tracer Survey collected data from 17 trainees in Pentecost who completed the Certificate II in Plumbing delivered by ACOMETS in 2023-24. The sample group consisted of 1 woman and 16 men, including 1 male trainee with a disability.
- Results show a significant increase in employment post-training, with notable growth in self-employment and entrepreneurial activities.
 - 15 out of 17 graduates (88%) have been working since completing the course—an 85% increase compared to before training.
 - Among those employed, 93% are working in the same field as their area of study.
 - The trainee with a disability has been employed since completing the course.
 - The female trainee has not yet secured employment, citing limited job opportunities locally.
- Trainees reported high overall satisfaction with training quality (88%), while recommending more time for practical training in future delivery.
- 86% of respondents indicated the training improved their understanding of climate change impacts.
- 40% of graduates reported always or often using their new skills in paid work (60% sometimes).
- 53% reported always or often applying their skills to support their communities (47% sometimes), including activities such as repairing community water systems, supporting recovery efforts after TC Lola, assisting with repairs in schools and preparing water system plans for community use.

LESSON LEARNED AND ACTIONS

LESSON 1: There is considerable interest from schools across Penama to implement F2S, but the support that the Penama Skills Centre can provide is limited given our available resources.

NEXT STEPS:

- F2S Guidebook needs to be approved by Penama PEO and then can be circulated to interested schools
- Schools should be encouraged to include F2S in their future School Strategic Plans.
- Work with schools implementing F2S to ensure they are using the data collection tool developed with ORCBDS.

LESSON 2: The implementation of large infrastructure projects such as the new water systems at Ambanga and Vandue requires a considerable investment of resources, which impacts on our ability to deliver priorities in other workstreams.

NEXT STEPS:

- Ensure planning for future activities takes into account realistic estimates of human and financial resources for effective delivery.
- Work closely with partners to ensure roles, responsibilities and co-contributions are clear from the outset.

LESSON 3: New companies established by graduates of recent training courses need our ongoing support to ensure they are well-positioned to bid for government projects and remain viable over the long term.

NEXT STEPS:

- Facilitate the delivery of training in areas such as financial literacy, business management and tender writing skills.

PARTICIPATION IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING*

SECTOR	WOMEN	MEN	TOTAL	PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Better Balance	22	0	22	0
Skills for Agribusiness	10	11	21	0
Disability Inclusion	0	1	1	1 man
Skills for Infrastructure	10	48	58	0
TOTAL	42	60	102	1 man

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