DISABILITY INCLUSION REPORT
July - December 2019

VANUATU
SKILLS
PARTNERSHIP

SUPPORTED BY
Australian Aid

Disability Inclusion Narrative Report

Key achievements:

- Reaching less visible people with disabilities – especially deaf and hard-of-hearing people
- Establishment of Disability Inclusion Officers in Provincial Government
- Increasing number of people with disabilities achieving formal qualifications

i. Introduction

This report is an update on the disability inclusion activities that were implemented between January and December 2019. Planning and implementation was undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS), Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VDPA), Vanuatu Society for People with Disability (VSPD), Vanuatu Qualifications Authority (VQA), Lonnoc, Marven, Matahi, Fisher Young and Pektel Rural Training Centres (RTCs), Pacific Vocational Training Centre (PVTC) and Vanuatu Agricultural College (VAC).

ii. Overview:

In 2016, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership was awarded a 3-year grant through DFAT's Disability Inclusive Development Fund (DIDFund), to support the implementation of the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020*. A one-year extension to June 2020 was confirmed during this reporting period. This grant supports a range of activities, including the implementation of disability inclusion action plans by Training Providers, financed through the Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Fund (TPIIF).

Efforts are guided by the *National Disability Inclusive Development Policy* and the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020*, as well as opportunities identified by key partners.

Key Highlights

- Port Vila Post won DFAT's 2019 Secretary's Disability Inclusion Award for Good Practice, specifically in recognition of Vanuatu Skills Partnership's efforts to progress the situation of deaf and hard of hearing people, made possible through the DIDFund.

- Nineteen disability inclusive skills development activities in the agribusiness, infrastructure, creative industries and tourism sectors were delivered in a flexible way through the provincial Skills Centres to maximise disability inclusion, enabling a 4% participation rate for people with disabilities (n = 27). Notably, women with disabilities comprised 17% of all female participants in agribusiness skills development, and men with disabilities made up 7% of all male creative industries participants.

- Of five Training Providers participating in a monitoring activity which tracks their improvements in disability inclusion efforts, in June:
  - All five reported improvements in both the accessibility of premises, and the capacity of trainers to work in a disability inclusive way.
  - Four of the five Training Providers (80%) improved their scores in community awareness raising regarding access to skills development for people with disabilities.
  - Three Training Providers (60%) reported improvements in disability inclusion policies.
  - Three Training Providers (60%) reported an improvement in processes to identify students with disabilities.
  - Three Training Providers (60%) reported an improvement in the enrolment and achievement of trainees with disabilities.

- Two clients, a deaf man in Torba province and a man with physical disability in Sanma, achieved certificate qualifications: a Certificate 2 in Construction and Certificate 1 in Agriculture (Nursery) respectively. The Construction course was led by Lonnoc RTC and supported by the Partnership, while the Agriculture course was independently led by the Vanuatu Agriculture College. The Partnership supported both Training Providers to apply reasonable accommodations including one-on-one support and modified assessment processes to overcome literacy and numeracy barriers and enable achievement of participants with disabilities.

- Thirteen people with disabilities have been employed by business clients, representing 2.5% of all business client employees[1]. Nine of these were employed in the tourism sector.

- In January, the Partnership supported the implementation of the final block of a professional development course in Disability Inclusion Training Approaches for 14 staff of seven Training Provider partners. A reflection and learning event was held with these partners in June, which led to review and redevelopment of partner Disability Inclusion Action Plans, and disbursement of TPIIF funds to support the implementation of these.

- Ongoing coaching in disability inclusion was provided to seven Training Providers by two Partnership staff. A Financial Management Coach was engaged to coach five Rural Training Centres in financial management processes to enable their access to grants. As a result, three Training Provider partners including Pektel Rural Training Centre, Vanuatu Agriculture College and Matahi Rural Training Centre enrolled 12 people with disabilities in various courses.

- Several people with disabilities were engaged as coaches and professional development trainers during this reporting period. One woman with disabilities was engaged as a professional development trainer for 14 staff members from seven training providers. One man with disabilities was engaged as a junior coach for two agribusiness activities in Torba. Two women with disabilities were engaged in coach development activities in tourism and creative industries in Tafea and Sanma provinces.

- Increased demand for skills development was supported through partnerships with VDPA and VSPD, which seek to address pre-conditions for inclusion through targeted activities which strengthen access to disability-specific services, including the following:
  - Mobility Device Services, previously only available in Port Vila, were launched in Sanma Province with financial, technical and strategic support from the Partnership. The Partnership facilitated the purchase of a container of mobility devices and its shipment to Santo,

[1] Source: Prosperity data collected from 237 active Skills Centre Business Clients between April – October 2019

supported VSPD's negotiations with Northern Provincial Hospital, and brokered arrangements with another Development Partner to fund and train a Santo-based staff member.
    - Fifty-three people, including twenty-four deaf people, participated in a sign language development workshop in Sanma as part of the 'Talking Hands' program facilitated by VDPA, which seeks to develop a national sign language in Vanuatu from the ground up. This activity, and other efforts to reach and support deaf clients, led to the Partnership receiving DFAT's 2019 Secretary's Disability Inclusion Award for Good Practice.
    - Sixty-six people with disabilities were provided with community-based rehabilitation support, including awareness raising and advocacy, and referrals to essential health and mobility device services.

- A consultation workshop regarding the *National Disability Inclusion Policy for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector 2016 – 2020* was held, and participants recommended that in its next iteration, this should be merged into an Inclusive Education and Training Policy.

- Participation of four creative industries clients with disabilities in the National International Day for People with Disabilities celebrations in Port Vila. Invited by the MJCS, these clients had an opportunity to showcase their skills and sell their products, as well as challenge assumptions about what people with disabilities can achieve.

Key Challenges/Risks

- Training Provider partners continue to require financial and technical support to enable tbhe identification and inclusion of trainees with disabilities. The conclusion of the DIDFund in June 2020 will limit the Partnership's ability to continue to provide practical support to these partners. The departure of the Partnership's Training Provider Support Manager will potentially exacerbate this.
- Support has been particularly necessary to enable achievement of formal qualifications by people with disabilities, whose literacy and numeracy is limited due to lack of access to formal education. The lack of a literacy and numeracy bridging course limits access to pathways towards formal qualifications for people with disabilities.
- While there has been marked progress in disability inclusion amongst Training Provider partners, responses from these to recommendations from the TPIIF Steering Committee are frequently slow, delaying disbursements of TPIIF grants. This could be linked to low numbers of staff at Training Providers, and their need to focus their time on extensive VQA registration requirements.
- The DIDFund has enabled VDPA and VSPD to progress towards their strategic objectives, including through the engagement of staff. DIDFund's cessation presents a challenge to these critical organisations, which are the sole providers of targeted services which enable participation of people with disabilities, including early intervention, community-based rehabilitation, awareness raising and advocacy.

Key Mitigation Strategies (related to challenges/risks above)

- Engagement of a Disability Inclusion Officer in early 2020 will enable the continued provision of close support to Training Providers, creating more time for the Disability Inclusion Coordinator to engage in and support national-level efforts.
- Engagement of the Disability Inclusion Coordinator in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) working group will be scaled up in 2020, with a view to collaboratively work with others towards the establishment of LLN bridging activities which enable participation of people with disabilities

and others in skills development. This is also an issue preventing access to labour mobility for many people; as such the Partnership will work closely with the Pacific Labour Facility to address this.

- The Partnership will undertake a review of achievements and lessons arising from the DIDFund, with a view to recommendations for how the program can progress its agenda with limited budget. Discussions will be held with DFAT regarding funding gaps and opportunities for partners (VSPD and VDPA).
- Shared work plan or collaborative planning between the Partnership and TED will ensure on-going support for the Training Providers participating in TPIIF.

iii. Partnership Status

- During this reporting period, targeted disability inclusion efforts have continued with seven Training Provider partners, under the auspices of Training Provider Inclusion Improvement Agreements which were signed in 2018. Disability Inclusion Action Plans were reviewed and redeveloped in June, and technical and financial support was provided during this reporting period to assist with the implementation of these.
- Under the auspices of pre-existing partnership agreements, collaborative efforts have continued with key partners MJCS, MoET, VSPD and VDPA. These agencies are all members of the Steering Committee convened by the Partnership to guide national and provincial skills development and bring the disability inclusion perspective to discussions, along with representatives from DFAT and the VQA.

iv. Co-contributions

- The Vanuatu Skills Partnership worked with partners to advocate for, model, influence and broker co-contributions by government and non-government agencies, including:
  - Contribution of Training Provider time and funding to support transport of construction items, development of plans for accessible sanitation facilities and awareness raising activities to promote skills development opportunities for people with disabilities, resulting in increased enrolment in skills development activities.
  - Cost-sharing of enrolment fees for participants with disabilities by Training Providers.
- The Partnership has worked with partners to improve the allocation of public and private resources to support disability inclusion across the skills development sector. Partnership strategies to facilitate this have included initiation of agreements to pay salaries until government agencies can do so, based on demonstrated value, and modelling support which inspires and enables investment by other development partners, including:
  - Payment of salary for the Malampa Provincial Community Services Officer (Disability) by MJCS, previously paid for by the Partnership, and agreement with MJCS to use a similar model for Torba Province.
  - Payment of salary for VSPD's Santo-based Mobility Device Services Officer by World Vision Vanuatu.

v. Work plan progress update

Please see infographic.

vi. Disability Inclusion Contextual Analysis

Influencing Factors	Key Opportunities	Key Constraints	How are we taking advantage of these opportunities and mitigating any risks?
Policies and legislation, regulation and standards – government, industry, national and international	• National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018 – 2025 provides an over-arching framework to Partnership efforts. • Policy for Disability Inclusive TVET 2016 – 2020 guides the Partnership's efforts. • Inclusive Education Policy 2011 – 2020 concludes next year.	• Policy for Disability Inclusive TVET 2016 – 2020 concludes next year. • Limited MoET leadership in disability inclusive education and training.	• MoET was engaged in review of the Policy for Disability Inclusive TVET 2016 – 2020 during this reporting period. • Partnership to advocate, in collaboration with other stakeholders, for MoET leadership of development of a new Inclusive Education and Training policy which covers all levels – early childhood education, primary, secondary and post-school education and training.
Economic – local, interisland, regional and international economies, investment and markets scope and scale	• Cruise ship markets have proved lucrative for people with disabilities in the past. • Agri-business has proved to be an attractive industry for people with disabilities in the past. • Tourism stakeholders have shown leadership in promoting and furthering inclusive tourism as a market which offers paid work for people with disabilities.	• Extent of engagement of VDPA in supporting cruise ship markets for people with disabilities is not known. • Tourism stakeholders require ongoing support and engagement to progress opportunities.	• Disability inclusion team supported the Tourism sector to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan and identify and provide coach development support to tourism coaches with disabilities. • The Partnership supported Skills Centre clients with disabilities to attend International Day for People with Disabilities to demonstrate their creative industries skills and sell products, challenging assumptions along the way. • Disability inclusion team to continue to support the Partnership's agri-business and creative industries personnel to work with

			sector partners towards implementation of their disability inclusion action plans.
Politics, leadership and relationships – the types and location of different structures, processes and people of influence, power holders and decision makers in the system/sector	• MJCS now pays the salary for the Malampa Provincial Services Officer – Disability. • The success of the Malampa Officer have led to discussion about employing a similar model in Torba, and World Vision funding a similar position for Sanma Province in 2020	• Other provinces also require a Disability Officer.	• Partnership to seek replication of this model in Torba.
Society and culture Inclusion (gender or disability) cultural revitalization	• The Partnership has resourced VSPD to expand their services to Sanma and around Efate and brokered additional support from World Vision.	• Availability of funds to support these services after DIDFund ceases in June 2020.	• Disability team to explore sustainability issues and options and develop a plan with VSPD. • Partnership to discuss funding options with DFAT.
Environmental – location, climate change resilience and mitigation, disaster risk prevention and response	• Partnership now has a Climate Change Strategy which factors in the challenges people with disabilities face as a result of climate change and Partnership staff are trained in using the tools associated with the strategy.	• Time to trial the tools is limited.	• Disability team to explore possibilities with the Partnership's Management team when Disability Inclusion Officer is engaged (early 2020).

Sharing good practices: Influencing disability data collection and reporting

In 2018, the Partnership's Disability and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) teams met with the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) to share experiences in collecting and using disability data to report on implementation progress and results. Based on the Washington Group Questions, the Partnership's demographic data collection tool collects information about the functional difficulties experienced by all provincial Skills Centre clients. This information is used to determine reasonable accommodations to support inclusion of people with disabilities in skills development activities through the Skills Centres, and to monitor the participation rate of people with disabilities.

The Partnership's team met with the MoET's Director of Policy and Planning, Principal Education Officer Policy and Planning and Inclusive Education Officer, and shared lessons and ideas for how the MoET could incorporate the UNICEF / Washington Group Child Functioning Module into the Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS). The Partnership was invited to propose a work plan to assist in guiding the MoET's work.

Using this work plan as a guide, the MoET developed Bislama versions of the questions, developed a tool, trained provincial education staff in its use, and developed a disability module within VEMIS. In 2020, schools will enter disability data into VEMIS, and the MoET will be able to disaggregate its enrolment and attendance datasets by disability for the first time. This will help schools and the Ministry to plan support to students with disabilities and enable the MoET to report against national and international disability policy commitments.

"*Thank you – because of you and Sherol the MoET now collects disability data in VEMIS*" – Marie Jonah, Inclusive Education Officer, MoET.

Empowering People with Disabilities

Four Skills Centre clients with disabilities from the Creative Industries sector participated in the celebration of International Disability Day hosted in Port Vila on December 3rd. They were invited by the Ministry of Justice & Community Services and their participation was funded by the Partnership. Of the four clients, two were from Torba, from the Vetimboso Weavers group, and the other two are producers from the Malampa Handicraft Centre. The clients are producers of bracelets, cane baskets, fans, flower vases and Christmas decorations.

During the one-day celebration, the clients were able to showcase their skills, and all four sold their products during the celebration. People who purchased the products were amazed at the quality of their work and the fact that the products were made by people with disabilities. They were also able to see first-hand these producers in action.

For the Torba clients, this event gave them (and their carers) the opportunity to visit Vila for the very first time and sell their products directly to the public in the nation's capital. This activity boosted the confidence, morale and motivation of all four clients to continue producing beautiful products. This activity also challenged assumptions about what people with disabilities can and cannot do, and raised awareness of the ways in which people with disabilities can participate in paid work and community life when empowered with skills and confidence.

Stikfaea: Role-modelling effective partnerships

In 2018, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership provided funding to the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS) to recruit a Provincial Community Officer – Disability for Malampa Province. This position had been identified as critical enabler of the identification of people with disabilities across Malampa, and their referral to services, including skills training offered by the Malampa Skills Centre. This position was recommended through the Partnership's Mobility Devices Feasibility Study undertaken in Malampa in 2018.

Funding was provided to MJCS to support this position, and MJCS led recruitment, working with the Public Service Commission. The position proved to be effective. One example of this is that a person with disability identified through the Feasibility Study was quickly referred to the Hospital in Port Vila for assessment and provision of a mobility device. In accordance with its agreement with the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, the MJCS took over the payment of salary for this position in July 2019; this position is now situated within the MJCS.

Building on the success of this model, the Partnership is working with MJCS to recruit a similar officer for Torba province, in response to increasing number of people with disabilities engaged through the Torba Skills Centre, and the need for a provincial coordination and referral point. At the same time World Vision Vanuatu, through an agreement it has with Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD), has begun its own discussions with MJCS to utilize this model to engage a similar position in Sanma Province. This is in relation to its disability inclusive WASH program, Laetem Dak Kona, as well as the expansion of VSPD's Mobility Device Service to Santo which has also been supported by the Partnership.

Once all these positions are on board, the Government of Vanuatu will have disability officers in Malampa, Torba, Sanma and Shefa provinces. Just 18 months ago, there was only one – in Shefa. The increased public resources for these decentralized disability-focused roles – with support from Vanuatu Skills Partnership acting as a *stikfaea*, role modelling effective partnerships and inspiring partners to do things differently – will substantially increase the access people with disabilities have to services and supports which assist them to participate in their communities.