

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development: Vanuatu

Through a 10-year commitment, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) connects more than 170 gender equality initiatives supported by Australia and implemented by over 160 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries. Providing technical, knowledge sharing and convening support to the portfolio of partners is *Pacific Women's* Support Unit, working to improve the long-term impact of gender equality projects in the Pacific.

The Australian Government, through *Pacific Women*, has committed approximately \$11.9 million over 10 years (2012–2022) on initiatives to support women's empowerment in Vanuatu.

Figures¹

<i>Community awareness and outreach</i>	<i>Counselling and other support services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">423 women supported with skills development and accredited training through provincial Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres through the Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP), for January–December 2019.27 skills development activities offered by VSP's provincial skills centres between February–June 2019.42 per cent of the 45 industry coaches and trainers delivering skills development activities in the productive sectors through VSP are women, to December 2019.Seven people with disabilities employed through VSP as trainers in disability inclusion.51 young women developed leadership skills through CARE's Young Women's Leadership Program (YWLP).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">6,574 counselling sessions provided by Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) in 2018, including for 1,811 new clients, from July 2018–June 2019.43 per cent increase in new clients and 135 per cent increase in repeat client sessions receiving services from VWC from 2013–2019.87 per cent of all family protection orders issued nationally by magistrates from 2015–2017 facilitated by VWC.More than 200 per cent increase in the number of family protection orders facilitated by VWC from 2013–2019.59,451 female clients accessing contraceptive services and support through the Vanuatu Family Health Association.

Achievements

Leadership and Decision Making

- With support from mentors and opportunities to practice leadership qualities, 31 YWLP graduates are demonstrating increased skills and confidence and promoting gender equality, to December 2019. The graduates are reaching 123 women and girls through small 'action projects' in their communities and facilitated a conference for 136 people to discuss issues facing young women in Vanuatu. Support for the YWLP network is growing a pipeline of young women leaders.
- VSP is enabling more women to deliver accredited training courses under the National Post School Education and Training Policy. Now, women account for 52 per cent of industry coaches and trainers delivering skills development activities in productive sectors through VSP.
- Two Market Vendor Association (MVA) executives oversee three markets across Port Vila, Efate, and Luganville, Santo, supported by M4C are better mobilising resources and successfully engaging in negotiations following training from M4C. Local governments are also engaging regularly with MVAs on market development and management issues.
- Stakeholders working to increase women's leadership in humanitarian action in Vanuatu are benefitting from increasing coordination due to the collaboration that now exists between CARE and the Department of Women's Affairs through the Gender and Protection Cluster.
- VSP raised the profile of gender equality among Provincial Government Training Boards by introducing regular board meeting dashboard reporting on gender and women's equality.
- Training and employment outcomes for women with disabilities are improving with VSP's targeted support and Better Balance Strategy at TVET centres, including in rural and remote areas.

Economic Empowerment

- The 29 members (16 women and 13 men) of the Vetimboso Handicraft Association are enjoying a 20 per cent rise in earnings from increased production and sales in weaving, stone carving and

¹ Information collated from *Pacific Women* implementing partner reports cumulative to June 2019 unless otherwise stated.



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jewellery. In six months of skills development support from VSP, they increased weaving production by 94 per cent and sales by 96 per cent.

- The 49 producers (46 women and three men) from Malampa Handicraft Centre increased their income after skills development training and coaching from VSP in 2018. From January–October 2018, they earned 400 per cent more income from sales than during January–December 2017.
- Under the brand AELAN, NGO Alternative Communities Trade in Vanuatu (ACTIV) strengthens trade opportunities for women producers of food and cosmetic products. With AELAN's HACCP certification, women producers are supplying international markets with products such as AELAN's medal-winning chilli pepper chocolate. From January–July 2019, sales of AELAN chocolate were 13.2m vatu and included distribution to P&O and Carnival Australia cruise ships.
- In Port Vila and Luganville Markets, 149 market vendors (145 women and four men) are benefitting from financial literacy and business skills refresher training sessions delivered during Market Business Fairs. Vendors' financial competencies and record keeping are strengthened so that they can better leverage business and financial access opportunities.

Ending Violence against Women

- Vanuatu's key provider of crisis services for survivors of violence, Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC), continues to be supported to provide quality counselling, case management and other support services. VWC plays a critical role in ensuring the *Family Protection Act 2008* is implemented such as through facilitating 87 per cent of all family protection orders issued by magistrates from January 2015–December 2017. VWC is reporting an increase in referrals and number of prosecutions for perpetrators of violence. It has appointed a volunteer police liaison officer, which is improving police responsiveness.
- Faith-based approaches are progressing attitude change in faith communities. VWC partners with the Seventh Day Adventist Church to conduct prevention activities. CARE works with the Vanuatu Christian Council and Presbyterian Church on joint advocacy to end violence against women, while UnitingWorld recruits gender equality ministers to share gender-equality theology.
- ANZ employees are benefitting from the introduction of domestic violence workplace policies, following awareness training by the Pacific Community's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) for all ANZ bank staff in Vanuatu.
- Through training by CARE, NGOs and churches better understand concepts and tools for gender transformative programming. CARE has also documented promising practices and developed tools for the prevention of violence against women and girls, useful for interventions in Vanuatu.

Enhancing Agency

- Mock sessions facilitated by RRRT helped the Vanuatu delegation to engage effectively in constructive dialogue with the United Nations Human Rights Council and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Committee. The Government of Vanuatu has also allocated budget for CEDAW reporting.
- The Government of Vanuatu increased its capacity to generate sex-disaggregated data and to use gender statistics to guide national policy and decision-making, evaluation and learning and human rights reporting. This resulted from support to SPC's Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGE) project.
- A partnership between the Vanuatu Family Health Association and the Vanuatu Cricket Association's Women's Islands Cricket Program is using sport as a platform to extend sexual and reproductive health services.

Pacific Women Partners

Government of Vanuatu: Department of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Community Services.

Vanuatu civil society partners: Alternative Communities Trade in Vanuatu (ACTIV); Wan Smolbag Theatre; Vanuatu Family Health Association; Vanuatu Women's Centre.

Other partners: Australian Department of the House of Representatives; CARE Vanuatu; Fiji Women's Crisis Centre; International Planned Parenthood Federation (with local partner Vanuatu Family Health Association); the Pacific Community (SPC): Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGE) and Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT); Pacific Leadership Program; Policing and Justice Support Program; The Protection and Pacific (ProPa) Network; Shifting the Power Coalition; UN Women: Markets for Change (M4C) and Pacific Fund to End Violence against Women; UNICEF; UnitingWorld; Vanuatu Skills Partnership; and *Pacific Women's* regional partners.

