



QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT 3rd Quarter 2021

PROJECT TITLE: Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP) II

PROJECT NUMBER: 123236

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and SRPD 2018-2022:

UNDP Strategic Plan (SP) 2018-2021: Signature Solution 2 to strengthen effective, inclusive and accountable governance; and Signature Solution 6 to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

(SRPD) (2018-2022) Output 5.3. More women and men benefit from strengthened governance systems for equitable service delivery, including access to justice: people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed and transparent decision-making processes, accountable and responsive institutions, and improved access to justice.

ATLAS Output ID: 00129624

Implementing Partner: United Nations Development Programme



Director General of Ministry of Internal Affairs, Cherol Ala Ianna, registers for National COVID19 Vaccination Program, using biometric National ID Card, which now has multi-purpose uses – voting, buying plane tickets, applying for Driver's Licence, disaster relief funds disbursement – and COVID19 vaccinations!



Ballot boxes being delivered on foot through muddy jungle tracks in Vanuatu.

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." US Postal Services Motto



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PART 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the Government of New Zealand, is focussed on strengthening electoral systems and democratic practices to conform to international standards and strengthening political stability. The Quarter 3 (Q3) Report demonstrates that whilst the VEEP Project continues to support broad reform in the electoral sector, opportunities have been pursued to build sustainability of VEEP outcomes by strengthening legislative frameworks, embedding institutional reform and consultative partnerships with a broad range of sector stakeholders.

The Civil Registration & Identity Management Bill and the National ID Card Bill were consultatively drafted in Q3 for consideration in the November Sitting of Parliament. The Gazettal of these Bills into Acts will greatly enhance the sustainability of electoral innovation supported by VEEP. Institutional reform of key agencies through restructures of both the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) and the Vanuatu Electoral Commission (VEC) were progressed in Q3 as well as a restructure the Civil Registry and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Department closely linked to the new legislation and recent Council of Minister's (COM) Decisions.

Sustainability has been enhanced by consultative development and delivery across a broad stakeholder base – not just predictably the VEO, the VEC but very importantly with CRVS which has emerged as a critical partner in implementing Vanuatu's biometric, verifiable National ID Card. Following on from the Port Vila Municipal By-Election on 24th September and the proven veracity of the National ID Card, it has been decided to end the transitional phase of using both the out-phasing electoral cards and the replacing National ID cards for voter identification by 1 January 2022. From the New Year the National ID Cards will thus be the only verifiable voter identifier for elections in future.

VEEP's innovative field-based approach, using 400 highly mobile GPS/ mobile apps loaded tablet technology with a team of 56 young enumerators trained by VEEP, has collected data from 3,363 villages (now allocated a GPS position and ID tag) across the archipelago of Vanuatu. By Q3, the UNDP/VEEP Project has supported 205,502 citizens, which is 65.3% of total population of 314, 464 (2021 National Census), to register and receive their National Identity card. This includes 99,161 females (48.25%) and 106,341 males (51.75%). Deceased voters have been removed from the Voting Register (504 female; 1,296 Male).

Youths and those living with an impairment "The Hidden People," have long been regarded as fringe dwellers to Government services enjoyed by more mainstream society, often with limited opportunities to engage in the formal economy, education, health services and elections. However, 101,791 youths (45,173 under 18, and 56,618 between 18-30 years), now have National ID Cards and are on the Voter Register, able to make their voices heard to improve access and inclusion outcomes. Substantial gaps remain in the area of capturing data and giving "voice" to People With Disability (PWD). In Q3, to address the issue of electoral inclusion, a People With Disability (PWD) Action Plan was consultatively developed.

The National ID card number is being used by Central Government financial institutions, NGOs and donors as identification for in-cash, in-kind for economic stimulus packages. The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, National Statistics Office, National Disaster Management Office and IOM all now utilise the National ID card for evidence-based decision making and planning, most notably Vanuatu's COVID19 response. By Q3 (August) the National COVID19 Strategy, initially rolled out in Port Vila, was being implemented in Luganville (Sanma) using the National ID Cards to verify identity and vaccination details.



PART 2: KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THIS QUARTER:

Results Resource Framework with Quarterly Progress.



Increasing the engagement of women is a critical strategy for VEEP. Identified with her biometric National ID Card, this voter is making her democratic voice heard at the Port Vila Municipal By-Elections (24th September 2021).



Port Vila Municipal By-Elections (24th September 2022) saw VEEP trained Polling Clerks utilising VEEP tablet technology and newly updated Electoral Rolls based on merged biometric National ID Card system and old electoral card system.



EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA EVIDENCE	KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS ACHIEVED	
			Key Activities	Output Results/Impact
<p>output 1 <i>Institutional Capacities of the Electoral Authorities Strengthened</i></p> <p>Gender marker: 2</p>	<p>1.1 <i>Number of provincial electoral and civil registration offices with recruited and trained staff, sufficient physical and technical infrastructure to accommodate their mandate</i></p>	<p><i>PSC contracts</i></p> <p><i>Renovated and equipped VEO Bldg.</i></p>	<p><i>HQ Port Vila Level:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. LoA funds transferred to accommodate recruitment of 25 data entry staff. Recruitment advertising completed, shortlisting done, interviews ongoing. New staff to be mobilised in October Q4;</i> <i>2. Data Verification teams being prepared for Torba ahead of Provincial Elections in December 2021;</i> <i>3. Supported publication of Candidate Lists on Facebook, Website, VEO and provincial offices;</i> <i>4. Ongoing meetings with DoLA regarding printing voter lists to display at constituency area council level / final inspections before exiting the transitional phase of voting with both electoral cards and national ID cards;</i> <i>5. Arrival of security lamination rolls and consumables/upgrade of printers (UNCDF);</i> <i>6. The 400 tablets procured for use in field data for electoral roll verification continue to be used – for Port Vila Municipal Elections, National COVID19 Strategy, as well as for Pentecost constituency by-election preparations and Torba validation and verification process;</i> <i>7. Planning and logistics, polling and counting training supported for Polling Staff for the Port Vila Municipal by-elections. The training was organised on 22nd September at the Grand Hotel</i> 	<p>The Electoral Authorities and the Civil Registration & Vital Statistics Department will extend their mandate into each of the provinces in line with the GoV decentralization strategy with establishment of strong Local Government Regions and Local Government Councils – bringing services closer to the people.</p> <p>This will be supported by robust and well-functioning HQ offices including a Field Coordination mechanism.</p>



		<p><i>Lease Agreements for 6 provincial CRVS offices 4 VEO provincial offices</i></p>	<p><i>using a variety of participatory approaches, mock polling and counting, audio-video productions etc. 46 Polling Staff were provided this Refresher Training, however identification shows further need to strengthen understanding & compliance.</i></p> <p><i>8. Only 21.5% of registered voters turned out for Port Vila Municipal By-Elections on 24th September demonstrating voter disengagement & the need for stronger messaging on importance of voting and the need for more accessible polling stations to counter log lines and waiting time to vote.</i></p> <p><i>Provincial Level:</i></p> <p><i>9. New provincial office in Penama, Ambae is supported;</i></p> <p><i>10. CRVS restructure will formalise Assistant Provincial registrar positions, 2 per year, ensuring sustainability to UNICEF contractual support for 6 contractors undertaking Hospital based registration of births and deaths to provide verification to Civil registry (vital for National ID Cards & Electoral Roll);</i></p> <p><i>11. A 'provincial package' for each provincial office has been consolidated with quotations (consisting of desk, chair, laptop, printer, phone, scanner, zoom equipment (speaker and webcam) poster material, manuals, and in some cases, a satellite disc where GoV network are not available. Preparations for central procurement is on-going based on requests and funding availability;</i></p>	
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			<p>12. <i>The project developed a Concept Note for a Provincial Council Open Day – Civic and Voter Awareness event in the provinces, possibly to be implemented in Q-4 in Torba province;</i></p> <p>13. <i>Support training booster through use of already developed Training Material, including audio material/video productions (some videos need small updates), 3x audio video productions to support visuals and to boost the efforts of the training manual;</i></p> <p>14. <i>Atlas maps are developed in collaboration with UNITAR based on cloud-free satellite images, post TC PAM and TC Harold and related geographical information, (1:7,000 scale) covering all Islands. These location datasets have been crucial for VEEP supported trained youth volunteers to find the villages and households when canvassing the islands to register the citizens, and they continue to be crucial for delimitation and boundaries activities for polling purposes, as well as a myriad of other purposes by national and international stakeholders. Currently established:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Atlas maps per Province broken down by island.</i> 2. <i>Maps and data for health facilities</i> 3. <i>Maps and data for education facilities</i> <p>15. <i>Review of the Provincial component of Electoral Results System and the development of another two modules for General Elections and Municipal Elections;</i></p> <p>16. <i>Manual for the new Electoral Results Management System developed for users.</i></p>	
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	<p>1.2 Number of new, increased and trained permanent staff at HQs and provincial offices, including joint training activities with the CRVS Department</p>	<p>2021 VEC Restructure Submission with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEC JDs • VEO NPPs • VEO PMR Forms <p>2021 VEO Restructure Submission with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEO JDs • VEO NPP • VEO PMR Forms <p>2021 CRVS Restructure Submission with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JDs • TNAs • NPP for April 2022 (4 new posts) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Service Commission (PSC) submission and NPP submission for VEO, approved & signed by DG Cheroi Ala and submitted to Office of Public Service Commission (OPSC) for appraisal; 2. Restructure Submission for the Vanuatu Electoral Commission (VEC) for April 2022 Parliament & Supplementary Budget consideration; 3. The VEC restructure includes the critical new post of a Political Party Coordinator to support harmonisation, communication, registration, compliance and integrity of party registration. 4. Restructure Submission prepared for the Civil Status & Vital Statistics (CRVS) Department completed with linked Training Needs Assessment & Skills Gap Audit <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Undertaken for inclusion in 2022 CRVS Business Plan 5. CRVS Business Plan on the new GoV template is drafted, including forward costing for new positions in the provinces & CRVS Training/capacity building; 6. Polling & Counting Manuals translated into in Bislama and English; 7. People With Disability (PWD) Action Plan developed that includes polling and electoral staff sensitisation training, Website information, with intentions to improve physical accessibility issues to polling booths (ramps, PWD friendly transport). 	<p>The Vanuatu Electoral Office currently seeks approval of a Restructure Submission to better position this critically important electoral authority to deliver the Government's prioritised policy, planning and legislation directions for the electoral system in Vanuatu, and to implement regular, credible, transparent, genuine elections in Vanuatu, truly reflecting "the will of the people" and "universal and equal suffrage" reflecting well-functioning fundamental human rights.</p> <p>Completed in Q3 Submission of 2021 VEO Restructure Submission countersigned by MoIA DG.</p> <p>CRVS Business Plan redrafted in line with new PSC format 2021, when Budget Book 3 is available.</p> <p>To be Undertaken in Q4 MoIA needs a new Corporate Plan 2022- 2025 by Q 4 (November) at which time Budget Book 3 needs updating. VEO/VEC and CRVS activities will then "cascade" compliantly</p>
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			<p>8. <i>Supported development of Training Materials, including 3 x audio material/video productions to support visuals and to boost the efforts of the training manual;</i></p> <p>9. <i>CRVS Restructure Submission provides for the creation of a Provincial Services Unit with an increase in salary for Provincial Registrars recognising importance of provincial services. The Deputy Registrar is given oversight responsibility for the new Unit;</i></p> <p>10. <i>CRVS Restructure includes budget forecasts for increased OPSC permanent positions for Assistant Provincial Registrars x 6 with 2 to be appointed per year over period 2022-2024 to institutionalise the previously UNICEF funded positions;</i></p> <p>11. <i>CRVS Training Needs Assessment and Skills Gap Audit undertaken;</i></p> <p>12. <i>CRVS Business Plan template produced in compliance with new GoV Guidelines for planning & reporting.</i></p>	
	<p>1.3 <i>Number of formalised EC internal regulations and VEO operational procedures drafted and endorsed.</i></p>	<p>State Law Office Gazette EC Regulations EC Minutes</p> <p>Printed Booklets</p>	<p>1. <i>Acknowledging the Policy authority in accordance with the Representation of the People Act, Part 17 Section 69, the Electoral Commission may regulate the electoral processes by orders consistent with the electoral law provisions, therefore:</i></p> <p>2. <i>12 EC regulations and 3 codes of conduct have been developed by the Electoral Commission with support from UNDP/VEEP in the form of</i></p>	<p>EC internal regulations are essential for the consolidation of the electoral processes in Vanuatu, which will greatly improve its integrity and transparency, paving the way for elections that are increasingly more credible and whose results are increasingly more legitimate.</p>



			<p><i>orders, to substantially improve the practices involved in the preparation and conduct of the various phases of the electoral processes in Vanuatu. They have subsequently been drafted by State Law Office, and approved by the Electoral Commission in the shape of three EC Regulations;</i></p>	<p>It is good international practice for the electoral authorities to complement the electoral legal provisions with internal regulations. Throughout the world, electoral authorities also establish “codes of conduct” for different stakeholders and participants in the electoral process to ensure their transparency and fairness.</p>
	<p>1.4 <i>The percentage of progress in codifying and digitizing institutional memory of EC/VEO systems and procedures, including congregating files to the Government Document Management System (Saperion);</i></p>	<p>Digitization Manual Data Declaration of Confidentiality TORs scanning and document handling staff.</p>	<p><i>This activity is on stand-by.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>However, additional Data Entry officers/students officers for use by VEEP and other agencies have been identified and interviewed in Q3 and will commence in October 2021 (Q4).</i> 	
	<p>1.5 <i>No of electoral administrative processes where gender is mainstreamed, and gender disaggregated</i></p>	<p><i>Amendments to: CAP 146 CAP 230 CAP 126 CAP 61</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>All electoral laws have been amended to be gender sensitive;</i> <i>All Job Descriptions has been amended to be gender neutral;</i> <p><u>1.</u> <i>Furthermore, in Q3 VEEP supported the development of a VEC/VEO PWD Action Plan to raise awareness of issues faced in electoral inclusion for People With Disability. The PWD Action Plan will also be reflected on VEOs Website. This is in response to governments across Asia-Pacific in 2014 committed to strengthening CRVS systems and advance universal civil registration to support good governance, health and development. However, due to a lack of data, we did not know if the most</i></p>	<p>Female Empowerment through the politics of language, and introduction of Gender-Neutral Amendments in all related electoral laws and CRVS laws.</p> <p>Strengthened CRVS systems and advance universal civil registration to support good governance, health and development, including vulnerable marginalized people.</p>



			<p>vulnerable people were being registered, which could mean hard to reach marginalized people, People With Disability (PWD), including women and girls, remain invisible, compounding the inequality they face;</p> <p>3. New CRVS legislation for Civil Registration and Identity Management, and National ID Bills is gender sensitive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Registration & Identity Management Bill; • National ID Card Bill. 	
<p>Output 2 <i>Integrity and Accuracy of the Voter Register Enhanced</i></p> <p>Gender marker: 2</p>	<p>2.1 Proportion of eligible voters who are registered to vote, disaggregated by sex, age, and location – to be done on a yearly basis</p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS and VES) and Civil Register (RegisterVIZ).</p>	<p><i>The concept of registering voters may seem simple - a list of all persons who are eligible to vote and adequate information to uniquely identify each eligible voter, yet implementation is challenging. Challenges relate to wrong birth dates, wrong name spelling, location errors, duplication of village names, missing photo IDs, duplicates of Voting Cards, deceased having voting cards. The planned verification and validation project following the national joint CVRS registration campaign in 2019 extended to be a "de facto" registration process, with several thousands of people being registered.</i></p> <p><i>By Q3, the UNDP/VEEP Project has supported 205,502 citizens, which is 65.3% of total population of 314, 464 (2021 National Census), to register and receive their National Identity card.</i></p> <p><i>This includes 99,161 females (48.25%) and 106,341 males (51.75%). Deceased voters have been removed from the Voting Register (504 female; 1,296 Male).</i></p>	<p>Vanuatu will ultimately have an accurate civil and voter registration database, which is one of the most effective ways for Vanuatu to protect the integrity of their elections and increase the confidence of voters in electoral processes.</p> <p>The production of their accurate electoral roll can convincingly be guided by the basic principle of universal and equal suffrage.</p> <p>VEEP's innovative field based approach, using 400 highly mobile GPS/ apps loaded tablet technology with a team of 56 young enumerators trained by VEEP, has collected data from 3,363 villages (now allocated a GPS position and ID tag) across the archipelago of Vanuatu.</p>
	<p>2.2 Number of voters issued with national ID card</p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS</p>	<p><i>By the time of Q1 2021, the number of voters issued with a national ID card is (Gender disaggregated):</i> <i>F: 47,584</i></p>	<p>Vanuatu will ultimately run elections where only national ID cards are used for voter identification in polling</p>



	<p><i>disaggregated by gender (replacing the electoral cards)</i></p>	<p>and VES) and civil register (RegisterVIZ).</p>	<p><i>M: 51,540</i></p> <p><i>By Q2 2021, (10/June/21) the number of voters issued with a national ID card (Gender disaggregated) was:</i> <i>Female: 73,721</i> <i>Male: 77,507</i></p> <p><i>By Q3 (end August 2021) the number of voters issued with a national ID card (Gender disaggregated) was</i> <i>Female: 99,161 females (48.25%) and</i> <i>Male: 106,341 males (51.75%).</i></p> <p><i>By Q3, the UNDP/VEEP Project has thus supported 205,502 citizens, which is 65.3% of total population of 314, 464 (2021 National Census), to register and receive their National Identity card.</i></p>	<p>stations and using the civil register to extract and produce the electoral roll. Using an updated and validated population database as the basis to create the electoral roll will enable very accurate voter statistics and ensure equal and universal suffrage. Vanuatu is still in a transitional phase where voters can vote with both national IDs and their old coloured electoral cards to ensure no one is excluded, however the transitional phase will end by 1st January 2022.</p> <p><i>By Q1 Achieved 99,000</i> <i>By Q2 Achieved 151,228</i> <i>By Q3 Achieved 205,502</i></p> <p><i>Target 200,000</i></p>
	<p>2.3 <i>Percentage of merge of databases/transition to new voter registration model.</i></p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS) and civil register (RegisterVIZ).</p>	<p><i>All the national ID numbers of voters registered in VES are linked to the civil register and has been inserted into GRVS. The merge is slowly ongoing, alongside data being verified, validated, and cleaned of incorrect data, duplicates, deceased and typical errors.</i></p> <p><i>Q2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>305,009 voters registered in the GVRs</i> - <i>Duplicates already removed from GVRs: 20,606.</i> - <i>Number of cleaned data records: 54,000</i> <p><i>Q3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>305,044 voters registered in the GVRs</i> - <i>Duplicates already removed from GVRs: 22,151.</i> - <i>Number of cleaned data records: 54,421</i> - <i>By Q3: 504 female; 1,296 Male deceased voters have been removed from the Voting Register</i> 	<p>Vanuatu will ultimately have <i>one</i> 'foundational' database, which will serve the purposes of multiple ministries and GoV agencies.</p> <p>The computerized electoral register will be based on information already available in the national civil registration system (also administered by the Ministry of the Interior), to which the provincial CRVS and VEO officers will continuously convey basic, administratively relevant information about citizens, including the acquisition of voting rights, changes of address, and death. Thus, inclusion on the electoral register and changes due to change of residence,</p>



			<p><i>Kept working on merging of VES and GRVS, and preparation of digital electoral roll, per polling station, and the ultimate phase out of electoral cards.</i></p>	<p>etc. should take place automatically and continuously. As a result, the register will be permanently updated, but citizens must take the initiative to keep their records up to date.</p> <p><i>Target 100%</i></p>
	<p>2.4 <i>Expected number of duplicated and deceased citizens removed from the Civil and Voter registries.</i></p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS) and civil register (Register VIZ).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>1.</u> <i>UNDP/VEEP and MoH have liaised on the systematic collection of data of deceased people. 400 were previously reported for 2020; By Q3, 2021, 504 female & 1,296 Male deceased voters have been removed from the Voting Register</i> <u>2.</u> <i>Field work data seem to indicate another 1,000 deceased over the years;</i> <u>3.</u> <i>Duplicates so far removed from the GVRs database are 20,606.</i> <u>4.</u> <i>By Q3, 504 female & 1,296 Male deceased voters have been removed from the Voting Register</i> <u>5.</u> <i>Activities in Q4 to start with Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health (D4H) Initiative's Global Grants Program to implement a joint project "Civil Registration data and Health Systems Data Interoperability in Vanuatu". The objective of the project is to link Civil Registry information data with public health information data and develop a system of high-quality data exchange between the two departments. The project will support the design and implementation of data interoperability and seek to establish improved digital notification and</i> 	<p>Establishment of Civil Registration data and Health Systems Data Interoperability by designing a high-quality data exchange between the CRVS department and Ministry of Health in the pursue maintaining accurate data.</p> <p>Outcome focus on two UN sustainable development goal (SDG) targets and related indicators concerning improving civil registration and vital statistics: target 16.9, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration, and target 17.19, the indicator for which is the proportion of countries that have achieved 100 percent birth registration, and 80 percent death registration. At the national level, the Policy objective Soc 6.9, of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) caters for areas to strengthen research, data and statistics for accountability and decision-making.</p>



			<p><i>registration of births and deaths, including establishment of active notification systems.</i></p>	
	<p>2.5 <i>New components developed and updated for Civil and Voter registration systems.</i></p>	<p>Civil and Voter registration system assessment.</p>	<p><u>1.</u> <i>Supported the roll-out of the National COVID19 vaccination programme based on National ID. The MOH had requested CRVS support in terms of using VEEP trained enumerators and use of tablets for verification purposes during the Vaccine roll out. The project has supported this process with mobile application development, preparation of tablets and training and funding of volunteers for this purpose;</i></p> <p><u>2.</u> <i>The project developed an ID Scan Application, and the set-up of data validation scanners in Luganville and Port Vila in central locations; more scanning stations pending;</i></p> <p><u>3.</u> <i>The project supported setting up a Helpdesk function ahead of provincial elections in collaboration with the OGCIO Office with 5 phone lines for three days, connected with the main VEO number to address any queries from voters;</i></p> <p><u>4.</u> <i>The project supported on-going data entry and data consolidation based on field work updates, verifications and 'de-facto' new registrations through the recruitment of data entry contractors – 25 students from USP & AUF - with this new cohort being shortlisted and interviewed end Q3. These enumerators will start work early October (Q4);</i></p> <p><u>5.</u> <i>The VEEP project developed a transfer module between the GVRs electoral card based dataset and the VES National ID number based dataset to produce a merged Electoral Roll by polling station;</i></p>	<p><i>UNDP/VEEP is providing on-going support for National ID enhancement as a tool to help the Government build accurate data, ensure universal suffrage, respond better to development, pandemics, natural disasters, incl. legal identity issues and development of strategy for linking of governments and development partners in harmonisation on use of unique IDs.</i></p> <p>EC/VEO now has a new integrated Electoral Results Management System (ERMS) incorporating all key aspects from vote counting to the certified results being announced with relevant complaints having been properly adjudicated.</p> <p>Prototype COVID19 Vaccine Registry developed based on National ID/Birth Registration No. Presented to WHO, UNICEF, MoH, Deputy PM and MoIA The System has been field tested and is being used for the National COVID19 Strategy.</p>



			<p><u>6.</u> <i>The project developed a Mobile Application for Voter Identification in polling stations based on tablet scanning ability, linked with the digital electoral roll, for offline/real time voter identification on election day;</i></p> <p><u>7.</u> <i>The Electoral Reform Working Group has announced the end to the transition phase on 1 January 2022, which has been ongoing since 2019 allowing voters to be identified by either electoral card or national ID card. By 2022, electors will be able to vote using the National ID card only;</i></p> <p><u>8.</u> <i>The project thus supported operations for Port Vila Municipal By-Elections on 24 September 2021 technically, operationally, logistically, administratively, and financially;</i></p> <p><u>9.</u> <i>Supported preparation and printing of paper-based electoral rolls, per polling station;</i></p> <p><u>10.</u> <i>The project assisted in preparing and deploying tablets for use in field data verification for electoral roll verification for use at Polling Stations in the September Municipal By Elections;</i></p> <p><u>11.</u> <i>VEEP prepared a web application similar to the one that has been used by the VEO, for National ID card verification. The web application can be accessed from anywhere inside the VANGO network, and is being used in the Provinces by Area Councils, CRVS Provincial Registrars and Assistant Provincial Registrars (the latter contracted through UNICEF but to be migrated into formal CRVS Restructure over the next 3</i></p>	
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			<p>years adding to sustainability). The information is from the RegisterVIZ production database, and the application server is for the moment in UNDP/VEEP office:</p> <p><u>12.</u> The case of Vanuatu civil registration and national IDs implemented with support by the VEEP project featured in UN ESCAP CRVS Insight Newsletter;</p> <p><u>13.</u> Global Grants Program application and proposal (150\$) submitted to The Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative - Application decisions were shared via email by June 15, 2021. Urgent review of all the processes on vital events is needed, aligned with updating the legal framework, and CRVS is now focused on and planning in Q3 for the following division of focus:</p> <p><u>I.</u> UNDP has supported comprehensive legal review (Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Bill, National ID Card (NIC) Bill, CRIM Regulations, procedures handbook etc)</p> <p><u>II.</u> UN ESCAP will provide an expert team to undertake CRIM business process mapping and reengineering, supported by VEEP Identity/civil registration policy expert and ICT expert.</p> <p><u>III.</u> Bloomberg GGP grant will support the integration of CRVS and health systems data, with support from VEEP Identity/civil registration policy expert and ICT expert.</p>	
Output 3 Ability to Conduct Voter	3.1 Number of new partnerships with civil society developed (Women, PWDs, churches), as well as regional	NGO mapping Voter Awareness	1. The project continued to support meetings of the Voter Awareness Committee (10 members from NGOs, CSOs Gov, Malvatumauri and media), also established during the General	Effective and regular electoral awareness activities in view of the 12 May Provincial elections, and the importance of registration.



<p><i>Education and Raise Public Awareness strengthened</i></p> <p>Gender Marker</p> <p>2</p>	<p><i>bodies, and national and international stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>Committee TORs Minutes of Meetings List of Participants</p>	<p><i>Elections in 2020, as a mechanism to coordinate key stakeholders, manage clear messages and disseminate information related to electoral events and electoral processes;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>2. Article released in Q3 on multiple Websites, Social Media platforms - "How An Agile Response Transformed Vanuatu's Civil Register System At A Time Of Crisis."</i> <i>3. Supported publication of Electoral Timelines, key weekly electoral messages, and Candidate Lists on Facebook, Website, VEO and provincial offices;</i> <i>4. Completed the production of a documentary movie as per established story board, telling the story of Civil Registration and establishment of legal identities in Vanuatu, 8 min documentary 'My Registration, My Identity, My Vanuatu', in preparation for the upcoming Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific 16 – 18 November 2021, Bangkok;</i> <i>5. Earlier, a short clip film was developed about the National ID introduction and history in Vanuatu for a CRVS side event at the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD) in March 2021 (the SDG forum for Asia and the Pacific). The focus was on "Visibility in Covid-19 times: Are we getting everyone in the picture through civil registration?"</i> <i>6. The project has also developed a storyboard for production of short UNDP/VEEP documentary clarifying the purpose and impact of the project;</i> 	<p>Increased knowledge about elections, Increased number of eligible and qualified candidates. Increased voter turnout.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the benefits and use of the national ID for the population of Vanuatu. Increased regional focus (Asia and Pacific) and attention to the introduction of legal identity and issuance of national IDs in Vanuatu, carrying many important lessons learned for small island states.</p>
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			<p>7. <i>Developed concept paper and support activities on National ID awareness campaign, the benefits of having/using National ID;</i></p> <p>8. <i>Continued strong efforts of Voter Information and Voter Awareness through national radio VBTC ; commercial radio (Buzz FM shows); TV; Facebook messages; Website; newspaper, billboards, small videos, and efforts through the Voter Awareness Committee partners in the islands;</i></p> <p>9. <i>VEO Facebook now has 5,060 followers of whom 45% are women and 54% are men in Port Vila, Luganville, Australia; Fiji; NZ; New Caledonia, and Solomon Islands, PNG - biggest audience group is 25-34 years;</i></p> <div data-bbox="886 950 1438 1226"> <p>ind (45%) Kvinder 2,7 tusind (54%) M</p> <table border="1"> <caption>VEO Facebook Followers by Age Group and Gender</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>ind (45%)</th> <th>Kvinder (54%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3-17</td> <td>~100</td> <td>~100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-24</td> <td>~1,000</td> <td>~1,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>~2,700</td> <td>~3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>~1,500</td> <td>~1,800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>~500</td> <td>~600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>~200</td> <td>~300</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>10. <i>VEEP supported Awareness Posters, booklets & Brochures being reprinted & disseminated, plus development of a new Poster on voting only with National ID card from January 2022;</i></p>	Age Group	ind (45%)	Kvinder (54%)	3-17	~100	~100	18-24	~1,000	~1,200	25-34	~2,700	~3,000	35-44	~1,500	~1,800	45-54	~500	~600	55-64	~200	~300	
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			<p>11. <i>Developed a Teacher's Manual (Student Workbook under development) in support of the Civic Education Booklet entitled "Vanuatu Blong Yu", for use in schools and other learning environments. 14 lessons ongoing. The teachers will play a very important role in preparing the younger generations to become active, engaged citizens. In every lesson plan contained in the manual, there will be topics, ideas and activities that will help stimulate students to think, ask questions and learn more about citizenship, democracy and how the state functions in Vanuatu. The course material aims to develop in students the knowledge, skills, values necessary to become responsible, active citizens and participate in their society and especially in election processes;</i></p> <p>12. <i>The project developed a Concept Note for Provincial Council Open Day – Civic and Voter Awareness event in the provinces. First Provincial Council Open Day to be held in Torba ahead of the Provincial elections in December 2021;</i></p> <p>13. <i>A CRVS movie production in connection with their 50 year's anniversary is being edited and the VEEP project have contributed with interviews.</i></p>	
	<p>3.2 <i>Percentage of matrix on gender tracking in elections developed, including gender-disaggregated data on all aspects of the electoral administration</i></p>		<p><i>In progress</i></p> <p>1. <i>Consultations held with Gender Inclusion Consultant very experienced in work on increasing women's political and parliamentary representation. The work will be undertaken collaboratively between a consultant abroad and Vanuatu based consultant, aiming to develop a</i></p>	<p>Increased focus on gender equality so people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in Vanuatu, with particular focus on appropriate civil registration and universal suffrage.</p>



			<p><i>VEEP/VEO Gender Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan promoting gender equality in the work and operations of the Vanuatu electoral authorities, to be integrated into VEC/VEOs strategic plan for the national elections in 2024;</i></p> <p>2. <i>The Gender Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan should be fully aligned with the newly launched "National Gender Equality Policy 2020-2030" by the Department of Women's Affairs.</i></p>	
	3.3 <i>Percentage of matrix on gender tracking in Civil Registry developed, including gender-disaggregated data</i>	<i>CRVS Department databases</i>	<i>In progress</i>	
	3.4 <i>Assessment on civic understanding and access to information implemented.</i>		<p>1. <i>VEEP in collaboration with CRVS, VEO and VNSO has initiated a study on "Access to Information and Civic Awareness Assessment" to analyse the Census 2020-2021 data and the 2019 Baseline Survey, and assess, broken down by province, possession of National ID, civic understanding and how different communities prefer to access information and public awareness.</i></p>	
Output 4 <i>Legal Electoral Framework Improved and Capacity Building on Electoral Reform to Key Stakeholders provided</i>	4.1 <i>Number of viable and practical reform proposals developed</i>	<i>Amendment to CAP 61 Explanatory Note National ID Working Group minutes Order No. 24 of 2020 for CAP 230 Provincial</i>	<p>1. <i>Supported legal amendments for Parliament session, Cap 61, Cap 230, Cap 126. Parliament ordinary session on 14 May 2021, for amendments to come into force before Provincial Elections in May 2021;</i></p> <p>2. <i>The Government introduced 23 Bills for First Ordinary Session. These included: Bill for the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, Bill for the Civil Status (Registration) (Amendment) Act;</i></p>	<i>The amendments are essential for the update of the legal framework to reflect current civil registration policy and practice, as well as the shift in voter identification methodology following GoV decision in 2017 to link the civil and voter registration databases in an effort to improve the integrity and accuracy of voter registration and to enhance the synergies between different government ministries and agencies.</i>



<p>Gender Marker 2</p>		<p><i>Council Elections Amendment to CAP 126 Municipal Council Elections</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. <i>Three EC regulations and the code of conducts has been drafted, vetted, approved, signed and recorded in the official Government Gazette, along with General Election Order no. 127 of 2021, Municipal Government Council Election Regulations Order no. 128 of 2021 and Provincial Government Council Election Regulations Order no. 129 of 2021;</i> 4. <i>Two Legal Reform working groups have been established: 1), the Civil Registration & Legal Identity Working Group, and 2) The Electoral Reform Working Group (ERWG)</i> 5. <i>The Civil Registration and Identity Management Working Group was supported by VEEPs CRVS Policy Expert with development of Discussion papers 1-7 for analysis and debate, resulting in;</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. <i>Drafting instructions on new Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Bill drafted w. VEEP Legal Drafter, and actual Bill drafted in collaboration with State Law Office. Ongoing translation into English/French/Bislama. Tabled for November Parliament;</i> II. <i>Drafting instructions on National ID Card Bill drafted w. VEEP Legal Drafter, and actual Bill drafted in collaboration with State Law Office. Ongoing translation into English/French/Bislama.</i> 6. <i>The Bill for the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act will replace the out of date Civil Status (Registration) Act [CAP 61] from 1971, plus, the Bill for the National Identity Card Act that sets out a comprehensive legislative</i> 	<p>Amendments include introduction of the national ID card, removal of requirement for entries in the Register to be hand-written, establishing the Central Civil Register to be maintained electronically etc. Without these changes, the national ID card would in principle be illegal for voting purposes.</p>
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			<p><i>scheme for National Identity Cards to be issued to citizens of Vanuatu;</i></p> <p><i>7. The project will support development of a CRVS Operational Handbook and trainings in in Q4 once the draft Bills have passed;</i></p> <p><i>8. The Electoral Reform Working Group (ERWG) has been successfully established with wide participation from PMs office, Law Reform Commission, MOIA compliance, DLA, CRVS, VEO and EC;</i></p> <p><i>9. ERWG concept note and TORs established, and following issues discussed:</i></p> <p><i>I. Harmonization of the electoral framework: integration of all bills into a single, harmonized electoral law – options to make a start on required legal analysis</i></p> <p><i>II. Ballot structure and design: move to a single ballot paper (attached in annex discussion paper)</i></p> <p><i>III. Out of Country Voting (attached in annex discussion paper)</i></p> <p><i>IV. Out of Constituency Voting (attached in annex discussion paper)</i></p> <p><i>10. Support to deepen Electoral Legal Reforms, to draft and replace Cap 146, and to harmonise all the dispersed electoral laws and regulations into one single Electoral Act will continue in Q4 2021 and in 2022.</i></p>	
	4.2 <i>Number of electoral staff (gender disaggregated)</i>		<i>Q4 2021 once the draft Bills have passed in Parliament;</i>	



	<i>trained on new reform measures</i>			
	4.3 <i>Number of key stakeholders trained on new reform measures</i>		<i>Q4 2021 once the draft Bills have passed in Parliament;</i>	
	4.4 <i>Electoral Gender mainstreaming action plan for the project developed and monitored</i>		<p><i>In 2014, governments across Asia-Pacific committed to strengthening CRVS systems and advance universal civil registration to support good governance, health and development. However, due to a lack of data, we do not know if the most vulnerable people are being registered, which could mean hard to reach and marginalized people, including PWD (People With Disability), women and girls, remain invisible, compounding the inequality they face. ESCAP has launched the "Let's really get everyone in the picture" initiative, to support countries in conducting inequality assessments to make sure we count everyone and leave no one behind;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. VEEP is supporting Gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan – TORs developed for Q4;</i> <i>2. In Q3 the project liaised by Zoom with Lesley Clerk (Australian Parliamentarian & women in politics advocate) as basis for developing a Gender Action Plan;</i> <i>3. In Q3 VEEP supported the development of a VEC/VEO PWD Action Plan to raise awareness of issues faced in electoral inclusion for People With Disability. The PWD Action Plan is to be uploaded to the VEO Website.</i> 	<p>Contributing to empowering women, girls and young people to fully use their rights and increase their political participation. VEEP strongly supports the participation and leadership of girls and women, promoting it, through comprehensive electoral legal reforms, civil registration and identity management reforms, and mainstreaming gender in all policies, procedures and actions.</p>



Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) officer assists a visually impaired voter to place her vote in the ballot box in recent Port Vila Municipal By-Elections. VEEP has recently supported a People With Disability (PWD) Action Plan to improve the access of PWD voters to electoral participation).



A heavy burden but bringing electoral access opportunity to remote communities in Vanuatu.



PART 3: PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 2021

Output 1:

- Restructure Submission progressed and approved by Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC) for the Vanuatu Electoral Office;
- Restructure Submission progressed and approved for the Vanuatu Electoral Commission with the critical new post of a Political Party Coordinator to support information on electoral legislation & processes, compliance. This Submission requires approval & signature of DG Ala;
- Restructure Submission for CRVS to be signed by DG Ala and progressed through PSC. The restructure creates a Provincial Services Unit, an Identity Management Unit and a CR Unit – to comply with new electoral legislation and Decentralisation Act.
- Support progress of VEO & VEC restructures through Office of Public Service Commission review & approval processes;
- Assist Ministry of Internal Affairs to develop MoIA Corporate Plan 2022 – 2026 as per GOV planning & reporting Guidelines as cementing the VEC, VEO and CRVS reforms and Business Plans will considerably enhance sustainability outcomes for all 3 agencies as well as ensuring cross sectoral cooperation is cemented within the Corporate Plan. Part of this process will be a revision of GoV Budget Book 3 approved annually in November Parliament's Budget Appropriations Act – further ensuring VEO, VEC, CRVS budget is integrated. Alignment with NSDP will be a focus.
- Continue to support VEO in building its decentralised provincial electoral offices, as well as CRVS offices, put in place office and network arrangements to support this structure where needed. Continued procurement and implementation of a 'provincial package' for each provincial office (desk, chair, laptop, printer, phone, scanner, zoom equipment (speaker and webcam), poster material, manuals, and in some cases, a satellite disc where GoV network is not available. Central procurement is ongoing;
- In case of 19 by-elections, support development of booster Training Concept and Agenda. Polling training agenda and training material power point, simulation exercises;
- Support training booster through use of already developed Training Material, including audio material/ 3x audio video productions to support visuals and to boost the efforts of the training manual;
- Support planning and logistics for training of Polling Staff for Pentecost constituency elections and for Torba Provincial elections;
- Complete the satellite imageries for all provinces with UNITAR/UNOSAT. Story map created, Web Maps with all data produced are visualised. Established list of consolidated villages. Presentation to be arranged with VNSO, IOM, DSSPAC, CRVS, VEO/EC

Output 2:

- Support data validation and verification mission to Torba Province in October, ahead of Torba provincial elections in December.
- Support consolidation based on field work updates, verifications and 'de-facto' new registrations;
- Support recruitment of 25 Data Entry Staff for data centre and field work updates
- Support preparation of digital electoral rolls, per polling station;



- Support preparation and printing of paper-based electoral rolls, per polling station;
- Support preparations to use the recently developed Mobile Application for Voter Identification in polling stations based on tablet scanning ability, linked with the electoral roll;
- Rebuild the RegisterVIZ, VES and GRVS Web in a development environment and start working on automations, upgrades, and a re-vamped version of the central civil register and the national ID based electoral list
- Start the biometric facial duplication analysis software to support clean-up of duplicates in civil and voter register images database;
- Continue clean-up of data in Central Civil Register, and Electoral Database;
- Support Electoral Operations for potential 19 by-elections (depending on Appeals Court Decision)
- Provide technical and operational assistance to the Torba Provincial Elections;
- Produce a list of Voter Lists based on National ID numbers only, to be sent to all Provinces in coordination with DLA and area council administrators, to support the 'voter list inspection at area council level';
- Continue support to COVID19 vaccination roll-out in provinces, financially and technically. Roll-out of COVID19 vaccination programme based on National ID. The MOH has requested CRVS support in terms of volunteers and use of tablets for verification purposes during the Vaccine roll out;
- Follow up on training of VEO, CRVS, MOH, OGCIO, MOYS, MOET on SQL query optimization, to strengthen skills/build capacities of GoV database developers and IT officers to address the challenge of identifying and tuning queries that are optimizing statistics, reporting, impacting performance or development of new components. The objective is to build capacities on analysing and addressing performance issues in partner/stakeholder Ministries;
- In collaboration with UN ESCAP, keep the momentum of the CRVS Working Group and VEEPs policy experts Frank Nan to provide policy guidance and coordination to the ESCAP business process assessment and mapping of CRVS;
- Support CRVS participation and presentation in the upcoming Second Ministerial CRVS Conference event in BKK for Asia and the Pacific. Vanuatu will present in both the main event and side event. The main event will focus on the role of civil registration and the Vanuatu's identity management system, and the side event will focus on the connection between civil registration and the Covid-19 vaccination rollout;
- Release nationally the documentary movie telling the story of CRVS in Vanuatu "National ID in Vanuatu, are we really getting everyone in the picture?" or "My Registration, My Identity, My Vanuatu".
- ESCAP has launched the "Let's really get everyone in the picture" initiative, to support countries in conducting inequality assessments to make sure we count everyone and leave no one behind. In Q4 work will start on a Gender Action Plan supported by Lesley Clerk to complement the PWD Action Plan developed in Q3.
- Follow up on the Global Grants Program with Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative. Work Planning documents submitted, contracting pending
- Finalise translations and explanatory notes of 1) the Bill on Civil Registration and Identity Management, and 2) the Bill on National Identity Card, tabled for November Parliament Sessions;
- Support drafting of CRVS procedures handbook;
- Support CRVS Staff training on Procedures/SOPs;



Output 3:

- In case of 19 unscheduled by-elections (depending on Court decision/outcomes), continue to support meetings of the Voter Awareness Committee as a mechanism to coordinate some key stakeholders, manage clear messages and disseminate information, and continue efforts of Voter Information and Voter Awareness through radio, TV, Facebook messages, Website, VBTC, billboards, small videos, and efforts through the Voter Awareness Committee partners in the islands. Radio every Thursday Buzz FM, key messages, FB key messages in line with legal provisions, 3 x SMS's all country Digicel/Vodafone. Billboards and social media;
- Support the parliamentary by-election in Pentecost on 8 October, training of material, manuals, support brush-up training and tablet-based voter identification in polling stations.
- Support the tablet-based data validation and verification project in Torba Province field work in Oct;
- Support the electoral preparations for Torba Provincial elections, Oct-Dec, with awareness and printing material, manuals, My Election Week by Week booklets, dissemination of key messages;
- Support training of polling staff, logistics.
- Support 'Provincial Council Open Day' to be held in Torba, as part of Civic and Voter Awareness event in the provinces;
- Undertake population and trend analysis of central civil register, planned for Dec 2021
- Undertake study of 'Access to Information and Civic Understanding' to inform future awareness campaigns;
- Develop Gender Action plan and strategy;
- Develop support activities on National ID awareness campaign, and the final phase-out of electoral cards by 1 Jan 2022;
- Support a 1-day civic education material review workshop between electoral authorities, UNDP/VEEP and the Ministry of Education/Curriculum Taskforce to review the Teachers Manual and Student Handbook. Support translation;
- Launch the Civil Education booklet in collaboration with Ministry of Education together with the Teacher's manual and Student handbook to go into curriculum from 2022
- Participate the 'Open Democracy Day' at the Parliament
- Participate in the NZ – Vanuatu Expo on 29 October.
- Launch the VEO Website as a news feed and repository of information of electoral cycles in Vanuatu, electoral processes, voting rights, Voter Information etc. and archive of past elections

Output 4:

- Upscale work with the Electoral Reform Working Group, which now has wide participation and interest.
- Continue support in engagement of the Law Reform Commission to undertake legal analysis and consultations on various electoral modalities for amendment;
- Arrange a 2-day workshop on electoral reforms, focusing on change of ballot structure, out of country voting, out of constituency voting, campaign periods, voter registration transition to new model etc.
- Provide support to legal drafting in collaboration with State Law Office on revision of electoral legislation and harmonisation of law to capture current disparate legislation and regulations;



- Continue support to the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) /National ID reform group – 2 important Bills tabled for November Parliament, translation ongoing;
- Pursue a comprehensive review of CRVS processes through collaboration with ESCAP-CRVS and UNDP/VEEPs national ID expert. Focus on CRVS strategy, CRVS business processes and CRVS software;
- Support for development of a CRVS Operational Handbook;
- Support coordination with Bloomberg's Global grant program and in collaboration provide technical support to development of applications for MoH and CRVS integration of data, development of API for inter-operability, explore integration of systems;

PART 4: PARTNERSHIPS

- National partnerships: EC/VEO, CRVS, CSU, VNSO, DLA, MOH, MoET, DoW, DSSPAC, OGCIO, VBTC
 - The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) with focus on digital economy work.
 - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) with focus on improvement of civil registration processes.
 - Bloomberg Philanthropies, Data for Health Initiative (CRVS, Global Grants Program) with focus on integrating Public Health Systems with CRVS data.
 - The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) with focus on birth registration
 - UN's World Health Organisation (WHO) with focus on death registration and COVID19 vaccination in Vanuatu.
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- During Q3 VEEP interacted with UNICEF on our insights on unique identifiers in administrative data systems under partnerships.
 - The project has also engaged with UNESCAP on CRVS business process assessment and mapping, and Bloomberg Philanthropies on data interoperability between civil register data and ministry of Health data.



PART 5: RISK and ASSUMPTIONS

Risk Category	Risk Sub-category	Event	Causes	Impact	Action needed	Treatment activity description	Expected effect from treatment
POLITICAL	Political will	Limited scope for strengthening institutional and operational capacities of VEO and VEC, particularly during the non-electoral periods	Limited or inconsistent political will and commitment to provide the necessary support to the electoral authorities and legal reforms	Delays in project output implementation; Reduced impact of project on VEO and VEC	Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEEP II will continue supporting the lobbying work of the EC/VEO within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other government agencies to push for compliance with government commitments towards support for the whole electoral cycle. • Prospective legal reforms require a wide and inclusive consultation process to raise awareness on legal changes. VEEP II envisages key activities to enhance engagement of relevant stakeholders (public, government ministries, donors and CSOs) to continue building collaboration mechanisms with governmental and civil society with a view to have ample participation and awareness on key electoral reform aspects. • There has been resistance to Political Party Reform Bill that 	STRENGTHENED OWNERSHIP BY VEC/VEO



						<p>will provide a stronger compliance framework for establishing new parties and for transparency of operations for existing parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with other electoral stakeholders and institutions. 	
POLITICAL	Political will	Poor perceptions of the independence or efficiency of the EC/VEO create obstacles to the implementation of the project activities.	Insufficient capacity within VEO / VEC to provide independent accurate legal advice on electoral matters	No confidence in VEO/VEC advisory services	Acclaim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technical advisory roles within the EC/VEO include provision for high level advice on and recommendations for the EC's consideration and adoption related to perceptions management; strategies to address poor perceptions and to build the integrity of the institution • Provide technical support to re-draft key legislation • Coordinate high-level advocacy by development partners and civil society 	CONFIDENCE IN CAPACITY OF VEO/VEC BY STAKEHOLDERS AND VOTERS
OPERATIONAL	Capacity development of national partners	The voter register is not adequately corrected through the next updates during the transition period.	Disconnect between Voter registry and Civil registry systems.	Lack of confidence in work of VEO; Low confidence in project impact	Acclaim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close collaboration between the VEO and the CRVS will be maintained, supported by VEEP's technical assistance, to support successful efforts of duplication analysis, data validation in the 	VOTER REGISTRY IS UPDATED SYSTEMATICALLY



			<p>CRVS and VEO have each their mandate and collect different information.</p> <p>This form of registration is predicated on the principle that voting is a right of citizenship and that voters may choose to register or not to register for an election.</p> <p>Currently, the national ID registration is voluntary.</p>	<p>The current 'voluntary national ID registration' will also have implications on accuracy and inclusiveness. if citizens do not register, they effectively deprive themselves of the right to vote.</p>	<p>field for improved quality of the register. VEEP Phase II will endeavour to support the VEO in its awareness and outreach efforts targeting key segments of the population to encourage new entries in the registration process with a view to ensure an inclusive and reliable voter register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A restructure of both offices has been undertaken to provide stronger capacity in operations, policy, analysis & planning • As yet unsubstantiated rumours of ID Cards being printed by Agents selling Citizenship is a grave concern. Once the National ID Cards are recognised by law, they have a financial value. This will need careful scrutiny and Regulations to ensure only Dep't of CRVS can legally issue the National ID Cards. • Bills now going to Parliament in November will need to be passed i& gazetted urgently to prevent legal identities being sold by private companies 	
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OPERATIONAL	Leadership & management	Non-availability of VEO staff capacity	Delayed recruitment	Late appointment of the VEO staff can have an impact on it properly carrying out its mandate.	Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will continue to support the EC/VEO efforts to ensure that the expected additional permanent staff (including the provincial officers) are appointed as promised. • A Restructure Submission is being presented to the Public Service Commission that will build capacity of the office • I Q4 assistance to the Ministry of Internal Affairs o draft a new Corporate Plan and assist with the MoIA CSU restructure will institutionalise stronger capacity building & institutional planning. building and supporting that work undertaken in Q2 and Q3 with VEEP support • A VEO Business Plan in new GoV format provides for implementation of priority position staffing. • The replacing of Civil & Voter Registration Expert in the VEEP team, has some challenges with delay in outstanding documentation from outgoing staff member going on 	VEO CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT THEIR MANDATE
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						<p>retirement and challenges of accessibility to the data and system for incoming staff member & to access the Government network and OGCIO server,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, GoV has locked down in-coming flights due to COVID19 causing issues with timely mobilization. to Vanuatu with limited flights and access to quarantine of only 120 places. • Challenges have emerged in handover process between two ICT experts in a critical support area in a transition phase <p>a. New expert will need to entirely rebuild all three database systems for development purposes/test environment purposes in a development environment in order to upgrade, test & develop new required features, possibly an impediment to smooth handover and provision seamless technical assistance. This possible delay is an issue with up-</p>	
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						<p>coming elections looming during busy election days.</p> <p>b. There is also a security risk management element in that the outgoing staff member still has access to all GoV servers.</p>	
POLITICAL	Political instability	Increased snap elections in Vanuatu	Political instability during the project duration might increase the chances of emergency ("snap") elections, which could alter the project's work plan and priorities.	Delayed project implementation; unclear direction on electoral reforms given by political leadership	Acclaim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEEP technical assistance will be provided to the EC/VEO to ensure there are plans in place to respond efficiently and in a timely manner to emergency elections, including in terms of regulations, operational plans, template legal timelines and procedures. • The threat of 19 possible by-elections if High Court Case is lost (suspension of April Parliament when 19 MPs were deemed "absent") will potentially not only be extremely costly but also disrupt the Budget Appropriations for 2022 undertaken by the November 2022 Parliament Sitting. • The President's Pardon of convictions for 3 MPs (one the former PM Charlot Salwai Tabimasmās) is being called into 	EFFICIENT AND TIMELY REPSONSE TO EMERGENCY ELECTIONS



						question and referred to Court by the Ombudsman as unconstitutional. The election for the vacant seat in Pentecost of Charlot Salwai is currently underway. If the Court overturns the pardon, a further By-Election will be necessary. This is the sort of occurrence that leads to voter disengagement and lack of confidence in the political system.	
POLITICAL	Political instability	Public disillusioned with the democratic processes	Regular vote of no confidence/snap elections	Delay in project implementation	Acclaim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EC/VEO will be supported to strengthen its public outreach. Improvement in the provision of electoral services (such as a more accurate and trusted voter register) will help improve public perceptions. • Increasing public disaffection and disengagement caused by frequent by-elections as well as the high costs of unbudgeted elections draining funds and staff focus from other high priority activities. 	PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN EC/VEO & Electoral processes eroded further
ENVIRONMENTAL	Health and Safety	Natural disasters and pandemics including COVID-19 in Vanuatu change	Natural disasters and pandemics including COVID-19 in Vanuatu	Delayed project implementation	Acclaim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure flexible schedule for activity implementation to minimise potential impact on outputs and ensure sequenced and timely implementation of 	FLEXIBLE WORKPLAN INORPORATING



		<p>stakeholder priorities and ability to implement and participate in activities under the project.</p>			<p>project activities, with adjustments made where necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lessons learnt from COVID-19 and other natural disasters for scenario planning and put in place contingency measures for activation as situations unfold 	<p>'EMERGENCY' SHOCKS</p>
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PART 6: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

An article was drafted about UNDP/VEEP support in Vanuatu and how VEEP scaled up with joint digital civil & voter registration efforts, some of the impacts of it - including disaster response work (in connection with the cyclones and volcanic eruptions/heavy ashfalls), identifying the locations of vulnerable citizens and delivering services, and quite critically, has assisted the COVID19 responses and vaccination rollout, and, off course elections (one person one vote) - so far has resulted in more than 70% of the population obtaining their 1st ever National ID cards.

["How an agile response transformed Vanuatu's civil register system at a time of crisis | UNDP in the Pacific."](#)

On social media:

UNDP Pacific website:

https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/articles/2021/How_an_agile_response_transformed_Vanuatu_civil_register_system_at_a_time_of_crisis.html

UNDP Twitter: https://twitter.com/UNDP_Pacific/status/1419424604087406596

UNDP Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UNDP.Pacific/posts/4090876584300713>

UNDP LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6825193110218379264>

A short documentary has been produced to document the story of civil registration and establishment of legal identities in Vanuatu. Here on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/5NVFB6b7EuM>

An ERMS video was uploaded on youtube : <https://youtu.be/QxBJPii52d4>

Participation was arranged in Q3 for a UNDP/VEEP Booth exhibition, visibility and support for Open Parliament Day to be held early October 2021

PART 7: KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES

The up-scaled support to National ID implementation in Vanuatu and on-going data verification and data validation process has faced several challenges since the start of its implementation in June 2019. Developed with the objective to verify CRVS's civil registrater information and VEO's Voter register Information, the project expanded to be a "de facto" country-wide registration process, with thousands of people being registered, personal information records amended and updated, thousands of new-borns and youths registered, and thousands of Birth Certificates and National ID cards reprinted and/or printed.

The initial technical process in place had to be adapted in support of the new requirements. Initially using 70 procured tablets in Malo, Aore in Sanma Province and all Penama province, the field work in Malampa, Tafea and Shefa provinces have required use of more than 400 tablets. The immense amount of data (and forms) collected has generated a heavy and unexpected workload on the back-office process. In response, another cohort of 25 students from USP & AUF, has been identified and contracted in Q3 to start data entry in Q4 to increase the data processing, hoping all data can be processed in time for printing the electoral rolls for another round of election data inspection and scrutiny at area council level, ahead of any elections to be held in 2022.

Another on-going challenge has been the logistics, as the population is so dispersed among all the islands. Access to good vehicles and boats and sometimes chartered flights to field staff on the ground in some remote area councils remains problematic. Good



quality training is often a key factor in the success of any project, and VEO and CRVS Department have been working hard to support the training, not only in the field but also in Port Vila (cascade training).

In terms of sustainability, the increasing ICT capacity and database development as well as maintenance skills within the VEO and CRVS is a major requirement. Given the many ongoing activities, the limited pool of staff resources and having so many in the field has challenged VEEP's ability to ensure proper ICT capabilities and database development skills.

One effective tool used during the verification project has been the use of satellite imageries, supported by the VEEP project and the results of combined efforts of UNDP/VEEP, UNDP Crisis Bureau, and United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) have developed these detailed maps and visual analysis to support the process. Maps were installed in tablets providing a sound overview and detailed information of the households and their exact locations to the field operators.

An emerging challenge in Q3 has been issues in the handover process between two UNDP ICT experts in a critical support area in a transition phase with the replacing of Civil & Voter Registration Expert in the VEEP team, with delays in outstanding documentation and handover of data and e-files by the outgoing staff member (going onto retirement). This has implications for data security, accessibility to the data and IT system for the incoming staff member & access to the Government network and OGCIO servers. The new expert will start working remotely and need to entirely rebuild all three database systems for development purposes in a test environment in order to upgrade, test & develop new required features, possibly an impediment to smooth handover and provision of seamless technical assistance. This possible delay is an issue with up-coming elections looming during busy election days. There is also a security risk management element in that the outgoing staff member still has access to all data and GoV servers. Dialogue continues and remedy risk measures are taken including managing and 'sandboxing' the access to the OGCIO servers and relevant databases.

There are also challenges related to securing international consultants/Technical Advisors timely mobilization to Vanuatu and delays in the arrival of contracted Civil & Voter Registration ICT expert, Civil Registration Policy Expert, Electoral Reform expert and Legal Drafter arising from the GoV lock down due to COVID19 of in-coming international flights to 2 days a week and ceilings on quarantine of only 120 places.

PART 8: SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP

UNDP/VEEP once again got involved in scaling up and expanding the scope of VEEP Support, this time with support to agreeing to develop the essential Ministry of Internal Affairs Corporate Plan 2022-26 for the continuously growing core Ministry of Internal Affairs in Vanuatu. This will provide a planning framework for the VEO/VEC, guiding more sustainable Business Plan and budget processes as a result. This work will take place in Q4 2021.

Meetings have been held with UNICEF, WHO, Ministry of Health exploring requirements for the health sector and how to appropriately link data between CRVS/MoIA and MoH and analyse further requirements and actual implementation strategies to support the roll-out of the National COVID19 Vaccination Strategy. The Ministry of Health (MoH), partnering with UNICEF and WHO have used the civil registry data, tablet-based approach, and the pool of VEEP trained enumerators to roll out the Vaccination Program. Utilising the VEEP tablets loaded with a specially designed Mobile Apps with the civil register, GPS locators and Satellite Imageries Web Maps, the same enumerators are slowly being mobilized country wide to support the Vaccination Program.

Vanuatu consists of 6 provinces. The central province vaccination program commenced in June, the Sanma Province program in August and the Torba, Panama and Malampa Province Programs will be following a ship-based strategy from Torba to Tafea. The plan is to have 15 teams on board with 2 fixed sites and 4 mobile teams. These teams will similarly use VEEP trained enumerators and tablets loaded with an up-dated version of the Civil Register Mobile app. The vaccine support by VEEP includes financial and technical support to the CRVS staff and volunteers at vaccination sites.

Mr Karel Haal, Health Economist of the Vanuatu Ministry of Health has noted "The vaccination rollout, and health care system in general, are largely benefiting from the support given by CRVS and UNDP/VEEP. Their support has resulted in a high level of data accuracy during the vaccination and a professional operation. *Moreover, the increased National ID coverage will allow the Ministry of Health to implement an improved Patient Information System in the coming years.*"



Meetings have also been held with PMO's Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC), Heads of Sections to further explore the potential of using the unique identification numbers for government planning purposes, and linking Ministry agencies and their individual isolated, and often outdated, databases with the Central Civil Register and use of the unique Identity numbers. All paper work at Labour and Police Departments now also require to complete the national ID number.

The sustainability & scaling up implications of the National ID Card is driving not merely roll-out of public health and pandemic programs but is being used by stakeholder agencies such as the Ministry of Education for education sector resourcing & planning. Usage of the ID Card for disaster planning & response is being implemented by the National Disaster Management Office and IOM Displaced Persons planning & income support payments as part of disaster response.

The ripple effects of the National ID Cards on governance operational environments are already being felt not just for voting but also for police clearances, passport applications, procuring a Driver's Licence, a plane ticket, opening a bank account and education enrolments. The potentially profound implications – not merely for voting purposes - of this simple card have quickly been realised by other agencies operating in Vanuatu.

The building of a Population Register based on verifiable data emerging from the central civil register and stronger registration of births and deaths will have flow on effects for the Voter Lists/Electoral Rolls.

A Global Grants Program application and proposal (150,000U\$) was submitted to The Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative - Application decisions were shared via email by June 15, 2021. Urgent review of all the processes on vital events is needed, aligned with the new legal framework, and CRVS is now focused on planning for Q4 for the Bloomberg GGP grant to support the integration of CRVS and health systems data, with support from VEEPs Identity/civil registration policy expert and ICT expert.

UN ESCAP will provide a senior expert (out of country) linked with a junior expert (in-country) to undertake CRIM business process mapping and reengineering, supported by VEEP Identity/civil registration policy expert and ICT expert.

This type of cross agency cooperation and partnership is becoming a hallmark of the VEEP Project as emerging opportunities are utilised to build innovation, impact, reach and sustainability.



PART 9: QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

As at Quarter 3 end, we have reached 52% delivery of the Annual Target. Taking into consideration of the current commitments, the total delivery rate comes to **68% of the Annual Target**.

Financial Report as at 30th Sep 2021							
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)							
Project Name: Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP) II							
UNDP reference number: 00123236							
MFAT Activity Code: ACT-0102062							
Project Period: - 01/01/2021 - 30/06/24							
Reporting Period: 01/01/2021 - 30/09/2021							
Donor: MFAT (NZ)							
Currency of Reporting: USD							
INCOME:							
Fund received - Dec 2020						358,448.28	
Fund received - Jun 2021						214,927.42	
Fund received - Jul 2021						1,295,055.00	
						<u>1,868,430.70</u>	
EXPENSES:							
EXPECTED OUTPUTS	ATLAS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Budget 2021	Actual Expenses	Commitments	Total Expenses Jan-Sep	Balance
Output 1: <i>Institutional Capacities of the Electoral Authorities Strengthened</i> <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	1.1	1.1 Support the EC/VEO in sustaining their staffing structure, incl. technical, financial and logistics support, capacity-building activities, and establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs, including planning and evaluation workshops.	30,000	17,813.17	17,609.43	35,422.60	5,422.60
	1.2	1.2 Support the EC/VEO in continuous development/updates of regulations, operational procedures, manuals, forms etc.	30,000	9,238.25	15,953.14	25,191.39	4,808.61
	1.3	1.3 Support the VEO in building its decentralized framework (provincial electoral administrators) and put in place administrative arrangements to support this structure incl. alignment with VEO/CRVS/DLA resources etc.	20,000	2,779.84	5,673.23	8,453.07	11,546.93
	1.4	1.4 Support National ID enhancement project as a tool to help the Government respond better to pandemics and natural disasters, including legal identity issues and strategy for linking of governments and development partners in harmonisation on use of unique IDs.	20,000	13,196.01	8,889.06	22,085.07	2,085.07
	1.5	1.5 Support digitization, digital archiving and knowledge base – including digital files into the Government Document Management System (Saperion).	40,000	-	-	-	40,000.00
	1.6	1.6 Sustain the modernization of the VEO with procurement support to a new voter identification model, incl. scanners/tablets for all polling stations, electoral material etc.	40,000	21,469.69	-	21,469.69	18,530.31
	1.7	1.7 Development and roll-out of cascade training, training of trainers (ToT) on electoral processes (polling & counting etc. for provincial, municipal and general elections)	30,000	6,813.07	-	6,813.07	23,186.93
	1.8	1.8 Assist the VEO in mainstreaming gender-sensitive policies and procedures, and ensure gender-sensitivity in all outreach activities in the electoral process	30,000	2,910.94	10,673.44	13,584.38	16,415.62
	1.9	1.9 Examine and support VEO in the identification of people with disabilities, in collaboration with GRVS department.	10,000	-	-	-	10,000.00



	1.10B	villages/new settlements/area councils/constituencies/polling stations. Support to satellite imagery development, services and production in conjunction with UNITAR and UNDP Crisis Unit, to support the establishment of a common locations dataset to be used by VEO, CRVS, National Statistics Office (VNSO) and other Gov	60,000	-	-	-	60,000.00
	1.11	1.11 Post-election Review : Support a Multi-stakeholder Post-election Review (EC/VEO, Gov authorities, CSOs, FBOs, PPs etc.);	20,000	-	-	-	20,000.00
	1.12	1.12 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	95,000	130,902.90	-	130,902.90	35,902.90
	1.13	1.13 Direct Project Costs Programme management costs (rent, equipment, DPC, etc.)	5,000	-	-	-	5,000.00
		Sub-Total for Output 1	430,000	205,124	58,798	263,922	166,078
Output 2: <i>Integrity and Accuracy of the Voter Register Enhanced</i>	2.1	2.1 Support transitioning to the new 'voter registration model' and capacity building support in ICT related components to ensure its sustainability and cost-effectiveness, as well as improve technical resources, systems sustainability and stimulating local ownership.	30,000	16,685.31	0.01	16,685.32	13,314.68
<i>Gender marker: 2</i>	2.2	2.2 Support implementation of strategy and operations for the transitional period to ensure a smooth transfer from the current GRVS and VES databases – to the use of the National ID Card database for the production and establishment of a unique electoral roll.	30,000	29,911.25	5,298.77	35,210.02	5,210.02
	2.3	2.3 Provide procurement support to the VEO in the data verification/validation of joint civil & voter data in all provinces, - procurement of equipment, material and services.	10,000	13,581.97	9,840.56	23,422.53	13,422.53
	2.4	2.4 Provide training support to the VEO in the data verification/validation of joint civil & voter data in all provinces – help desk functions, area secretaries, ward secretaries, field technicians, and operators in each province.	40,000	20,648.82	-	20,648.82	19,351.18
	2.5	2.5 Support the development of a component to link the VEO website with the voter register for active voter response service.	10,000	1,317.33	-	1,317.33	8,682.67
	2.6	2.6 Support the development of a SMS service for Voter verification based on the National Id Number.	30,000	21,045.94	-	21,045.94	8,954.06
	2.7	2.7 Provide technical support to the CRVS systems and databases, revise the actual identity management system with the objective to guarantee the accuracy to the existent citizen information and the quality of related services.	40,000	37,447.78	20,000.00	57,447.78	17,447.78
	2.8	2.8 Develop a centralized a CRVS/VEO citizen image database.	20,000	2,683.60	-	2,683.60	17,316.40
	2.9	2.9 Develop and implement a facial recognition system with the objective to identify possible matches in CRVS/VEO databases.	30,000	-	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00
	2.10B	2.10 Support the implementation of a helpdesk and call center component providing services for electoral activities - hr, training and equipment.	30,000	-	-	-	30,000.00
	2.11	2.11 Investigate and support the use of new technologies and digitalisation processes for voter registration and voter verification	15,000	-	-	-	15,000.00
	2.13	2.12 Develop a study/prototype for database verification & results transmission auditing processes.	15,000	7,208.33	-	7,208.33	7,791.67
	2.12	2.13 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	95,000	95,171.34	-	95,171.34	171.34
		2.14 Direct Project Costs	5,000	-	-	-	5,000.00
		Sub-Total for Output 2	400,000	245,702	65,139	310,841	89,159



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



Output 3: <i>Ability to Conduct Voter Education and Raise Public Awareness strengthened</i> <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	3.1	3.1 Continuously support maintenance of the website as an online archive and actively use of VEO Facebook page to reach particularly the Youth segment of the electorate.	10,000	7,468.46	-	7,468.46	2,531.54
	3.2	3.2 In collaboration with Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO), analyse the Census 2020-2021 data and assess, broken down by province, possession of National ID, civic understanding and how different communities prefer to access	10,000	-	-	-	10,000.00
	3.3	3.3 Support the development of a concept paper and support activities for voter education, voter awareness and public outreach, and the implications and use of National ID.	30,000	7,741.88	19,500.00	27,241.88	2,758.12
	3.4	3.4 Continue to support establishment of a Voter Awareness Committee as a mechanism to coordinate all stakeholders and manage clear messages	10,000	8,841.88	-	8,841.88	1,158.12
	3.5	3.5 Support targeted awareness campaigns (media, material etc) on potential referendum, National ID registration, Municipal elections, Provincial elections, General National Election.	40,000	34,663.40	213.24	34,876.64	5,123.36
	3.6	3.6 Assist the VEO in training field staff (provincial administrators/ area secretaries/ward secretaries etc.) on voter information and awareness on any election, including face-to-face trainings.	40,000	314.40	6,950.69	7,265.09	32,734.91
	3.7	3.7 Support the VEO in further deepening of partnerships between various stakeholders and the electoral authorities, including focus on inclusion of women through grassroots outreach and activities.	30,000	903.21	2,125.00	3,028.21	26,971.79
	3.8	3.8 Support a youth induction training in Municipal Local Council (MLC) functioning and elections/Provincial Local Council (PLC) functioning and elections, in collaboration with PPEI, SLIP, Parliament	15,000	-	-	-	15,000.00
	3.9	3.9 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	95,000	95,200.60	-	95,200.60	200.60
		3.10 Direct Project Costs	5,000	-	-	-	5,000.00
	Sub-Total for Output 3		285,000	155,134	28,789	183,923	101,077
Output 4: <i>Legal Electoral Framework</i>	4.1	4.1 Develop legislative option papers/concept notes and provide technical advice as input to discussions on legal reforms, in collaboration with Law Commission and State Law Office.	20,000	-	19,680.00	19,680.00	320.00
<i>Improved and Capacity Building on Electoral Reform to Key Stakeholders provided</i> <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	4.2	4.2 Provide support to reforms of the electoral legal framework, including the integration of all direct elections in a single act.	30,000	9,885.94	19,680.00	29,565.94	434.06
	4.3	4.3 Provide support to national consultations regarding impact of legal framework changes	30,000	-	29,250.00	29,250.00	750.00
	4.4	4.4 Support operationalizing the positive outcome of the legal reform process with review of all regulations, procedures, operational manuals, forms etc.	10,000	-	-	-	10,000.00
	4.5	4.5 Support operationalizing the positive outcome of the possible political reform process for political parties. Development of procedures and forms for the Office of political party registrar embedded in VEO structure.	30,000	-	-	-	30,000.00
	4.6	4.6 Support political parties to understand and adhere to the legal framework	20,000	-	9,750.00	9,750.00	10,250.00
	4.7	4.7 Support development and implementation of data protection/data security policy and related legislation.	10,000	-	-	-	10,000.00
	4.8	4.8 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	95,000	94,359.16	-	94,359.16	640.84



	Project Monitoring, communication and visibility	2,000	0.00	-	-	2,000.00
	Sub-Total for Output 4	247,000	104,245	78,360	182,605	64,395
	Total All Outputs	1,362,000	710,204.47	231,086.57	941,291.04	420,708.96
5	General Management Support @ 8%	108,960	52,128.42	18,486.93	52,128.42	56,831.58
	Total Expenditure	1,470,960	762,332.89	249,573.50	993,419.46	477,541
	Balance as at 30th Sep 2021				875,011.24	
	Fund Utilization Rate at at 30 Sep 2021 compared to 2021 Budget		52%		68%	
	<i>*52% is utilization rate without commitments</i>					
	<i>**68% is utilization rate with commitments</i>					



PART 10: QUALITY ASSUARANCE

PROJECT MANAGER	PROGRAMME CLEARANCE
Name: Anne-Sofie Gerhard	Name: Revai Makanje Aalbaek
Title: Chief Technical Adviser & Project Manager UNDP/VEEP	Title: Team Leader – Effective Governance UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji
Signature: <i>Anne-Sofie Gerhard</i> 14-Oct-2021	Signature: <i>Revai Makanje Aalbaek</i> 14-Oct-2021



ANNEXES

Annex 1 – OUT OF COUNTRY VOTING

OCV: Introduction

Out-of-country voting (also called external voting, absentee voting or voting from abroad) is a modality that allows citizens of a country residing abroad to implement their right to vote. Yet many issues arise from the idea of citizens living abroad being allowed to vote. International IDEA has identified four “basic building blocks” for OCV, including: a) eligibility requirements; b) voter registration requirements; c) types of elections; and d) polling procedures.

There are NO international standards for OCV. Many countries implement it (under various modalities) and many others do not. It is acknowledged that OCV enhances the citizens’ right to vote, but it is also recognized that OCV presents many procedural and operational challenges. Not least, it should be noted that many OCV modalities include only national elections, only sometimes provincial elections and almost never municipal elections.

OCV in Vanuatu

The Representation of the People Act, in its Part 4, allows for the Electoral Commission (EC) “acting on the advice of the Principal Electoral Officer given after consultation with both the Prime Minister and the Minister responsible for foreign affairs, and subject to the agreement of the foreign Government concerned”, to designate one or more polling stations in a foreign country.

In its Order 68 of 1983, the EC designated a polling station in Noumea (New Caledonia). However, Order 68 was made only for the purposes of the 1983 general elections, and it states that it shall “cease to have effect immediately after the report on voting has been finally sealed at the above polling station by the Returning Officer in accordance with Rule 19 of Schedule 5 of the Representation of the People Act No. 13 of 1982”. Nevertheless, the practice has been maintained ever since, apparently without formal legal and regulatory measures. It also has been argued that the practice is not in line with Part 6 of the Act (CAP 146, subsections 2 and 3), dealing with the registration of voters overseas and the establishment of an “overseas electoral list”.

In fact, to this day the only polling station overseas is the one in Noumea, whose votes go to a seat in the Port Vila Constituency. In the last couple of years, there have been serious discussions to add supplementary polling stations in Fiji, Australia and New Zealand (which is allowed by the current legal provisions). However, it would be problematic to add any additional polling stations to the Port Vila constituency, without noting that such practice does contradict Part 6 of the Act (CAP 146). The issue of allowing overseas voters to vote in the “the part of the overseas electoral list relating to the constituency in which in his opinion he would have voted had he not been overseas” could create serious practical and operational difficulties.

In its report on the 2020 elections, the VEO recommended reconsidering of OVC. At present, there are no explicit modalities for OCV, and the same procedures have been used overseas as in-country. Clear OCV modalities and procedures should be, preferably, determined by the EC and not the law. If included in the law, they should be determined in close consultation with the EC.

Practical measures can be put in place by the VEO to facilitate overseas voting, such as the (universally common) use of diplomatic offices for polling purposes. The adoption of a single ballot paper per constituency would greatly facilitate out-of-country voting, allowing overseas voters to vote for the constituency to which they are registered, as if they voted in-country.

For information, attached is a draft EC regulation regarding the eventual establishment of additional polling stations abroad.



Annex 2 – OUT OF CONSTITUENCY VOTING

Out of constituency voting: introduction and context

“Out of constituency voting” (also called “absentee” or “remote voting”) is the possibility for any voter wishing to exercise his/her right to vote in the place of residence, which belongs to an electoral constituency other than the one in whose electoral rolls he/she has been registered, that is, his/her electoral constituency of origin.

Vanuatu context

The electoral system currently in use in Vanuatu is that of First Past the Post (FPTP) and Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) in 18 single and multiple-member constituencies. The current arrangements are adapted to the demographics of the country. These 18 constituencies are the basic “electoral unit” for the general elections and the legal framework is clear in requiring voters (and candidates) to be residents in their constituency in order to register to vote, to cast a ballot and to be nominated as candidate. Any special measure affecting this system in a major way could create significant operational and logistical issues which would significantly affect the current legal and operational timelines.

In the past the government has, through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, asked the Vanuatu Electoral Office to look into the possibility of setting up special measures to allow for out-of-constituency polling in the preparations for general elections. The request for out-of-voting constituency involves exploring feasible and effective measures to allow voters to vote outside their place of residence instead of the one assigned to them through the voter registration process.

Already Vanuatu uses a modality of “absentee” voting, which is the proxy vote. But proxy is a sensitive modality, often accused of being easily manipulated and therefore it is always accompanied but various restrictions and forms of control (as is the case in Vanuatu). In that sense, it is an “exceptional” voting modality. Trying to relax those controls to become a “massive” modality used for voting would test the system and could very easily compromise the integrity of the process.

Out of constituency voting: overall considerations and recommendations

Operational considerations

Elections are a complicated process with sensitive and logistically challenging preparations, which generally need to be sequential. Therefore, timelines (and deadlines) are of paramount importance for electoral administration. Preparations for a general election start months in advance, with a review of the legal and procedural nature, the development of operational and logistical plans, the voter registration process, the nomination of candidates before the electoral campaign, the polling, counting and tabulation of results.

One of the first considerations in regard to the introduction of special measures for out-of-constituency voting is, therefore, the need for sufficient timeframe to introduce special measures before any general elections. Any modification to the voting system will be a challenge to implement without ample time for planning and preparing for such a change.

While many argue that special measures for out-of-constituency voting are a positive step in allowing citizens to fulfil their right to cast their vote, it is extremely important to ensure that any measures adopted are realistic and feasible, otherwise they might compromise the overall credibility of the elections. Time also needs to be factored in to inform the electorate about the adoption of any extraordinary measures and on how (and when) such measures could be effectively used by them.

Out-of-constituency voting modalities

One common modality for out-of-constituency voting is the postal vote (as is done in Fiji). For this modality to work, there needs to be a highly efficient and trusted postal system in the country, which is not currently the



case in Vanuatu. It is also often discouraged because of its extremely high costs (born by the electoral authorities) and its often very cumbersome procedures for verification of voters.

A common modality used for the introduction of out-of-constituency voting is implementing prior registration by voters who wish to vote outside their designated polling stations. Besides requiring substantive additional resources, this modality needs to be included in the legal framework and operational plans. Another option is out-of-constituency voting without previous registration for absentee voting, that is, to allow for voters to vote anywhere they want (or at designated "special" polling places around the country, which would seem to be the only viable option) and to allow them to vote for their own constituency. With 18 national constituencies, and without a way of knowing how many voters would vote where and for which constituency, this option seems very difficult to implement at the moment in Vanuatu.

Allowing widespread out-of-constituency voting would mean setting up "special" polling stations, where ballot papers for the 18 different constituencies (or at least 17) would be required. Mexico has a model for out-of-constituency voting by which "special" polling stations are specifically established for voters unable to vote in the constituency in which they are originally registered. This system is problematic, as it doesn't allow to clearly estimate the number of voters that could turn up on polling day and, for this reason, it could result in creating more problems than actual benefits. Often, situations of great confusion, serious tension and disappointment by many voters are created at special polling stations visited, where much larger numbers of voters were turning up than those whom a single special polling station could have handled. Additionally, the current ballot structure would very much hamper the introduction of any special measures for out-of-constituency voting; adoption of a single ballot paper, while not solving all the operational issues, would significantly help in the introduction of any special measures.

Out-of-constituency voting: conclusions and recommendations

Absentee voting of any kind is a more complex, more costly, and potentially less transparent form of voting, which could compromise the integrity of the whole process. Large numbers of absentee voters will exacerbate administrative pressures on integrity controls, voting materials supply, issue and return, and staffing requirements.

At the moment, the only feasible option in Vanuatu would be to install "special" polling stations, but the logistical challenges would be enormous (again, it would be impossible to know in advance how many voters would be showing up at the polling stations, one of the main reasons for registering voters in the first place). Limiting "special" polling stations allowing for out of constituency voting to the two main urban centers in the country would be the most feasible modality from an operational perspective, but many voters (not living in those two cities) might feel left out and discriminated against.

In any case, any special measures would require to be backed by a mechanism that efficiently and speedily re-allocates the special votes from the constituency in which they were cast to the respective constituencies of origin, in various parts of the country where such votes must be accounted for. The (actual and perceived) integrity, transparency, reliability and security of such a vote-transmission system should also be carefully weighed.

In its most narrow interpretation, out-of-constituency voting may be restricted to those whose official duties prevent them from attending their normal voting station--for example, polling officials, security forces on duty on voting day, officials of the state employed at foreign locations. This was the case in the Solomon Islands, where measures for out-of-constituency ("remote") voting were introduced in the legal framework in 2018. Although remote voting provisions were published in the official gazette, no corresponding regulations were developed to render the provisions operational, as because of logistical challenges the out-of-constituency voting modalities were limited in the 2019 elections to pre-polling for police officers and polling staff. Regulations are required to activate pre-polling for other "class of electors" but this hasn't happened yet.





Annex 3 – BALLOT PAPER DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

Introduction: Ballot Paper Design and Structure

The design and structure of the ballot paper used in an election has multiple impacts. Ballot paper design has an impact on two important aspects of the election process: (a) the ability of voters to understand the choices of candidates or parties running in the election and select their choice in a valid manner and (b) the accuracy of counting of votes.

Ballot design can aid or inhibit clarity in an election. A general principle underpinning any design is that the simpler the ballot paper the more effective. The ballot paper form and content needs to be easily understandable. Simplicity aids speed of voter flow, and assists all voters - not only those less literate - to vote with confidence that they have not made a mistake. In all environments, inclusion of the party or candidate symbols on the ballot paper will help voters. In less literate societies, especially where party affiliations are more fluid, candidate or party leader photographs are useful.

Electoral management bodies need to take into account a range of issues when designing the ballot paper. In the past, voters used to fill in the ballots with their choices, but nowadays the ballots are generally pre-printed by the electoral authorities. The cost of the design is also an important factor that needs to be considered, as is the practicalities of delivery and retrieval of ballots.

While the electoral system and method of voting will influence the design of ballot papers, universally there are two basic types that require voters to cast their ballots in two distinctly different ways: (a) voters are issued with a single ballot containing all the parties or candidates in the election; in this case, voters have to indicate on the ballot paper which of these is preferred before placing the ballot in the ballot box; and (b) voters are faced with a selection of different ballot papers, each representing a different party or candidate; in this case, voters have to choose which ballot they prefer, usually sealing their choice of ballot in a ballot envelope before placing it in the ballot box.

From a universal perspective, the single ballot paper is the modality most used. The individual ballot for a candidate or a party is commonly called the “*French system*.” This is the system Vanuatu has adopted and is currently using.

Ballot structure in Vanuatu

As mentioned, Vanuatu uses the “*French system*,” which requires a ballot paper per candidate and an envelope to place the chosen ballot paper. The individual ballot papers bear the picture and the symbol of each candidate and are placed in a single booklet. In the legal framework, this is stated in the Act (CAP 146) – Schedule 5, as follows: 10 Voting: (1) Polling clerk to (d) deliver to the voter one ballot paper for each candidate and one envelope; and (2) voter to (b) record his vote by placing the ballot paper bearing the name and symbol of his chosen candidate in the envelope; (c) leave all other ballot papers in the booth; (d) present himself to the presiding officer or polling clerk who without touching it shall verify that the voter tenders one envelope; and (e) place the envelope in the ballot box.

In the past, the VEO had requested the law makers a change to the ballot structure, arguing that a move to a single ballot would allow better operational procedures, and would result in less cost and waste, but the move did not encounter political support. In its report of the 2020 elections, the VEO recommended “*Modifying the ballot-paper design: instead of printing a booklet of all candidates, one per page, a switch to a single ballot-paper system (without use of envelopes). This move to a single ballot paper per constituency would signify substantial savings, easier logistics, better transparency and better safeguarding of the secrecy of the vote (if this is approved, the polling and counting procedures in the laws and/or regulations would have to be modified accordingly).*”

Conclusions



The electoral authorities agree that a move from the current ballot structure (one ballot per candidate with an envelope to put the chosen ballot) to a single ballot paper (with all candidates for each district in that ballot and no envelope) would be extremely beneficial. The reasons for this include:

- Costs savings: printing of a single ballot paper will certainly result in savings to the electoral budget, among them to do away with the procurement of envelopes (one for each voter). The current “waste” of ballot papers would also be avoided;
- Ease of logistics: there would no longer a need to produce a booklet of ballots per voter. The use of a single ballot would simplify the logistics of producing, distributing and retrieval of ballots;
- Improvement of the voting procedures: lessons-learned exercises have highlighted that there have been frequent issues in the choosing of the candidate ballots, due to the strong glue that is required to bind the booklets together (there have been reports of various ballots inside a single envelope due to this problem);
- Enhancement of secrecy of the vote: as there would be no ballots left over in the polling booth, the secrecy of the vote would be better preserved;
- Improvement of the transparency of the counting of the votes;
- Importantly, facilitation of out of country and out of constituency voting: a single ballot paper would significantly facilitate the logistics and procedures when setting up additional out-of-country polling stations and the adoption of any out-of-constituency voting.

Should the move to a single ballot paper be approved and the pertinent legal changes are made, the electoral authorities are committed to ensure the ballot design meets international standards, reflects the Vanuatu context and is user friendly. Voting regulations and procedures will also be updated to reflect the new ballot paper structure. Additionally, the authorities will also prepare and conduct an extensive voter information and awareness campaign, to ensure voters are prepared to sue the new ballot paper structure. In order to allow the electoral authorities to design the ballot paper in the best conditions, to modify efficiently the voting procedures and to conduct a comprehensive voter awareness campaign, it is essential that the legal changes be made in a timely manner, well in advanced of the first elections where the new ballot paper might be used.