



## QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT Quarter 2, 2022

**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

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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. These on-going reforms have continued despite Vanuatu closure of international borders in response to COVID19 and internal borders with a whole of Nation lockdown in place from 5<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022, seeing a mandatory closure of many Government Offices, Private Sector, Development Partners and NGOs unless deemed as providing critical services.

However, despite this significant operational constraint, the 2022 Quarter 2 Progress Report demonstrates that whilst the VEEP Project continued to focus on the key mandate of electoral reform, the Project has also continued to *consolidate, consult, capacity build and complete/cascade* initiatives commenced previously. These activities were undertaken not only with the three key delivery partners of the Electoral Commission (EC), the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) and the Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Department but also more broadly with other allied agencies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) in which these three agencies are situated, sectoral stakeholders in Vanuatu, and regionally, strengthening institutions to embed sustainability outcomes and driving further innovative approaches.

*1. Consolidate:* Perhaps the most significant achievement of Q2 was the consolidation of the Drafting Instructions for the proposed Harmonised Single Electoral Bill which include 15 important innovation sections to electoral practices in Vanuatu. It was presented to the State Law Office's Parliamentary Council on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022, to be finalised as a Bill for the November 2022 Sitting of Parliament. (Refer Annex 1 for further details).

A further consolidation initiative has been the application for recurrent operations budget (EC, VEO and CRIM) in the 2023 Ministerial Budget Committee Cycle to fund activities previously resourced by VEEP project i.e. national ID Card production, awareness materials publication, as a considerable step forward to embed and institutionalise VEEP reforms. This activity was undertaken as training across the whole of the Ministry to build capacity.

The May Port Vila Municipal Council Elections have demonstrated consolidation of previous VEO administrative gains with smoother processes increasingly managed by EC/VEO without VEEP administrative/operational/financial support, and a stronger Voter Register based on National ID Cards with 67 candidates standing for 16 seats, 17 of whom were women, although acknowledging that voters can still vote with the old electoral cards and therefore significant inaccuracies persist.

The launch of the MoIA Nasara Sector Strategy 2022-2026 by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Ishmael Kalsakau Maau'koro on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> May consolidated the integrated raft of MoIA Plans and Reports. The Sector strategy provides strong directions on funding priorities for MoIA to be further discussed with sector stakeholders Development Partners, NGOs and the private sector.

*2. Consult:* Broad consultation has underpinned VEEP supported initiatives not only to ensure "buy-in" and ownership but also to ensure that outreach and awareness strategies created a broad understanding of the reasons and impact of the proposed electoral reforms. Four Working Committees supported by the project remain pivotal to the "*nasara*" approach, a very significant term culturally and historically to



indicate broad community collaboration and consultation utilising face-to-face platforms but also digital platforms:

- a) **the Electoral Reform Working Group** – has reviewed, harmonised and modernised all pertinent electoral legislation into one single Electoral Act, drafting instructions have been drafted and countrywide consultations have been undertaken. The proposed Bill includes many new innovations and will be a critical step in a number of electoral transparency and inclusiveness measures. The Chairman of the Electoral Commission handed over the vetted drafting instruction to the Parliamentary Council/State Law Office on 27 June 2022;
- b) **the Civil Registration and Identity Management Working Group** undertaking comprehensive civil registration reforms to replace the civil registration and vital statistics framework dating back almost 42 years to pre-Independence. Project support in Q2 has focused on development of related Regulations and Standard Operating Procedures to support implementation of the two new Acts, gazetted in January 2022 - the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act (Cap 27 2022) and the National Identity Act (Cap 28 2022) as well as a Council of Ministers (COM) Paper for repeal of the Marriage Act, alignment of Child Protection Bill and Adoption Bill with the CRIM Act;
- c) **the Data Protection and Data Privacy Working Group** developing policy and legislative protocols for protection of personal data, data privacy and harmful digital communication;
- d) **the Voter Awareness Committee** – made up of media groups, Transparency International (Vanuatu), disability groups, women, youths, the Vanuatu Council of Churches, and community-based NGOs working for electoral awareness and functions like a 'sounding board' for targeted election public outreach, and transparency. The voter awareness committee was activated both in support of the electoral reform proposal, as well as for the Port Vila Municipal elections during this quarter.

With internal travel between provinces banned, to widen accessibility interviews and presentations on the proposed Bill were filmed in Bislama with the Chair, Electoral Commission; Principal Electoral Officer (PEO) and Deputy PEO and VEO staff and broadcasted digitally to all six provinces, key stakeholders and shared through VEO's Website and Facebook page, as well as radio interviews.

*3. Institutional Reform & Capacity Building:* Restructures were approved in Q2 for the four critical VEEP Partner agencies - the Electoral Commission (EC), the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO), the Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) Department and the Corporate Services Unit (CSU) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This will allow staffing of positions to embed and decentralise, or deconcentrate, electoral reform and identity management activities to all six provinces. Centrally, the reform of MoIA's CSU will see the establishment of a Project Management Unit (PMU), an Internal Auditor, additional financial and Human Resources staff and M&E capacity. This will support both VEEP and other Development Partner projects within MoIA with transparent implementation and reporting.

The HACT report in Q4 2021 had identified financial reporting, planning and delivery issues. These are now being addressed through the establishment of a Finance Officer's Network and a HR Officer's Network involving staff from all MoIA agencies. Surveys were undertaken to clearly identify skills gaps for which training is underway to build institutional capability as a sustainability initiative.

It should be noted that with VEEP support, the Ministry of Internal Affairs was the only Ministry to present its 2021 Annual Report to Parliament in May, despite this be a legislated requirement under the PFEM & PSC Acts. Other Ministries cited COVID lockdown as the reason for their failure to produce the



Report, but on-line support and early preparation of drafts saw MOIA submission on time of a high-quality report compliant to GoV Guidelines.

*4. Cascading Activities:* VEEP's mandate is to "conform to international standards and strengthen political stability" but in so doing, opportunities for "upscaling" have emerged, leading to cascading innovations – one activity leading to another - with VEEP setting reform and delivery benchmarks. The development of the Ministry's Nasara Strategy led to future risk mitigation planning and in turn to Foresight Brief's development, four of which are being presented as Papers in donor roundtable consultation *fora*:

- Government Relations with Youth - Youth Challenges and Opportunities in Vanuatu
- Labour Mobility/Migration
- Decentralisation (Devolution)
- Data Privacy & Protection

In Q2, Murielle Meltenoven, Commissioner Labour Department as part of Foresight and Anticipatory Planning was selected to prepare and present at the 'Pacific Update', hosted by Australia National University in Fiji on 28-30 June focusing on labour and migration mobility, aligned with her Foresight Brief on Labour Mobility.

The National ID Card, distributed nationwide to underpin validation of deeply flawed National Voter Register and Polling Station lists, has had huge ripple impact. [Refer Annex 2](#) for a full analysis. End Q2, 231,614 ID Cards have been issued to Ni-Vanuatu citizens, equal to 78% of the population, with 165,396 actively used for voting but also opening bank accounts, Police ID, booking flights & shipping services, school enrolments, access to health services including the National COVID Vaccination Program, Ministries of Health & Education forward planning & budgets. Inquiry has come from Barbados and Belize as well as Oceania PICs, interested in the digital transformation processes, implementation and impact. In response, 'Vanatu's Digital Journey' infographic illustrations have been created by VEEP to map the development of supporting legislation, policy and procedures. [Refer Annex 3.](#)

Finally, towards the end of Q2 the annual VEEP Board meeting was held on 23 June. As of 31 May 2022, the project had already delivered 85% expenditure of funds available (funds received so far), and 40% of the overall 2022 budget (acknowledging that the project still has a budget gap). While great satisfaction with very impactful achievements was highlighted, concerns were raised by VEEP project regarding sufficiency of funds to keep the digital transformation on track, as well as to come up with an implementation plan for the electoral reform package, should it pass in November 2022, leaving only 2023 to get ready for 2024 General Elections.

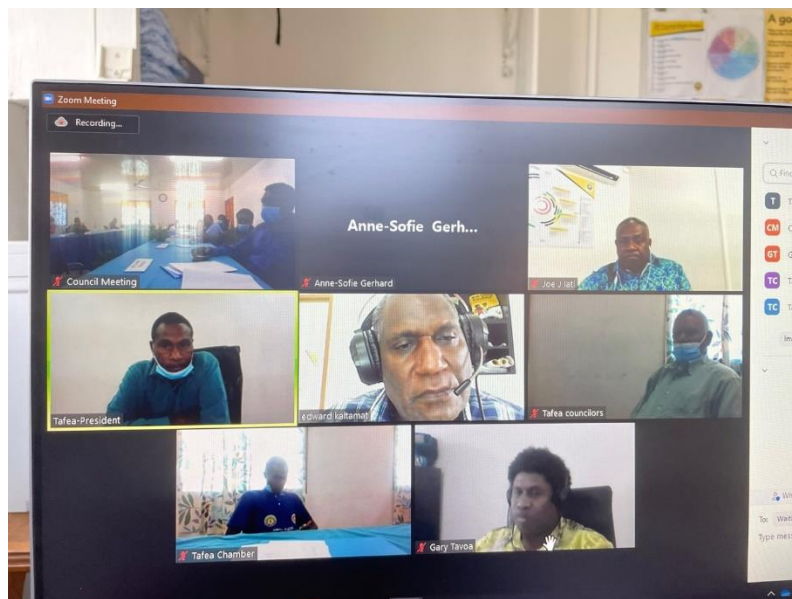
### *Conclusion*

Although VEEP Project outputs remain as the core delivery focus, 2022 has a strong emphasis on Lessons Learned, consultation, awareness, sustainability and anticipatory risk mitigation.

Phase II completes in 2024 – the year of the planned National Elections. 2023 will need to see sustainability strategies firmly embedded in a planning, policy, procedural and legislative framework with strong counterpart agency buy-in. Therefore, the remainder of the 2022 operational year will be hall-marked by maintaining momentum of innovation change, driving legislative reform and integrated initiatives across the electoral sector that will frame the VEEP project gains and building institutional capacity to sustain the changes led by the NZ MFAT supported UNDP/VEEP project.



## PART 2: KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THIS QUARTER: Results Framework Progress



**Caption:** Tafea Provincial President and Councillors in live virtual consultation and a following Q&A session with Chair of Electoral Commission, and Deputy PEO using the film produced with VEEP support following COVID19 Nationwide lockdown in March 2022 and cancellation of planned provincial consultation tours. Refer [Annex 5](#) on process and outcomes of the electoral reform virtual consultations.



**Caption:** CheroI Ala Ianna, Director General of Ministry of Internal Affairs officiates following the launch by Deputy PM and Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon Ishmael Kalsakau Maa'u'koro of the MoIA Nasara Sector Strategy 2022-2026 along with the diplomatic corps and MoIA Executive at the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs Nakamal on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022.







EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA EVIDENCE	KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS ACHIEVED	
			Key Activities	Output Results/Impact
<p><b>Output 1</b> <i>Institutional Capacities of the Electoral Authorities Strengthened</i></p> <p><b>Gender marker: 2</b></p>	<p><b>1.1</b> <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>Renovated and equipped VEO Bldg.</i></p> <p><i>PSC contracts Job Descriptions</i></p> <p><i>Lease Agreements</i></p> <p><i>6 provincial CRIM offices</i></p> <p><i>5 VEO provincial offices</i></p>	<p><i>HQ Port Vila Level:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Submission to Office of Public Service Commission (OPSC) for restructure of VEO approved, providing for 6 provincial officers with 5 now employed.</i></li> <li><i>New Policy Project (NPP) Submission prepared for Ministerial Budget Committee for salaries and recurrent operations budget commencing 2023</i></li> <li><i>Long vacant but critical position of Deputy Electoral Officer filled – Gary Tavoia – a pivotal officer with long Corporate History, knowledge, and commitment</i></li> <li><i>Long vacant post of Admin/Finance Officer for VEO financial Visa confirmed and advertised</i></li> <li><i>A significant development was the addition of 6,000,000 vt per year to CRIM's operations budget (recurrent) by DG and Finance Manager to sustainably support the on-going production of National ID Cards as a reward for organisational high performance. This is a significant step in project sustainability as this expense had been previously supported by VEEP.</i></li> <li><i>Data Entry officers re-contracted for data cleaning, consolidation and validation of field work data but work delayed due to COVID closure. Updated and cleaned data will be migrated to the new central civil register, which provides the basis of the future voter register.</i></li> </ol>	<p>The Electoral Authorities and the Civil Registration &amp; Identity Management 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 a robust and well-functioning HQ office and training/informed provincial staff.</p>



			<p>7. <i>The project previously assisted in preparing and deploying 250 tablets with tailored offline registration applications for field data registration and verification</i></p> <p>8. <i>Training for VEO officers on planning, Annual Work Planning &amp; Performance Review processes</i></p> <p><i>Provincial Level:</i></p> <p>9. <i>Three vacant provincial staffing positions for Provincial Electoral Officers advertised and filled</i></p> <p>10. <i>Procurement of a 'provincial package' is on-going for each electoral provincial office (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 is not available. Preparations for central procurement is ongoing. Lists prepared in collaboration with VEO office;</i></p> <p>11. <i>Provincial package support is on-going for CRIM to upgrade printers and support infrastructure and network connections. Lists prepared in collaboration with CRIM office;</i></p> <p>12. <i>Satellite imageries for all provinces developed incl. drawing of Area Councils. All multi-layered Atlas maps completed, with layers of health clinics, schools, walking distance to polling stations etc. with support from UNITAR/UNOSAT;</i></p> <p>13. <i>Continuing efforts to consolidate thousands of village-listings with VNSO data, excel sheets and shapefiles.</i></p>	
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	<p><b>1.2</b> Number of new increased and trained permanent staff at HQs and provincial offices, including joint training activities with the CRIM Department</p>	<p>2022 EC Restructure Submission</p> <p>2022 VEO Restructure Submission</p> <p>2022 CRIM Restructure Submission</p> <p>VEO JDs</p> <p>CRIM JDs</p> <p>VEO NPP</p> <p>CRIM NPP</p> <p>VEO PMR Forms</p> <p>EC/VEO Budget Book 3 Revision</p> <p>CRIM Budget Book 3 Revision</p> <p>Zoom Training: List</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. EC Restructure Submission approved with revised Job Description for Political Party Coordinator, submitted by Chair to Hon. Minister and DG and approval;</li> <li>2. New Policy Project (NPP) created for 2 new EC staff in restructure to be submitted for 2023 MBC Budget (2023) with linked operations budget;</li> <li>3. VEO Restructure Submission approved.</li> <li>4. New Policy Project (NPP) created for new VEO staff in restructure submitted to MBC with preparation undertaken as a capacity building exercise for both staffing &amp; operations budget.</li> <li>5. The NPP developed for VEP provincial operations is an important development. This is a significant step in project sustainability as this expense had been previously supported by VEEP.</li> <li>6. New legislation gazetted in January 2022 - the Civil Registration &amp; Identity Management Act (Cap 27 2022) and the National Identity Card Act (Cap 28, 2022) - creating the new Department Civil Registration and Identity Management (CRIM) replacing former Civil Registry &amp; Vital Statistics (CRVS).</li> <li>7. CRIM Restructure Submission approved with NPP for previously unfunded increments for high performance, new posts and operations budget undertaken as a capacity building exercise.</li> <li>8. EC/VEO Q1 Reports (done at beginning of Q2) produced in compliance with new GoV Guidelines for planning &amp; reporting.</li> </ol>	<p>The Vanuatu Electoral Office currently seeks approval interrupted by closure of all GoV agencies following community transmission of COVID (5 March 2022) 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. Furthermore, to continuously 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><i>Pending to be completed:</i></p> <p>Submission of 2022 VEO Restructure Submission submitted by PEO, countersigned by MoIA DG. Awaiting PSC Sitting for approval</p> <p>VEOs &amp; CRIMs new Business Plan in line with new PSC format</p> <p>New Corporate Plan 2022- 2026 EC/VEO &amp; CRIM budget and activities will then "cascade" compliantly</p>
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		<p><i>of Participants available</i></p> <p>9. <i>Budget Book 3 redrafted to align with both MoIA Corporate Plan 2022-2026 &amp; MoIA Sector Strategy 2022-2026</i></p> <p>10. <i>Zoom based training provided for Book 3 Revision, NPPs &amp; GIP proposals for EC/VEO &amp; CRIM and across MoIA agencies – including provincial staff.</i></p> <p>11. <i>MoIA Finance Officer Network and an MoIA HR Officer Network established with 2 surveys administered and analysed by M&amp;E Manager CSU) to identify high priority training areas needed. Discussion Paper for establishment, Survey instruments x 2 and outcomes reports from training delivered is available.</i></p>		
	<p><b>1.3</b> <i>Number of formalised EC internal regulations and VEO operational procedures drafted and endorsed.</i></p>	<p>State Law Office Official Gazette</p> <p>EC Minutes</p> <p>Drafting Instructions for a Harmonised Electoral Bill drafted for November 2022 Parliament</p>	<p><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><i>1. Implementation under way for two Acts Gazetted as Acts in January 2022 through strong technical support from VEEP TAs and Working Groups supported by VEEP - the Civil Registration &amp; Identity Management Act (Cap 27 2022) and the National Identity Card Act (Cap 28, 2022)</i></p> <p><i>2.Regulations drafted &amp; provided to SLO</i></p> <p><i>i) Civil Registration and Identity Management Regulation;</i></p> <p><i>ii) Vanuatu National Identity Regulation; and</i></p> <p><i>iii) Fees Regulation for the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act, and the Vanuatu National Identity Act.</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>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><i>The new harmonised Electoral Bill, if passed, will set a benchmark for the Pacific. The new bill will include TSM for women, independence of the Electoral Commission etc.</i></p>



			<p><i>3. Draft Drafting Instructions submitted 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to AG/SLO for a new Single Electoral Act harmonising, repealing and replacing the current legislative framework. The new proposed bill includes major innovation, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i) Strengthening of independence of the Electoral Commission;</i></li> <li><i>ii) Recognition of Provincial Electoral Officers;</i></li> <li><i>iii) Electoral Lists;</i></li> <li><i>iv) Campaign Financing Disclosure;</i></li> <li><i>v) Electoral Campaign &amp; Code of Conduct;</i></li> <li><i>vi) Single Ballot Paper;</i></li> <li><i>vii) By-Elections;</i></li> <li><i>viii) Special Measures for Internally Displaced Persons;</i></li> <li><i>ix) Special Voting (Remote Voting);</i></li> <li><i>x) Out of Country Voting;</i></li> <li><i>xi) Electoral Petitions;</i></li> <li><i>xii) Constituency Determination;</i></li> <li><i>xiii) Expanded Electoral Offences;</i></li> <li><i>xiv) Regulations for electoral procedures;</i></li> <li><i>xv) Special Temporary Measures for Women's Voting.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>4. Outline for a National Data Protection and Privacy Policy for Vanuatu has been drafted.</i></p>	
	<p><b>1.4</b> <i>The percentage of progress in codifying and digitizing institutional memory of EC/VEO systems and procedures, including congregating files to the Government Document</i></p>	<p>Digitization Manual Data Declaration of Confidentiality TORs</p>	<p><i>This activity is on stand-by. Contracted data entry students trained as enumerators and data entry officers are unable to work due to COVID GV closure</i></p>	<p><i>Contracted students unable to work due to COVID GV closure</i></p>



	<i>Management System (Saperion);</i>	Scanning and document handling staff.		
	<b>1.5</b> <i>No of electoral administrative processes where gender is mainstreamed, and gender disaggregated</i>	<i>New harmonised Electoral Bill</i>  <i>Restructure Submissions JDs</i>  <i>New Central Civil Register Database</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>All electoral laws have been amended to be gender neutral;</i></li> <li>2. <i>All Job Descriptions has been amended to be gender neutral;</i></li> <li>3. <i>New CRIM legislation and National ID Acts are gender neutral</i></li> <li>4. <i>The New Bill – single harmonised Electoral Bill provides very specific gender positive initiatives i.e Temporary Special Measures for Women’s Voting.</i></li> <li>5. <i>Gender disaggregation remains difficult as current IT system cannot differentiate due to unusual spelling of names and lack of gender specific data entry.</i></li> <li>6. <i>The new integrated central civil register/population register, RV5, will facilitate registrations and statistics in gender and age aggregated manner. Migration of data has started.</i></li> <li>7. <i>On-going training on VEEP supported development of a EC/VEO PWD Action Plan to raise awareness of issues faced in electoral inclusion for People With Disability. The PWD Action Plan uploaded to VEOs website. This is in response to governments across Asia-Pacific in 2014 committed to strengthening CRIM systems and advance universal civil registration to support good governance, health and development.</i></li> </ol>	Female Empowerment through the politics of language, and introduction of Gender-Neutral Amendments in all related electoral laws and CRIM laws, as well as systems datasets.

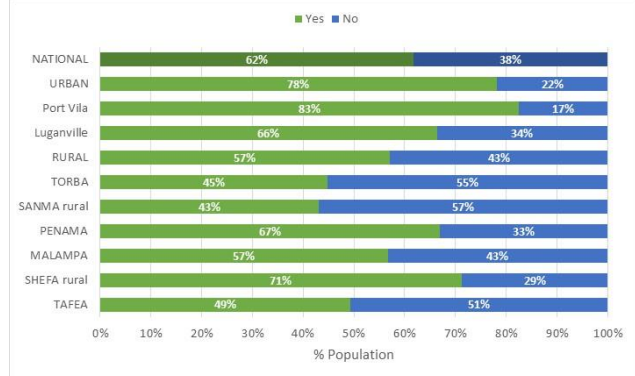


			<p>8. <i>Several important discussions took place with Vanuatu National Council of Women to pave the way for Q3 activity - Gender Action Plan.</i></p> <p>9. <i>A special meeting of Voter Awareness Group was held for VNCW and women intending to be candidates in Vila Municipal Elections</i></p> <p>10. <i>Media Releases on TSMs in Port Vila Municipality (May 2022)</i></p> <p>11. <i>Attendance by Chair Edward Kaltamat at a workshop for women candidates at Moorings Friday 24<sup>th</sup> with VEEP produced materials for Women Candidates</i></p> <p>12. <i>Q3 will see development of a Gender Action Plan for Women in Politics.</i></p>	
<p><b>Output 2</b> <i>Integrity and Accuracy of the Voter Register Enhanced</i></p> <p><b>Gender marker: 2</b></p>	<p>2.1 <i>Proportion of eligible voters who are registered to vote, disaggregated by sex, age, and location – to be done on a yearly basis</i></p>	<p>Data reports from National Voter Register and new Central Civil Register</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 'ghost voting'. The verification and validation project following the national joint civil and voter registration campaign begun in 2019 has been extended to be a "de facto" registration process in 2021-22, with several thousands of people being registered and issued with national ID cards.</i></p> <p><b>By the time of Q1 2021</b>, the number of citizens issued with a national ID card is (Gender disaggregated): F: 47,584 M: 51,540</p> <p><b>By Q2 2021</b> Female: 73,721</p>	<p>Vanuatu will ultimately have an accurate central civil register database and a linked national voter register, 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 accurate electoral lists per polling station can convincingly be guided by the basic principle of universal and equal suffrage, with all the population of Vanuatu being registered as each their unique legal identity.</p>



			<p>Male: 77,507  <b>By Q3 2021:</b>                  Female: 99,161 females (29.7%) and                  Male: 106,341 males (35.4%).  <b>By Q4 2021</b>                  Females: 106,854 (35.6%)                  Male: 114,347 (38.1%)</p> <p><b>By end 2021</b>, the UNDP/VEEP Project had thus supported 222,646 citizens, which is 74.21% of total population of 300,019 (2020 National Census), to register and receive their National Identity card.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2022</b></p> <p><b>By end Q1 2022</b>, persons issued with national ID Cards were:                  Females: 107,717                  Male: 115,808</p> <p>.....</p> <p><b>By end Q2 2022</b> By end Q2, the UNDP/VEEP Project had supported 231,614 citizens, which is 77.1% of total population of 300,019 (2020 National Census), to register and receive their National Identity card.                  Females: 111,069                  Male 118,970                  Of these, 165,396 are active users</p>	
	<p><b>2.2</b> Number of voters issued with national ID card disaggregated by gender (replacing the electoral cards)</p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS and VES) and civil register (RegVIZ4).</p>	<p>% Population with a National ID Card by region end 2020.</p>	<p>Vanuatu will ultimately run elections where national ID cards are used for voter identification in polling stations and using the new central civil register to extract data and produce the national voter register. Using an updated and validated population database as the basis to create the electoral lists per polling station will enable very accurate voter statistics and ensure equal and universal suffrage. In 2021-2022, 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 but</p>





*Throughout remainder of 2022, we will be moving progressively to a completely integrated system – a voter/ID/Civil Register (the Central Civil Register) – which is in essence a population register.*

*As the legacy systems are being migrated piece by piece to the new integrated system, several cycles of data validation will be made in the process by dedicated data validation teams within the VEO and the CRIM Department. This process will allow the authorities to identify gaps in coverage or data integrity and address them in time for 2024 General Elections.*

*All individuals who exist legally will be automatically included in the national voter register provided they are 18 and above.*

hopefully with the new Electoral Reform 2022 passing in November Parliament seating, and the two new civil registration and identity Acts passed, only ID Cards can legally be used as Voter ID from 2023 onwards.

Note: VEEP Target was to register and issue national ID Cards: 200,000  
VEEP has reached and surpassed ProDoc target (223,525 ID cards issued.)

**2.3** Percentage of merge of databases/transition to new voter registration model.

Progress Reports as legacy systems are being migrated piece by piece to the

*All three legacy systems, GVRS, VES and RV4, are progressively being merged, alongside data being verified, validated, and cleaned of incorrect data, duplicates, deceased and typical errors. Meanwhile it was realised that the system base was very old and outdated (more than 20 years) so a new system database, RV5, has been designed*

Vanuatu will ultimately have one 'foundational' database, a population register, which will serve the purposes of multiple ministries and gov agencies. The computerized automated national voter register will be based on information already available in the national civil register system (also administered by the



		<p>new integrated system Progress Reports on cycles of data validation, data cleaning</p>	<p><i>and decoded since end 2021. RV5 will be the new engine of the central civil register and serve as the basis for all GoV registers and private sector to be linked for data sharing.</i></p> <p><i>The project is now supporting having the first unified database up and running by end Q3 2022. A first test/pilot version has now been deployed, which will then go through a few iterations to get it perfectly fitted for local needs, followed by multiple trainings and documentation.</i></p> <p><i>The project will continue to support to progressively phase out RV4 in favour of RV5 following this approach:</i></p> <div data-bbox="989 740 1283 1036" data-label="Diagram"> </div>	<p>Ministry of Internal Affairs), to which the provincial CRIM and VEO officers continuously convey relevant information about citizens, including births, the acquisition of voting rights, changes of address, and deaths. Thus, inclusion on the voter register and changes due to change of residence, etc. should take place automatically and continuously. As a result, the register will always be updated and there will no longer be requirement for costly and complicated field registrations ahead of all elections, however citizens must take the initiative and responsibility to keep their records up to date.</p> <p><i>Target 100%</i> <i>Achieved 75%</i></p>
<p><b>2.4</b> <i>Expected number of duplicated and deceased citizens removed from the Civil and Voter registries.</i></p>	<p>Data reports from voter register (GRVS/VES) and civil register (RegVIZ4), and from Q2 2022, the new central civil register</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. UNDP/VEEP and MoH have liaised on the systematic collection of data of deceased people. 400 were previously reported for 2020 by MoH but field work data seem to indicate another 1,000 deceased over the last 2 years;</i></li> <li><i>2. New provincial positions for CRIM Assistant Registrars stationed in each province and in Provincial Central Hospitals will provide more sustainability in births and deaths registration.</i></li> <li><i>3. Work has commenced in collaboration with CRIM Department, OGCIO and Bloomberg Philanthropies to link</i></li> </ol>	<p>The integration and interoperability with Ministry of Health data (MoH) for the identification of deaths will be an important achievement in the pursue of maintaining accurate data.</p> <p>New provincial positions for CRIM for Assistant Registrars stationed in each Provincial Central Hospital will provide sustainability.</p>	



			<i>health data and civil registration data and ensure interoperability.</i>	
	<b>2.5</b> <i>New components developed and updated for Civil and Voter registration systems.</i>	<p>New Electoral Results Mngt System (ERMS)</p> <p>Conceptual Design for an Integrated System database</p> <p>System Documentation</p> <p>Assessments of the new integrated system, following an agile implementation concept</p>	<p><i>1. The project continues to support on-going data entry and data consolidation based on field work updates, data cleaning and 'de-facto' new registrations through 19 data validation officers.</i></p> <p><i>2. Throughout 2022, the project continues to support progressively moving to the completely integrated system – the new voter/Identity/Civil Register (the Central Civil Register), which is in essence a population register.</i></p> <p><i>3. By Q2, first batch of 100,000 records have been migrated to the new system, while further system development is ongoing. As the legacy systems are being migrated piece by piece to the new integrated system, several cycles of data validation will be made in the process by dedicated data validation teams within the VEO and the CRIM Department.</i></p> <p><i>4. The new system will be integrating the ISCO standard classification on Occupation localised for Vanuatu, as well integrating all newly consolidated village listings for over 2500 villages. All individuals who exist legally will be automatically included in the national voter register provided they are 18 and above.</i></p> <p><i>5. In 2022, until the new proposed Electoral Bill has passed, the project will continue to support maintenance and software development of a mobile application for Voter Identification in polling stations based on tablet scanning ability, linked with the voter register that will continue to be used;</i></p> <p><i>6. The project has supported training as requested of VEO, CRIM, MOH, OGCIO, MOYS, MOET on SQL query</i></p>	<p>EC/VEO will have a new integrated results management system incorporating all key aspects from vote counting to the certified results being announced with relevant complaints having been properly adjudicated.</p> <p>The Republic of Vanuatu will have a Population Register, as first country in the Pacific, as part of the new central civil register based on the national ID.</p>



*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 in analysing and addressing performance issues in Ministry SQL Server environment, in addition to OGCIO experts, limiting reliance on only few individuals. A technical training was undertaken over five days from 14-18 June 2021. The training was online, using a virtual platform and virtual labs provided by NextTech, an Australian company. Good feedback received so far, with wishes for additional modules to be built on in 2022;*

*7. In 2022 continuing National Vaccination campaign for COVID is based on National ID. The MOH requested CRIM support in terms of volunteers 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 of volunteers for this purpose. The roll out commenced early June 2021 and required all tablets to be reset, updated, tested and ready for use;*

*During vaccination rollout, MoH required particular IDs that would be accepted for administering vaccination solely for the purpose of tracking individuals for their second dose or tracking someone if there is an adverse event after vaccination.*



***Of the total number (141,305) people vaccinated with at least 1st dose, 87% used their national ID.***

Province	People Registered with National Id	Total number of people vaccinated with 1 dose	%
Malampa	18,609	19294	96%
Penama	14,623	14967	98%
Sanma	23,398	30739	76%
Shefa	49,313	58536	84%
Tafea	11,766	12486	94%
Torba	5,195	5283	98%
<b>Vanuatu</b>	<b>122,904</b>	<b>141,305</b>	<b>87%</b>

*8. VEEP developed a web application for National ID card registration and data validation. The web application is accessible from anywhere inside the VANGOV network, and also offline in the field. The information is from the RegisterVIZ production database, and the application server is for the moment in UNDP/VEEP office. Requirements include to be a Network User, a laptop/computer connected to the VANGO network and Barcode readers.*

*9. On-going work through the VEEP project to support the roll out of Election Results Management System, tailored to each type of elections, training of VEO staff and students on the system and data entry, where candidates are based on their National ID numbers;*

*10. VEOs Action Plan for People with Disability on VEOs website continues to be rolled out. Due to a lack of data, the most vulnerable people were not being registered, which means hard to reach and marginalized people, People with Disability (PWD), including women and girls, remain invisible, compounding the inequality they face. This will be captured in the new system.*

*11. Global Grants Program application and proposal (150\$) was submitted to The Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative and application decision was confirmed by June 15, 2021.*



			<p><i>Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health initiative - The project to support Civil Registration Data and Health Systems Data Interoperability in Vanuatu is now ongoing and implemented by CRIM Dept, guided by a technical expert. The overall focus outcome is to ensure timely, reliable and accessible recording of vital events and data interoperability. The launching of activities was delayed given the COVID situation in Vanuatu. Comprehensive review of all the processes on vital events has been undertaken, aligning with the new legal framework, and CRIM is focused on and planning for the following division of focus:</i></p> <p><i>I. UNDP continuously supporting legal review (CRIM law, national ID law, electoral reform, regulations, procedures handbook etc.)</i></p> <p><i>II. UN ESCAP and VEEP supporting business process mapping of 'as is' processed, and reengineering</i></p> <p><i>III. Bloomberg GGP and UNDP/VEEP supporting integration of CRIM and health systems</i></p>	
<p><b>Output 3</b> <i>Ability to Conduct Voter Education and Raise Public Awareness strengthened</i></p> <p><b>Gender Marker</b> <b>2</b></p>	<p><i>3.1 Number of new partnerships with civil society developed (Women, PWDs, churches), as well as regional bodies, and national and international stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>NGO mapping Voter Awareness Committee TORs Minutes of Meetings List of Participants  Number of followers on FB</p>	<p><i>1. Continued to support meetings of the Voter Awareness Committee (10 members from NGOs CSOs GoV and media), also established during the General Elections in 2020, as a mechanism to coordinate some key stakeholders, manage clear messages and disseminate information;</i></p> <p><i>2. Several important discussions took place with Vanuatu National Council of Women to pave the way for Q3 activity - Gender Action</i></p> <p><i>3. A special meeting of Voter Awareness Group was held for VNCW and women intending to be candidates in Vila Municipality election;</i></p>	<p>Effective and regular electoral awareness activities were planned for Quarter 1 with a capacity building and Voter awareness campaign planned for each province, but COVID 19 has seen delay for elections planned</p> <p>If Lock Down ends, the Provincial Awareness (6 provinces) program plan is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on 2 new Acts</li> <li>• Consultation on new harmonised legislation i.e., Reserved Seats for women</li> <li>• the importance of registration.</li> <li>• Increased knowledge about elections, Increased number of eligible and qualified candidates.</li> <li>• Increased voter turnout.</li> </ul>



		<p>Number of FB posts</p> <p>Number of Press Releases</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <i>Media Releases on TSMs in Port Vila Municipality (May 2022)</i></li> <li>5. <i>Attendance by Chair Edward Kaltamat at a workshop for women candidates at Moorings Friday 24<sup>th</sup> with VEEP produced materials for Women Candidates</i></li> <li>6. <i>Q3 will see development of a Gender Action Plan for Women in Politics.</i></li> <li>7. <i>Civic Education materials being translated into French &amp; Bislama by Department of Language Services in PMs Office</i></li> <li>8. <i>A Text book, a Teacher's Manual and a Student Workbook in support of the Civic Education Booklet entitled "Vanuatu Blong Yu," has been developed for use in schools and other learning environments. The Senior Secondary materials and teachers will play a very important role in preparing the potential voters to become active, engaged citizensdemocracy 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. Translated Eng, French, Bislama.</i></li> <li>9. <i>VEO website populated with updated materials and regular updates published on VEO Facebook page</i></li> <li>10. <i>Press Releases in Q2:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>EC VEO Response to Howard Aru's Article</i></li> <li>• <i>Reserved Seats for Women</i></li> <li>• <i>ID Cards Simple Idea – Big Impact</i></li> <li>• <i>Launch of Sector Strategy</i></li> <li>• <i>Virtual Consultations Impact</i></li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the benefits and use of the national ID for the population of Vanuatu.</li> <li>• Increased regional focus (Asia and Pacific) and attention to the national ID introduction in Vanuatu, carrying many important lessons learned for small island states.</li> <li>• Planning, reporting &amp; Budgets</li> <li>• How to develop Annual Work Plans (AWPs) to achieve CRIM and EC/VEO Business Plans</li> </ul>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>EC Chair Reflections on Municipal Elections</i></li> <li>• <i>Yumi42 ID Cards/CRIM</i></li> </ul> <p>11. <i>Muriel Meltenoven Director Labour Department as part of Foresight &amp; Anticipatory Planning presented at a Regional UNDP conference in Fiji on 30th June focusing on labour and migration mobility, aligned with her Foresight Brief on Labour Mobility.</i></p>	
	<b>3.2</b> <i>Percentage of matrix on gender tracking in elections developed, including gender-disaggregated data on all aspects of the electoral administration</i>	<i>New integrated system statistics</i>	<i>In progress</i>	
	<b>3.3</b> <i>Percentage of matrix on gender tracking in Civil Registry developed, including gender-disaggregated data</i>	<i>New integrated system statistics</i>	<i>In progress</i>	
	<b>3.4</b> <i>Assessment on civic understanding and access to information implemented.</i>	<p><i>Assessment on Access to Information and Civic Awareness in Vanuatu: Evidence from the NSDP Baseline Survey and the 2020 National Census</i></p>	<p>1. <i>The project is looking to inform the second phase of VEEP using data from the 2020 National Population and Housing Census (NPHC) and the 2019-2020 NSDP Baseline Survey.</i></p> <p><i>Closure of national borders has made it impossible to mobilise international TA</i></p> <p><i>In Q3 2022, a data analyst will be on-boarded the VEEP project to develop this analysis.</i></p> <p>2. <i>The objectives of this "Access to Information and Civic Awareness Assessment" is to "assess, broken down by province, possession of National ID, civic understanding and how different communities prefer to access information and public awareness".</i></p>	<i>Informed voters and transparency of electoral processes through access to information and appropriately targeted public awareness campaigns.</i>





			<p>3. Committed to improving access to information for the purpose of informed voting and transparency of electoral processes, the VEEP project was aiming to have recommendations made based on the analysis to inform strategies for future impactful awareness campaigns.</p>	
<p><b>Output 4</b> Legal Electoral Framework Improved and Capacity Building on Electoral Reform to Key Stakeholders provided</p> <p><b>Gender Marker 2</b></p>	<p><b>4.1</b> Number of viable and practical reform proposals developed</p>	<p><i>Gazettal of new Civil Registration and Identity Management Reform package (CRIM Act CAP28 and NID Act CAP 27)</i></p> <p><i>Drafting Instructions for harmonised and modernised Electoral Laws into one single Electoral Bill</i></p> <p><i>Vanuatu wide electoral reform consultations</i></p>	<p>1. Two Bills passed November 2021, and gazetted as Acts in January 2022 through strong technical support from VEEP TAs and CRIM working group supported by VEEP - the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act (Cap 27 2022) and the National Identity Card Act (Cap 28, 2022)</p> <p>2. CRIM Regulations and Operational Procedures are being developed to implement the new Acts. By the end of Q2 three drafting Instructions for new CRIM regulations have been submitted to State Law Office (CRIM, NIC and Fees Regulations)</p> <p>3. The Marriage Act is currently under review by the Working Group, to progress Marriage Act being repealed, modernised, and replaced as instructed by the Minister. Regulations will also be developed to support this new Act, targeting November Parliament 2022 seating.</p> <p>4. The Electoral Reform Working Group has been working intensely on developing drafting instructions for a new single electoral act, submitted to AG/SLO on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May by Chair, EC &amp; CTA VEEP, harmonising the current fragmented legislative framework, and introducing several innovations, including:</p> <p>i) Strengthening the independence of the Electoral Commission;</p> <p>ii) Recognition of Provincial Electoral Officers;</p> <p>iii) Electoral Lists;</p> <p>iv) Campaign Financing Disclosure;</p>	<p>The single harmonised Electoral Act will be ground-breaking in several ways but contains issues of considerable political and societal sensitivity. By end of Q1 draft drafting instructions have been finalised and nationwide consultations are being planned and prepared. The draft Bill needs extensive consultations which was initially planned as part of a joint VEO CRIM provincial 'awareness and advocacy' tour/road show in all provinces. Virtual consultations are now being prepared with pre-recorded messages and virtual platforms for Q&amp;As due to COVID lockdowns and restrictions.</p> <p>With the national ID implementation, the collection and use of richly detailed personal and sensitive data about individuals, in greater volumes than ever before, necessitates good data protection. Vanuatu has no data protection legislation. The development of a Data Protection Act which will contribute to respect for and the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons, and in particular, their right to privacy with respect to the processing of their personal data;</p>



			<p>v) Electoral Campaign &amp; Code of Conduct;                  vi) Single Ballot Paper;                  vii) By-Elections;                  viii) Special Measures for Internally Displaced Persons;                  ix) Special Voting (Remote Voting);                  x) Out of Country Voting;                  xi) Electoral Petitions;                  xii) Constituency Determination;                  xiii) Expanded Electoral Offences;                  xiv) Regulations for electoral procedures &amp;                  xv) Special Temporary Measures for Women's Voting.</p> <p>4. The project has supported the development of COM paper and a 'Generic outline for a National Data Protection and Privacy Policy, which was subsequently drafted by Council of Europe Legal Experts.</p> <p>The purpose of this Policy is to create the foundations of a data protection and privacy law that will give effect to associated rights enshrined in the Constitution of Vanuatu, and the international obligations of Vanuatu and to express the commitment of the State to ensure respect for, and the protection of, personal data and associated rights of individuals, and in particular the right to privacy.</p>	
	<p><b>4.2</b> Number of electoral staff (gender disaggregated) trained on new reform measures</p>	<p>Number of Training sessions and meetings on Reform Measures</p>	<p>GoV national lockdown has delayed training through a planned 'Provincial Awareness' (6 provinces) program plan replaced instead by a film Virtual Consultations with over 600 virtual participants Refer Annex 5</p>	



	<p><b>4.3</b> <i>Number of key stakeholders trained on new reform measures</i></p>		<p><i>GoV national lockdown has delayed training however, Virtual Consultations with supporting VEEP produced film to over 600 participants across all 6 provinces through Provincial Government Area Councils, Awareness Working Group and liaison with Vanuatu National Council of Women. Refer Annex 5</i></p>	
	<p><b>4.4</b> <i>Electoral Gender mainstreaming action plan for the project developed and monitored</i></p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan – TORs developed for Q3.</i></li> <li>2. <i>The PWD Action Plan uploaded to VEOs website.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>People with Disability (PWD), including women and girls, remain invisible, compounding the inequality they face.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <i>A special meeting of Voter Awareness Group was held for VNCW and women intending to be candidates in Vila Municipal Elections</i></li> </ol>	<p>Analysis and understanding of gender issues in effective governance, particularly participation in political processes, through examination of participation and decision-making of women and men in different institutions, and introduction of some targeted measures to bring women up to a level playing field.</p> <p>Addressing the gaps in electoral gender mainstreaming will entail adoption of reforms to stimulate different governing institutions and the integration of gender perspectives into all project interventions and support.</p>



## PART 3: PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THIRD QUARTER, 2022

### Output 1:

- Support for deferred elections (Port Vila Municipal Elections 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and Presidential Elections gazetted for 21<sup>st</sup> July), a repercussion of Government decisions on national COVID lockdown;
- Follow up on advertisement outcomes for VEO Finance Officer, to improve finance management of activities in EC/VEO;
- Recruitment/Introduction of VEEP Finance and Admin Officer;
- Continue to support training delivery for the HR Officer Network and the Finance Officer Network, with monthly half day trainings to strengthen skills, capacities, knowledge and coordination across the big Ministry based on two surveys: a HR Officer survey and Finance Officer survey, and the VEEP HACT Report undertaken to determine skills gaps for capacity building training – a sustainability strategy not only for EC/VEO and CRIM but also inter-related key MoIA stakeholders;
- On-going support for Foresight Briefs by Sector Strategy facilitators/Directors, with La Trobe University researchers and expertise provided by UNDP, focussing partly on possible multi donor support for project initiatives identified as prioritised activities;
- On-going support for Murielle Metsan, Director Labour Department as part of Foresight & Anticipatory Planning to prepare and present at an ANU conference end June 2022 focusing on labour and migration mobility, aligned with her Foresight Brief on Labour Mobility: <https://devpolicy.crawford.anu.edu.au/pacific-update>
- Recruitment of VEEP Logistics Advisor to support VEO Logistics officer in develop SOPS for electoral operations, development of communication strategy and communication tree for electoral security and logistics, introduce warehouse and inventory management etc.;
- Recruitment of Procedures Advisor to support development of SOPs for integrated ID management for CRIM, hereunder birth registration, marriage, divorce, adoption, death and voter registration, in pursue of population data accuracy;
- Provide support for 2023 Ministerial Budget Committee (MBC) Submission to embed sustainability outcomes through stronger budget and planning base for EC/VEO, CRIM and MoIA Corporate Services;
- Develop GIPs (Government Investment Program) applications for CRIM Office and Warehouse – ideally for a CRIM/VEO shared storage facility.

### Output 2:

- Provide technical and operational support to electoral preparations and operations for Presidential Election (Gazetted for 21 July)
- Provide technical and operational support to electoral preparations and operations for Malekula Parliamentary by-election and Malampa Provincial Government Council by-election to be held as first-ever concurrent elections in Vanuatu on 28 September 2022;
- Support VEO to progressively transition to the establishment of the national voter Register and Polling Station lists, extracted from the Central Civil Register. Start migration of data from RegVIZ4 civil register to integrated new central civil register (RV5) - Analysis, specifications and preparations;



- Set up interim data validation center, recruitment of 20 data validation officers (students), to support the data clean-up and data migration;
- Support development of data migration rules and training of Data Validation Officers (DVOs);
- Support data consolidation including village listings, on-going data entry, etc. based on field work updates, verifications and 'de-facto' new registrations;
- Support preparations of establishing voter lists per polling station (32) for Malekula by-elections deferred due to Nationwide COVID Lockdown;
- Support the data validation and de-duplication of voter lists for Malekula constituency, Malampa province;
- Support data geo-location and polling station data to be matched (data entry officers);
- Support preparations of tablets with VEEP developed mobile application for voter identification based on national ID in polling stations using tablet scanning ability, pre-loaded with the voter list;
- Keep developing the backend of the new integrated database, and keep adding the key functionalities in line with process mapping;
- Provide continued support and coordination to UN ESCAP for finalisation of their report on civil registration process mapping and recommendations for process re-engineering;
- Support development of rules for data registration, data cleaning and data migration;
- Support development of Standard Operating Procedures for voter registration and birth registration;
- Start efforts of development a CRIM Operational Handbook / User manuals for the new central civil register;
- Start efforts of development of a CRIM Administrative procedures Handbook
- Coordinate and align efforts with the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health initiative aiming at linking Civil Registration Data and Health Systems Data through an API to ensure data interoperability;
- Development technical specifications of procurement of biometric equipment for fixed stations, launch the procurement process of biometric kits. Q4: Installation, testing, acceptance and deploy ID equipment - Completing biometric data for data accuracy incl. credible voter lists
- Work with OGCIO to increase data storage space for RV5;

### **Output 3:**

- Complete analysis of assessment undertaken on 'Access to Information' by Jamie Tanguay (and print and share this assessment) and population coverage of national ID;
- Provide awareness training workshop on Population Analysis by Nik Soni with interesting findings for future perspectives;
- Continue to provide support for the Voter Awareness Committee as a mechanism to coordinate key stakeholders, manage clear messages and disseminate information (on both electoral reform innovations and upcoming concurrent elections in Malekula);
- Undertake a Gender in Politics initiative with meetings of key stakeholders, awareness campaigns (media) to encourage more women into politics;
- Further development of Gender in Politics Action Plan following broad consultation with stakeholders (TSMs, increasing involvement by women in candidacy, electoral reform etc)



- Continue comprehensive review of CRIM in Vanuatu through collaboration with UNESCAP. Focus on CRIM strategy, CRIM Policy review, CRIM business processes analysis and improvements.
- Continuously support consultations to mitigate resistance to the electoral reform and civil registration reform;
- Support National ID Awareness Campaign;
- Continue efforts of Public Outreach and Voter Awareness through radio, TV, Facebook messages, Website, VBTC, billboards, small videos, as well as efforts through the Voter Awareness Committee partners in the islands;
- Continue work with MoE and the translation of the civic education curriculum material, final graphic design and printing, distribution to 26 secondary schools (English, French, Bislama)
- Support the implementation of a helpdesk/call centre for voter services;
- Support publication of election updates, election logistics, candidate lists etc. on Facebook, VEO website, VEO and provincial offices
- Release Nasara Sector Strategy documentary;

#### **Output 4:**

- Continue close collaboration with Office of Attorney General in drafting the Electoral Bill based on the drafting instructions developed by the working group and widely consulted throughout Vanuatu, and delivered to State Law Office by end June 2022;
- Continue to support implementation of the two new Civil Registration and Identity management Acts gazetted in Jan 2022;
- Provide support to review the CRIM Policy;
- Review of related Acts: Marriage Act, Adoption Act,
- Support development of Data Protection & Privacy Policy and draft Bill.
- Continue to support and keep momentum going in the three Legal Reform Working Groups established to focus on:
  - 1) civil registration and identity management (CRIM)
  - 2) electoral legal reform group
  - 3) data protection and data privacy policy
- Support development of SOPs on Data Access/Data Sharing, in coordination with MoIA Compliance Unit;
- Support development of MOU on Data Access/Data Sharing, in coordination with MoIA Compliance Unit;
- 

#### **Up-Scaling Opportunities**

- Political Reform – Political Party registration and regulation Bill developed 2019, including translation, presented in Parliament Nov 2019 – reform package revived as requested by Speaker of Parliament;
- Establishment of Vanuatu’s Official Place/Location Register with village data consolidation and definitions, lead agency Department of Local Authorities;
- ADB e-KYC- pilot in Vanuatu, and RBV;



- Foresight Briefs Roundtables with Donors and MoIA;
- Building of MoIA Provincial Hubs with multi donor support



## PART 4: PARTNERSHIPS

- National partnerships: EC/VEO, CRIM, CSU, VNSO, DLA, DOL, MOH, MoET, DoWA, DSSPAC, OGCIO, VBTC, VCCI (Chamber of Commerce), ***Sector Stakeholder Map Refer Annex 4***
- The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) with focus on digital economy work, eKYC;
- 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 (CRIM, Global Grants Program) with focus on integrating Public Health Systems with CRIM data.
- The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) with focus on increasing birth registration
- UN's World Health Organisation (WHO) and Ministry of Health (MoH) with focus on death registration, COVID19 vaccination in Vanuatu, and data for research and policy
- Private Sector - Pacific Advisors/Police Clearance, Asian Development Bank eKYC





## PART 5: RISK and ASSUMPTIONS

(Refer also to Risk Mitigation Strategy in new MoIA “Nasara” Sector Strategy)

Risk Category	Risk Sub-category	Event	Causes	Impact	Action needed	Treatment activity description	Expected effect from treatment
POLITICAL	Political will	Limited understanding of political reform to legislative framework	Lack of reform minded advocates amongst Parliamentarians	Resistance by Parliament to support legislative reform	Awareness and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern that possible Constitutional changes with or without a Referendum would necessitate flow on changes to the draft Single Harmonised Electoral Bill necessitating extensive changes.</li> <li>There is considerable risk in the highly sensitive nature of several of the components of the proposed Single Harmonised Electoral Bill. Although the Bill has now passed drafting instruction stage, there will need to be careful, on-going sensitisation and consultation to mitigate negative push-back from Parliamentarians.</li> <li>The Single Harmonised Electoral Act and other prospective legal reforms require a wide and inclusive consultation process to raise awareness on the legal changes. VEEP II is using the Voter Awareness Committee to engage relevant stakeholders (public, government ministries, donors and CSOs) to continue building collaboration mechanisms with governmental and civil society with a</li> </ul>	STRENGTHENED UNDERSTANDING BY THE BROADER POLITICAL COMMUNITY OF THE REFORMS PROPOSED



						<p>view to have ample participation and awareness on key electoral reform aspects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been on-going resistance to a Political Party Reform Bill drafted to provide a stronger compliance framework for establishing new parties and for transparency of operations for existing parties. Once/if the Single Electoral Reform Bill is passed, VEEP will support the EC to pursue this matter further in 2023</li> <li>• Work closely with other electoral stakeholders and institutions.</li> <li>• Utilise relationships Sector Strategy to build understanding and “buy-in.”</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	
POLITICAL		Limited scope for strengthening institutional and operational capacities of EC and VEO, particularly	Limited or inconsistent GoV Budget, resourcing and commitment to provide the necessary	Delays in project output implementation; Reduced impact of project on EC, VEO & CRIM	Training & support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently approved restructures for EC, VEO and CRIM will provide a staffing structure with detailed Job Descriptions as the underpinning organisational structures for stronger service delivery</li> <li>• Training in drafting budget proposals to improve EC, VEO &amp; CROM recurrent and</li> </ul>	



		during the non-electoral periods	support to the electoral authorities			<p>remuneration budgets to secure additional funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in how to write donor proposals (called GIPs - Government Investment Program) for broader operational resources</li> <li>• Use of the VEEP established Committees -Electoral Awareness Committee, the Electoral Reform Working Group, the Civil Registration and Identity Management Working Group &amp; the Data Protection and Data Privacy Working Group to improve outreach, awareness and buy-in during non-electoral periods</li> </ul>	
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 EC / VEO to provide independent accurate legal advice and advocacy on electoral matters	No confidence in EC/VEO advisory services	Awareness and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Media Releases to better inform the public when issues are raised</li> <li>• Provide technical support to re-draft key legislation</li> <li>• Coordinate high-level advocacy by development partners and civil society</li> </ul>	CONFIDENCE IN CAPACITY OF EC/VEO BY STAKEHOLDERS AND VOTERS



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	Awareness and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Delay in planned elections caused by national Lock Down from 5th March in response to Vanuatu's first community transmission. This has caused considerable delays in project planned work but VEEP has responded innovatively using Zoom for virtual meetings.</li> </ul>	EFFICIENT AND TIMELY RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY ELECTIONS
POLITICAL	Political instability	Public disillusioned with the democratic processes	Regular vote of no confidence/snap elections	Delay in project implementation	Awareness and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	PUBLIC CONFIDENCE EC/VEO & ELECTORAL PROCESSES ERODED FURTHER
OPERATIONAL	Capacity development of national partners	The Voter Register is not adequately corrected through the next updates during	Disconnect between Voter Registry and civil registration systems.	Lack of confidence in work of VEO; Low confidence in project impact	Awareness and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further donor support from other Development Partners to assist DLA through Area Administrators to check validate Voter Rolls as a very high priority for 2023 leading up to National Elections in 2024.</li> </ul>	VOTER REGISTRY IS UPDATED SYSTEMATICALLY



		<p>the transition period.</p>	<p>CRIM and VEO have each their mandate and collect different information.</p> <p>With new Act, Currently, the national ID registration is mandatory over 18 yrs of age.</p>	<p>National ID registration will have implications on accuracy and inclusiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interoperability and Data Migration in Q3 between the VEO and the CRIM data bases to validate and verify Voter Lists, supported by VEEP’s technical assistance, to support successful efforts of duplication analysis, data validation in the field for improved quality of the register.</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• A restructure of both offices has been undertaken to provide stronger capacity in operations, policy, analysis &amp; planning</li> <li>• In 2021, unsubstantiated rumours of ID Cards being printed by Agents selling Citizenship was a grave concern. Once the National ID Cards Act was gazetted in January 2022, ID were recognised by law and have a financial value. This will need careful scrutiny and Regulations to ensure only Dep't of CRIM can legally issue the National ID Cards.</li> <li>• Regulations will need to be developed urgently to prevent legal identities being sold by private companies</li> </ul>	
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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"> <li>• The Public Service Commission has terminated all Director contracts seeing potential loss of Principal Electoral Officer and Director of CRIM as well as very important Directors of Dep'ts of Local Authorities, Immigration, Labour.</li> <li>• This threatened continuity of initiatives, loss of strategic vision and lowering of morale.</li> <li>• However, it has given rise to opportunities for junior staff to assume leadership roles – a good Succession Planning strategy.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Restructure Submissions were approved by the Public Service Commission and will build capacity of the offices of EC, VEO, CRIM and MoIA's CSU (manages and reports on finances)</li> <li>• Ministry of Internal Affairs Corporate Plan will institutionalise stronger capacity building &amp; institutional planning.</li> </ul>	VEO CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT THEIR MANDATE
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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VEO &amp; CRIM Business Plans in new GoV format provides for implementation of priority position staffing</li> <li>• In addition, GoV has locked down incoming flights due to COVID19 causing issues with timely mobilization of TA to Vanuatu with limited flights and access to quarantine – potentially 8 additional TAs</li> </ul>	
ENVIRONMENTAL	Health and Safety	Natural disasters and pandemics including COVID-19 in Vanuatu change stakeholder priorities and ability to implement and participate in activities under the project.	Natural disasters and pandemics including COVID-19 in Vanuatu	Delayed project implementation	Advocacy & Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the Sector Strategy, UNDP Office Fiji and New York have supported Anticipatory Planning training to assist VEEP’s sector partners in mitigating risks This will be a valuable, sustainable strategy for risks to the sector.</li> <li>• COVID-19 closure nationally on 5<sup>th</sup> March will require VEEP team to review and revise planned Work Plan for 2022 - particularly with delays to Malekula, Municipal election &amp; Presidential Election.</li> <li>• Ensure flexible schedule for activity implementation to minimise potential impact on outputs and ensure sequenced and timely implementation of project activities, with adjustments made where necessary.</li> </ul>	FLEXIBLE WORKPLAN INORPORATING 'EMERGENCY' SHOCKS



## PART 6: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Media articles in the Daily Post are utilised by GoV's national radio and television, and independent FM radio stations.

The Vanuatu Electoral Office with VEEP support has an Awareness and Outreach Working Group made up of media groups, Transparency International (Vanuatu), disability groups, women, youths, the Vanuatu Council of Churches and community-based NGOs working for electoral awareness and functions like a 'sounding board' for targeted election public outreach, and transparency.

Infographics on Vanuatu's Digital ID Journey is available on VEO and CRIM Websites, and UNDP Regional Office Website [Infographic - Dropbox](#)

A Fast Facts brochure was developed, professionally formatted and printed as well as uploaded to UNDP regional website. Link to the VEEP II Fast Facts: <https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/library/eg/veep-fast-facts.html>

The Virtual Consultation film on electoral reform may be viewed at: [https://youtu.be/m\\_BoY6A-iCQ](https://youtu.be/m_BoY6A-iCQ)

Press Article in Daily post: [https://www.dailypost.vu/news/electoral-authorities-shed-light-on-election-issues/article\\_81fd1dd1-1b1a-58cb-95cb-e80dd781ffda.html](https://www.dailypost.vu/news/electoral-authorities-shed-light-on-election-issues/article_81fd1dd1-1b1a-58cb-95cb-e80dd781ffda.html)

## PART 7: KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND CHALLENGES

In Quarter 2 2022 the key challenge has been the ongoing Nationwide Lockdown as Vanuatu experienced its first community transmission of COVID19 with the Omicron variant spreading rapidly. On 5<sup>th</sup> March, the Council of Ministers (COM) and Public Service Commission, closed all government offices, all private sector businesses not deemed "essential" and all Development Partner agencies, iNGOs and NGOs were required to have staff work from home. This has had a considerable effect on ability to deliver core activities in the VEEP Project. VEEP Technical Advisors due to arrive in Vanuatu were not able to be mobilised.

Whilst virtual platforms and zoom calls enabled consultations to go ahead, important face-to-face initiatives, such as training staff on data migration, have had to be delayed to Q3. The nationwide "Road Show" planned for all six provinces to ensure broad consultation on the proposed electoral reform of the Single Harmonised Electoral Bill, to raise awareness on related issues such as the National ID Card and conduct training with Area Councils had to be adapted to virtual consultations.

Without a full team in-country, VEEP staff have had to take on additional workloads. With so many key Government stakeholders away from their offices, the resumption of work saw a "catch-up" process underway with many meetings concentrated in short periods of time – often conflicting. The VEEP team also stepped up to support the Ministry in development of their Business Continuity Plan, Communication Tree, work-from-home methodology – and development of 'safe re-opening of Offices Protocol.

In response to these operational challenges, the VEEP Project made innovative use of digital platforms to maintain momentum. In addition, a film was produced featuring officers of the EC and VEO explaining the majority of innovative components of the new Electoral Bill. This was played in live Q&A sessions nationally. **See Annex 5.**





The nationwide Lockdown saw postponement from Q2 to Q3 of both the Port Vila Municipal Elections (held Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June) and the Presidential Elections - now gazetted for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July.

Key Lessons Learned from this period are that it is important to approach challenging scenarios with innovative approaches and that consultation and collaboration, central to Vanuatu's historical operational context to build relationships of trust, are critical to successful outcomes.

## PART 8: SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP

VEEP Project outputs remain as core delivery focus but scaling up activities are proposed and/or underway as part of sustainability initiatives. In June, the annual VEEP Board Meeting was held, highlighting that 2023 will be a critical year for "Step-Up for Sustainability" approaches which is also a strong focus throughout 2022. Therefore, in Q3 & Q4 of 2022 there will be a continuing strong emphasis on Lessons Learned, consultation, awareness, sustainability and anticipatory risk mitigation.

The remainder of the 2022 operational year will be hall-marked by maintaining momentum of innovation change, driving legislative reform and integrated initiatives across the electoral sector that will frame the VEEP project gains and building institutional capacity to sustain the changes led by the VEEP project. Phase II currently completes mid-2024 – the year of the National Elections. Q3 & Q4 will continue to see sustainability strategies firmly embedded in a planning policy procedural and legislative framework with strong counterpart agency buy-in.

The considerable investment in the national authorities and processes will only be sustainable if the Ministry has the capacity (financial, technical, human resources) to progress the innovations of the VEEP project and maximise the potential of the investments made in electoral reform by the Government of Vanuatu Development Partners and Sector Stakeholders.

Accordingly, a strong lens on support for sustainability strategies has been provided to date in 2022 and will continue to be provided as essential strategies through the remainder of the year in Q3 and Q4, hereunder:

- a) Legislation – Bills, Acts & Implementation
- b) Manuals & Standard Operating Procedures
- c) RV5, technical, coding and maintenance skills
- d) Planning
- e) Budget Process Training
- f) Reporting Training
- g) Restructure Implementation
- h) HR Training
- i) Risk Mitigation & Foresight Planning
- l) Decentralisation

*a) Legislation:* On-going support for the Single Harmonised Electoral Bill (delivered to Attorney General's Office Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June) will be a high priority in Q3 & Q4, especially if changes are proposed or if driven by the GoV's current proposal for reform or a Referendum of the Constitution of Vanuatu.



In anticipation of the Bill being passed, VEEP is already forecasting implementation activities through the Legislative Reform Working Committee and other sector stakeholders for 2023 *IF* the Single Harmonise Electoral Bill is passed to ensure it is able to be used in the 2024 General Election – only 17 months after possible passage in November 2022 and only 15 months after possible Gazettal by the President of Vanuatu in Jan/Feb 2022.

CRIM had two Acts gazetted in January 2022 - the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act (Cap 27 2022) and the National Identity Card Act (Cap 28 2022). These need to be implemented with a CRIM Road Map to be developed as well as supporting the development and revision of Regulations, SOPs and Procedures Manuals.

Further work will be undertaken on the Marriage Act with a Council of Minister's Paper already prepared and the Adoption Act as a corollary to the Single Harmonised Electoral Bill.

*b) Manuals & Standard Operating Procedures:* The lack of implementation plans for the new legislation and of Standard Operating Procedures (or Procedures Manuals) were identified by Director General Cheroi Ala Ianna as a significant gap for the wider Ministry. Quarter 3 & 4 2022 will prioritise development of SOPS for VEO Logistics with TA to be contracted as part of support to codify and institutionalise the VEO operational procedures. Procedures and Manuals were developed during VEEP Phase I. However, these will need to be updated to accord to new legislation.

i) To be updated through a short term locally based TA Contract:

- Procedures for party / candidate agent's accreditation
- Procedures for observer's accreditation
- Procedures for candidates' nomination
- Procedures for voter registration (new methodology)
- Procedures for polling and counting, including operational forms (Polling Station (PS) reconciliation form, PS results form, Record of the Seals form, material transfer forms)
- Registration manual

ii) New SOPs/Manuals

- VEO electoral logistics SOP
- CRIM Manuals to operationalise the two new Acts
- Operational forms to be used in the joint CVR process have been developed, along with checklists, guide for the registration supervisors with their roles and responsibilities.

iii) Training in drafting SOPs should be a part of the contract deliverables for sustainability & capacity building purposes

*c) RV5, technical, coding and maintenance skills:* The overall aim is to establish a functional CRVS system in Vanuatu. This requires changes in the legal, technical, and organizational functioning of the CRVS system.

In the legal functioning there is a complete overhaul of CRVS legislation ongoing. Parts are finished (CRIM Act, NIC Act, Regulations on CRIM, NIC and fees), some are near completion (Data Protection Act), some will be completed in 2022 (Repeal and rewrite Marriage Act, regulation on Vital Statistics). With the Electoral Bill passing, the National Voter Register will in the future be extracted from the Central Civil Register.



In addition, the business processes for all vital events, will be assessed and re-designed. Currently, the redesign of birth and death registration is nearly completed, after which all other vital events business processes will be redesigned.

In technical functioning currently a new CRVS system is designed (in-house) to align the system with the legislation and to ensure that the CRVS system is functional to improve registration and storage of data as well as improve services to citizens. Sharing the CRVS data, respecting data protection legislation, will further improve public administration functioning and reform.

In organizational functioning, the CRIM Department will be reorganized in order to enable proper managing of the new CRVS system. All these elements are mentioned in the CRIM Business Plan 2022.

d) *Planning:* It transpired that the overall planning framework, not only EC/VEO and CRIM but also the entire Ministry of Internal Affairs was very poor. If EC/VEO and CRIM institutional reforms are to survive after VEEP completes, it can only do so on a strong planning and budget basis.

Training to be delivered in Q3 and Q4 will be based on survey undertaken in May 2022 to identify finance skills gaps with other MoIA finance personnel participating as well as EC, VEO & CRIM.

The new MoIA Corporate Plan 2022-2026 was the first in any GoV Ministry to fully comply with new Guidelines launched by Hon PM. New Business Plans being operationalised in Q3 and Q4 will require on-going support, especially in demonstrations of how both the new Corporate Plan and Business Plans relate to Appropriations Act, Volume 3 and Budget Narratives.

MoIA's new "Nasara" Sector Strategy 2022-2026 was launched 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022. One of only 4 of GoV's 13 Ministries have a Sector Strategy. VEEP support will be provided to explore and deliver Sector Strategy in Q3 and Q4 especially in regards to decentralisation issues and concepts discussed in the five Foresight Briefs. Refer following Section (h).

e) *Budget Planning & Training:* Poor understanding of the Budget Cycle processes have meant missed opportunities for improved budget allocations from GoV through improving MoIA's Budget Ceiling and allocations but also through the GIP process of engaging with Development Partners on activities now clearly prioritised in the new Corporate Plan and Sector Strategy and of course linked to the annual GPP – Government Policy Priorities.

Very low levels of training and capacity have been identified amongst MoIA financial officers. This has been highlighted by concerning results of the HACT Audit of the VEEP Program. However, issues raised are endemic across all of MoIA. A survey administered in May clearly ascertained Skills Gaps for Finance Officers (FOs) with training to be provided through an FO Officers Network to build capacity in those areas. This training is being observed with keen interest by the PSC & other Ministries with generic training materials developed by VEEP TA shared on request



In Q3 training in developing Government Investment Program applications will be undertaken, this time as a real application – not basic principles - for an MoIA Multi-Purpose Provincial Hub, a building in which CRIM and VEO would each have office space as well as DLA, Labour & Immigration.

*f) Reporting Training:* Templates for Reporting have been developed for EC/VEO and CRIM. In Q3 and Q4, further training support will be provided so that by the end of 2022, a full reporting (and planning) cycle on the new GoV guidelines will have been delivered – providing a very strong basis for on-going reporting and planning into the future. It must be noted that success in providing high quality plans & reports then feeds into improved opportunities to request additional resourcing through the annual MBC Cycle – and of course with Development Partners.

*g) Restructure Implementation:* Restructures approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC) of EC, VEO, CRIM and the MoIA Corporate Services Unit need to be followed through in Q3 and Q4. Discussions could be held with Development Partners to provide funding support for key positions – particularly those in the CSU Projects Management Unit and CRIM's Assistant Registrars, sited in all 6 Provincial Hospitals to capture birth death & registration, previously funded by UNICEF. Implementation should assist with sustainability, good governance and transparency outcomes for GoV and Development Partners.

*h) Human Resource Officer Training:* Very low levels of training and capacity have been identified amongst MoIA officers responsible for HR matters. Long standing vacancies in VEO and CRIM, poor Job Descriptions affecting Department performance and lack of performance appraisal have had a negative impact on delivery – not just in EC VEO & CRIM but across all MoIA agencies. A survey administered in May clearly ascertained Skills Gaps for HR staff and training provided through a HR Officers Network to build capacity in those areas. This training is being observed with keen interest by the PSC & other Ministries with generic training materials developed by VEEP TA shared on request

*i) Anticipatory Planning:* As part of the Sector Strategy, Anticipatory and Foresight Planning training was provided to appraise and mitigate risks.

In Q2, VEEP supported Murielle Metsan Director Labour Department as part of Foresight & Anticipatory Planning to prepare and present at a conference in June focusing on labour and migration mobility, aligned with her Foresight Brief on Labour Mobility.

The other Briefs are being finalised ready to be presented at appropriate *fora* with VEEP logistical support

- Demand Driven Aid / Development Partner Coordination
- Government Relations with Youth
- Decentralisation (Devolution)
- Data Privacy & Protection
- Gender Equity

*j) Decentralisation of Verification & Validation of ID Cards, Vote Register and Polling Station Voter Rolls:* In Q3 and Q4, it will be critical to undertake decentralised activity delivery for the validation of Voter Register & Polling Voter Rolls with Area Council Area Administrator (as per the AA's Job Descriptions.) Training on the Area Administrator's role and use of Bio-metric Registration Kits (2 per province) will be needed to add unique ID



profiles, allocation of unique identifier village name & GPS based Village Identifier Number (for use in voting but also disasters, MoH & MoE planning etc) to the National ID Cards.

*This use of the Department of Local Authorities is not only a logical step in decentralisation but a highly critically on-going role to ensure verification of Electoral Rolls using local knowledge of people really residing in local villages, and cleansing the rolls of deceased persons, displaced persons (economic migration or disaster's driven and voters who have moved away to reside elsewhere.*

*This is a nationally important initiative for preparation of verifiable National Voting Register ahead of the 2024 General Elections. Donor support may need to be sought for resourcing this activity. It should be noted that this data will also be of high importance for NDMO, IOM, MoE MoH for planning and delivery activities. Refer Annex 2 for ID Card ripple effect implications and up-scaling opportunities.*



## PART 9: QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

VEEP received its 4<sup>th</sup> tranche of funds for phase 2 for the amount of NZD 1,470,000 under MFAT Funding. The table below shows the expenditure in summary, followed by detailed report, as well by activity.

MFAT Funds expensed under VEEP	\$ 408,195.35
TRAC funds expensed under VEEP	\$ 15,139.33
DFAT Funds activities for VEEP Project	\$ 23,791.42



## Financial Report as at 30 June 2022

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: 01/01/2022 - 31/06/2022

Donor: MFAT (NZ), TRAC FUNDS

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
Fund received - Jun 2022	1,470,000.00
	<b>3,338,430.70</b>

### EXPENSES:

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	ATLAS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Budget 2022	Budget Description	Total Amount	Actual Expenses (Jan 2022-30 June 2022)	Total Expenses	Balance
<b>Output 1:</b> <i>Institutional Capacities of the Electoral Authorities Strengthened</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.	21,600	Workshops, training, south/south cooperation	81,600	21,432.79	21,432.79	167.21
	1.2	1.2 Support the EC/VEO in continuous development/updating of regulations, operational procedures, manuals, forms etc.	21,600	International Consultant, Travel and DSA	61,600	632.95	632.95	20,967.05
<i>Gender marker: 2</i>	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.	21,600	Workshops, training,	61,600	15,628.53	15,628.53	5,971.47
	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.	10,800	Workshops, ICT equipment	30,800	819.46	819.46	9,980.54
	1.5	1.5 Support digitization, digital archiving and knowledge base – including digital files into the Government Document Management System (Saperion).	10,800	Procurement ICT, software	40,800	10,828.14	10,828.14	28.14
	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.	10,800	ICT Procurements, professional services	40,800	(167.12)	(167.12)	10,967.12
	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)	10,800	Workshops venue, travel, per diems	40,800	22,099.47	22,099.47	11,299.47
	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	21,600	Professional services, workshop venue, travel per diems	81,600	12,637.87	12,637.87	8,962.13
	1.9	1.9 Examine and support VEO in the identification of people with disabilities, in collaboration with GRVS department.	10,800	Field missions, travel, per diems, workshops	30,800	-	-	10,800.00
	1.10B	1.10 Support the VEO in demarcation and alignment of electoral boundaries, 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, Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) and other Government offices.		ICT equipment procurements, filed missions, travel,	30,000	1,747.32	1,747.32	1,747.32
	1.11	1.11 Post-election Review: Support a Multi-stakeholder Post-election Review (EC/VEO, Gov authorities, CSOs, FBOs, PPs etc.);	10,800	Workshop venues, travel,	30,800	6,907.04	6,907.04	3,892.96
	1.12	1.12 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	108,000	International and national professional services	393,000	39,813.57	39,813.57	68,186.43
	1.13	1.13 Direct Project Costs Programme management costs (rent, equipment, DPC, etc.)		Programme management costs (rent, equipment, DPC, comms, etc.)	20,000	-	-	0.00
<b>Sub-Total for Output 1</b>			<b>259,200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>944,200</b>	<b>132,380</b>	<b>132,380</b>	<b>126,820</b>



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Output 2: <i>Integrity and Accuracy of the Voter Register Enhanced</i>  <i>Gender</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.	16,200	ICT procurements, professional services,	61,200	-	-	16,200.00
	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.	10,800	Training workshops, ICT and software procurements, technical assistance	40,800	-	-	10,800.00
	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.		Technical advisory support, ICT procurements	0	-	-	0.00
	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.	10,800	Technical support, consultancy services, workshop venues, travel, per diems	40,800	-	-	10,800.00
	2.5	2.5 Support the development of a component to link the VEO website with the voter register for active voter response service.	5,400	Technical support	10,400	-	-	5,400.00
	2.6	2.6 Support the development of a SMS service for Voter verification based on the National Id Number.	21,600	Technical support, procurement of telecommunication service provider	71,600	-	-	21,600.00
	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.	10,800	Professional services, training workshops, travel, per diem	40,800	24,379.68	24,379.68	13,579.68
	2.8	2.8 Develop a centralized a CRVS/VEO citizen image database.		Professional/technical services	0	2,032.13	2,032.13	2,032.13
	2.9	2.9 Develop and implement a facial recognition system with the objective to identify possible matches in CRVS/VEO databases.	10,800	Professional/technical services	20,800	20,644.92	20,644.92	9,844.92
	2.10B	2.10 Support the implementation of a helpdesk and call center component providing services for electoral activities - hr, training and equipment.	0	Procurement of equipment, telecommunications service provider	0	-	-	0.00
	2.11	2.11 Develop a study/prototype for database verification and results transmission auditing processes..	16,200	Professional/technical support	31,200	617.49	617.49	15,582.51
	2.13	2.12 Develop a study/prototype for database verification & results transmission auditing processes.	16,200	Professional /technical support	31,200	-	-	16,200.00
	2.12	2.13 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	108,000	National and international professional staff	393,000	39,374.95	39,374.95	68,625.05
	2.14	2.14 Direct Project Costs		Programme management costs (rent, equipment, comms, etc.)	15,000	-	-	0.00
	<b>Sub-Total for Output 2</b>		<b>226,800</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>756,800</b>	<b>87,049</b>	<b>87,049</b>	<b>139,751</b>
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.		Social media/ Website professional services /support	10,000	-	-	0.00
	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 <del>different communities prefer to access information and public</del>	10,800	Technical support, workshops venue	20,800	9,417.92	9,417.92	1,382.08
	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.	10,800	Technical/professional support	20,800	-	-	10,800.00
	3.4	3.4 Continue to support establishment of a Voter Awareness Committee as a mechanism to coordinate all stakeholders and manage clear messages		Workshops/meetings venue	10,000	-	-	0.00
	3.5	3.5 Support targeted awareness campaigns (media, material etc) on potential referendum, National ID registration, Municipal elections, Provincial elections, General National Election.	10,800	Multi-media services procurement, printing, production of IEC materials	40,800	-	-	10,800.00
	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.	10,800	Workshop/meeting venues, travel, per diem	50,800	15,196.14	15,196.14	4,396.14
	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.	10,800	Workshop/meeting venues, travel, per diem	50,800	2,192.38	2,192.38	8,607.62
	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	16,200	Workshop/meeting venues, travel, per diem	46,200	-	-	16,200.00
	3.9	3.9 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	108,000	National and international professional staff	393,000	39,428.72	39,428.72	68,571.28
		3.10	3.10 Direct Project Costs		Programme management costs (rent, equipment, DPC, comms,	15,000	-	-
	<b>Sub-Total for Output 3</b>		<b>178,200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>658,200</b>	<b>66,235</b>	<b>66,235</b>	<b>111,965</b>



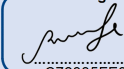


Output 4: Legal Electoral Framework Improved and Capacity Building on Electoral Reform to Key Stakeholders provided  Gender marker: 2	4.1	4.1 Develop legislative option papers/concept notes and provide technical advice as input to discussions on legal reforms, in collaboration with Law Commission and State Law Office.	10,800	Technical support/consultancy, workshop venue	20,800	8,334.76	8,334.76	2,465.24	
	4.2	4.2 Provide support to reforms of the electoral legal framework, including the integration of all direct elections in a single act.	10,800	Technical support/consultancy, workshop venue	30,800	-	-	10,800.00	
	4.3	4.3 Provide support to national consultations regarding impact of legal framework changes	10,800	Technical support/consultancy, workshop venues, travel, per diems	40,800	11,682.50	11,682.50	882.50	
	4.4	4.4 Support operationalizing the positive outcome of the legal reform process with review of all regulations, procedures, operational manuals, forms etc.	10,800	Technical support/consultancy, workshop venues, production of procedures, printing	40,800	1,640.00	1,640.00	9,160.00	
	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.	10,800	Technical support/consultancy, meetings and workshop venues	40,800	18,582.10	18,582.10	7,782.10	
	4.6	4.6 Support political parties to understand and adhere to the legal framework	21,600	Technical support/consultancy, meetings and workshop venues	81,600	-	-	21,600.00	
	4.7	4.7 Support development and implementation of data protection/data security policy and related legislation.	10,800	Technical support/consultancy,	20,800	12,661.60	12,661.60	1,861.60	
	4.8	4.8 Effective technical advisory services and project implementation	110,160	National and international professional staff	395,160	39,374.95	39,374.95	70,785.05	
			Project Monitoring, communication and visibility		Monitoring visits and report writing	6,000	-	0.00	0.00
<b>Sub-Total for Output 4</b>			<b>196,560</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>677,560</b>	<b>92,276</b>	<b>92,276</b>	<b>104,284</b>	
<b>Total All Outputs</b>			<b>791,899</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,036,760</b>	<b>377,940.26</b>	<b>377,940.26</b>	<b>482,819.74</b>	
5	<b>General Management Support @ 8%</b>		<b>68,861</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>242,941</b>	<b>30,255.09</b>	<b>30,255.09</b>	<b>38,605.91</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>			<b>860,760</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,279,701</b>	<b>408,195.35</b>	<b>408,195.35</b>	<b>521,426</b>	

<b>Total Expenses @2021 and @2022</b>							<b>1,604,916.17</b>
<b>Balance as at 31st March 2022</b>							<b>1,733,514.53</b>
<b>Fund Utilization Rate at at 30 June 2022 compared to Funds received so far</b>							<b>48%</b>
<b>Fund Utilization Rate at at 30 June 2022 compared to 2022 Budget</b>							<b>47%</b>
<b>MFAT Funds expensed under VEEP</b>							<b>\$ 408,195.35</b>
<b>TRAC funds expensed under VEEP</b>							<b>\$ 15,139.33</b>
<b>DFAT Funds activities for VEEP Project</b>							<b>\$ 23,791.42</b>

I declare that this financial acquittal is a true and accurate record of monies received and expended for this project.

DocuSigned by:

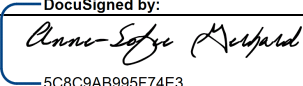
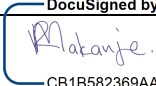
  
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Levan Bouadze

Resident Representative  
UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji

Date:  
29/07/2022



## 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:  <small>DocuSigned by: 5C8C9AB995F74E3...</small>	Signature:  <small>DocuSigned by: CB1B582369AA4A2...</small>



## ANNEX 1: ELECTORAL SECTOR LEGISLATIVE REFORM

### Main Initiatives proposed for new Electoral Act

**Introduction:** The Electoral Commission (EC) has embarked on a process of strengthening the legal framework underpinning the elections in the country. For that purpose, it created the Electoral Reform Working Group, which has proposed to replace existing electoral laws with a single electoral Act, which will regulate parliamentary, provincial government council and municipal council elections in a single harmonised law. Additionally, innovations in the electoral process have been proposed, in order to modernize the institutions and practices in Vanuatu.

*Currently as of 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022 Edward Kaltamat, Chair of the Electoral Commission, submitted the final Drafting Instructions to the Attorney Generals Department for preparation of the draft Bill to be presented to the November Sitting on the Vanuatu Parliament. During the intervening period there will be on-going consultations to raise awareness of the proposed reforms. This will include a session for Parliamentarians reviewing the proposed Bill that has already been up-loaded to their Tablets for their perusal.*

The following outlines the main innovations proposed, in no particular order.

**1. Strengthening independence of the Electoral Commission:** One of the guiding principles for an efficient electoral authority is “independence”. This principle relates to “independence of action”, that is, the possibility of doing the job without any undue influence from whatever source, including government, political parties, or any other source, including the international community. International practice shows that “independent” electoral bodies are more likely to generate confidence in the institutions and practices in regards to elections. While the current EC tries to conduct itself in an independent manner, the current legal provisions do not mention the “independence” of the EC. The EC/VEO is under the administrative tutelage of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and does not have its own budget that can be managed independently; in short, legally the EC does not have an administrative nor financial independence, which has often impacted negatively on the preparation and conduct of the elections. Additional issues regarding the independence of the EC are the modalities for appointment and dismissal of the electoral commissioners. The new electoral Act will try to introduce those measures that consolidate the independence of the EC.

**2. Recognition of Provincial Electoral Officers.** Currently, there is no permanent presence in all of the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) in the provinces. Despite the fact that presence in the provinces is not a feature present in the legal framework, lessons-learned have shown the importance of having a permanent presence of the electoral authorities in the provinces, particularly with the introduction of the new model of continuous voter registration (open all year around). There have been efforts to increase the number of permanent provincial electoral officers to all provinces, so far without success for a number of reasons (including



COVID19). However, it has been recommended that this feature be included in the legal framework to guarantee its implementation.

**3. Voter Registration:** Voter registration is one of the most important functions given to the EC, which in turn has relied on the work of the VEO to register voters. The traditional model for voter registration was to have a stand-alone voter registration conducted by the VEO. The voter register was established exclusively from the data collected by the VEO. In Vanuatu, efforts have been made targeting the efficiency, as well as the integrity, of the voter registration process. In 2017 the Government decided to introduce a "National ID Card" to all its citizens. At the same time, the government also decided to link the civil and voter registration database, in order to improve the quality of the voter register and build trust around it, as well as creating synergies among various government agencies. The result has been a change in concept and conduct of voter registration model in the country. The (VEO) is no longer be responsible for collecting the information for "registration of electors in the field." Instead, the VEO is now responsible for the "establishment and maintenance of the Voter Register" relying on information ("secondary information") originating from the Central Civil Register. Additionally, the EC/VEO are no longer issuing "Electoral Cards" and the "National ID Card" will fulfil the necessary proof of identity and eligibility at polling. In order to ensure the legislation is in line with the current practices, it is necessary to revise the electoral provisions.

**4. Electoral lists:** The current legislation provide for "electoral rolls" for each polling district. In fact, "electoral rolls" will no longer be necessary. As mentioned, a national Voter Register will be established and updated as necessary from the Civil Registry information; the VEO will allocate voters to polling stations based on the address information in the Voter Register and "electoral lists" will be prepared, for each specific polling station and will be available for public inspection before being finalised. Electoral data can be updated all year round through provincial offices or CRIM Department in Port Vila.

**5. Campaign financing disclosure:** Around the world, the issue of campaign financing constitutes an important element legitimising the electoral process and its results. Vanuatu is one of only two countries in the world that have no specific regulations for political parties. It is certainly one without any kind of requirements for political party registration measures. One of the provisions widely used around the world is financial disclosure for parties and candidates, particularly during the campaign period. Once again, at the moment Vanuatu is one of the very few countries in the world without any provisions to regulate campaign financing. Monitoring and control of money in elections has become a major feature around the world to maintain the integrity and credibility of the electoral process. Despite the lack of political party regulations, and to ensure transparency, accountability and a level playing field, the new Act proposes to introduce basic campaign financing disclosure provisions to improve oversight of campaign contributions and donations, and expenditures. This is a "light" measure, as it doesn't regulate campaign finances, but deals only with reporting of the campaign finances.



**6. Electoral campaign and code of conduct.** At the moment, there is no clear indication of the electoral campaign period in any of the laws. It is therefore recommended to make explicit the length of the electoral campaign period. Obligatory codes of conduct for political parties and candidates have already been approved by the EC and gazetted in 2021. Additionally, it is international good practice to have compulsory codes of conduct for political parties and candidates to comply with during the electoral campaign periods. The current EC regulation in regard to codes of conduct for parties and candidates can be relied upon until the codes of conduct are updated under the new Act.

**7. Single ballot paper:** 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. With the current ballot structure in Vanuatu, 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. While this is a legitimate model, the ballot structures most used around the world is that of a “single ballot paper”, containing all the parties or candidates in the election, and where the voters have to indicate on the ballot paper which of these is preferred before placing the ballot in the ballot box. This modality is considered more user-friendly and much more cost-effective. The new Act proposes the use of a single ballot paper with all candidates on it for each constituency. This is a cost saving measure to move away from the current, and more cumbersome, ballot paper structure: 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 as would issues in regard to different ballots being glued together, which effectively invalidates the vote. The adoption of a single ballot paper, which would do away with the need to produce a booklet of ballots per voter, would also significantly facilitate the electoral logistics, simplifying the production, distribution and retrieval of ballots. A single ballot paper would also enhance the secrecy of the vote: as there would be no ballots left over in the polling booth, the open bin next to the ballot box or outside polling station, the secrecy of the vote would be better preserved. Transparency in the counting of the votes would also be improved. A single ballot paper will also facilitate expanded out of country and out of constituency voting.

**8. By-elections:** The RPA says that should there be a vacancy for a seat in the national Parliament, a by-election is required to replace that seat. The electoral authorities have long tried to have this legal provision modified, as by-elections are costly, take up a lot of time and resources that could be used more efficiently. There was a proposal in a COM paper in 2016 to allow for the runner-up of an election to take the seat of an elected member of Parliament that has passed away. The acting attorney general at the time said this was not possible, as the “electoral system includes an element of proportional representation”, (where it clearly doesn’t). Problematically, the COM paper proposed a change not only to the RPA, but also to the



Constitution, which would of course require a national referendum. Many would argue that there is no need to change the Constitution, only the law, to abandon the system of by-elections, which from an administrative and financial perspective would make a lot of sense. Therefore, it is proposed that serious consideration should be given to doing away with by-elections. In their place, the EC could be given a power to declare the candidate who obtained the second highest number of votes at the last election (from same party where possible) as the candidate to fill a vacancy. This has been used in municipal council elections in the past.

**9. Special measure for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** Currently, there are no special measures allowed by law to facilitate the electoral participation of IDPs resulting from natural disasters (a common occurrence in Vanuatu). It is therefore proposed to introduce special measures, in terms of voter registration and polling, for IDPs resulting from natural disasters and civil disturbances within flexible, pre-determined timeframes set by the Electoral Commission.

**10. Special voting (remote voting):** 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 and to be nominated as candidate. Any measures significantly affecting this system in a major way could create operational and logistical issues, but limited measures could be introduced that would be beneficial and easier to control. In that context, the request to explore out-of-voting constituency involves introducing "limited", feasible and effective measures to allow voters to vote outside their place of residence ("absentee" or "remote voting") 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. Another 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. 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. Out-of-constituency registration is already allowed within the current legal framework, but in order to increase electoral participation, it could be beneficial to examine the possibility of introducing out-of-constituency voting. As mentioned, this could be done in a limited manner, such as establishing out-of-constituency polling stations in Port Vila and Luganville; again, this arrangement could be facilitated only by the adoption of a single ballot-paper per constituency. In that context, the new Act proposes to provide limited voting measures for certain voters to cover polling outside their allocated polling stations. These are voters who are working for the election during polling day and limited out of constituency voting, including out-of-constituency polling stations in Port Vila and Luganville.



**11. Out of country voting:** 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. 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 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). Given the heavy cost of OCV and the great operational challenges, it is recommended that additional OCV be implemented through an in-person voting modality only, with polling stations being set up in the corresponding consulates. 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). Regulations can be made under the new Act to expand out-of-country voting to include countries other than New Caledonia. Out-of-country votes should go to the constituencies where the out-of-country voters have been registered, for national parliamentary elections only. Finally, as in the case of out-of-constituency voting, expansion of out-of-country voting would be feasible only if a single ballot paper per constituency is adopted.

**12. Electoral petitions:** The current system whereby the Supreme Court determines electoral petitions for parliamentary elections will be retained. However, it is proposed that electoral petitions for provincial and municipal council elections be determined by the Magistrates Court rather than relying on election committees which is the current situation.

**13. Constituencies:** There are to be national constituencies, provincial constituencies and municipal constituencies (wards) as is the current situation. However, it is proposed that the Electoral Commission be given the power to determine the provincial and municipal constituencies. Currently, the Minister has this power. The President will continue to determine national constituencies on the advice of the Electoral Commission.

**14. Expanded electoral offences:** The new Act plans to provide for the expansion of electoral offences and higher penalties for electoral offences. A major vacuum in the RPA is that no penalties are established for committing electoral offences leaving little “teeth” to the



authorities to enforce their mandate in that regard. It is therefore proposed that the new Act introduce increased penalties for an expanded range of electoral offences.

**15. Regulations to provide for electoral procedural and operational details:** An attribution of the EC is to come up with its own regulations. Despite the adoption in 2021 of 16 EC regulations, in the past these regulations have been few and far between, not least because of the overly detailed nature of the legal texts, which define operational procedures that normally can (and should be) determined by regulations, allowing more flexibility and suppleness to the electoral administration. Pertinent examples of issues that can be solved through EC regulations are the 3-month residency requirements for registration and the development of specific, separate procedures for the nomination of political party nominees and independent candidates. Regulations under existing electoral laws will be revoked following a transitional period and replaced by new regulations under the new electoral Act. The new regulations will provide for electoral procedural and operational details rather than overloading the new Act with such details.

**16. Special temporary measures for women's voting:** It is a known fact that the Pacific region is an area of the world with the lowest representation of women in elected posts. Thus, the discussion regarding the introduction of temporary special measures (TSM) for women for different types of elections is appropriate. Given that social and political contexts around the world do not favor the election of women and therefore hamper women's representation in elected bodies, many states have adopted the use of TSM. TSM are a set of positive or proactive affirmative action measures to narrow gender disparities and promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender quotas represent one type of TSM related to a country's electoral system that is intended to promote women's representation in elected bodies.

Despite the fact that Vanuatu ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995, the idea of enforcing legal measures that are meant to benefit women's representation is still controversial in the country. Critics argue that the preferential treatment that measures such as quotas given to women is undemocratic and unfair towards men. Ni-Vanuatu lawmakers and politicians, who often want to uphold the status quo, feel that such treatment gives women a free pass, regardless of their qualifications. Nevertheless, the introduction of TSM has proven successful in many places. In Vanuatu, when discussions were held regarding the political reform process in 2016, the possibility of introducing TSM was quickly abandoned, as there was clearly no political support.

Nevertheless, TSMs have been introduced for the municipal elections, with a 30% quota for women in Port Vila and Luganville municipal councils, with good results. It seems the political mood might be changing regarding TSM and it is therefore worthwhile to put the issue at the discussion table. While majoritarian systems (such as FPTP and SNTV) are not ideal for the introduction of TSM, it is still possible, particularly in multiple member constituencies, with the use of reserved seats. It is recommended that, in the new electoral Act, reserved seats for





women that apply in municipal council elections be expanded so as to apply in parliamentary and provincial elections in certain multiple member constituencies e.g., multiple member constituencies with 3 or more members. Some provinces may not benefit from such a measure e.g., Torba and further consideration will be required for such provinces.

Port Vila, June 2022



## ANNEX 2: DIGITAL NATIONAL ID: A SMALL ITEM IN THE POCKET, BUT A BIG STEP FOR VANUATU

The national ID card is a small object, but with huge impact on governance, transparency, and reporting for Vanuatu!



With the close cooperation of Vanuatu's Electoral Authorities, the Civil Registry and Identity Management Department and the Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP), funded by the New Zealand Government and managed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), significant electoral reforms are underway aimed at fairer, transparent elections in turn leading to good governance and economic development outcomes.

One of the most challenging issues faced by the Electoral Commission and its operational arm, the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO), in targeting fair elections was how to "clean" a flawed voter registry. The government decided to link the voter registry with the civil registry and establish a central civil registry as the population source data and issue national ID cards to the citizens. In so doing, other envisaged uses were soon being realised.

We are in the process of adding biometric data such as an ICAO compliant photograph and fingerprints, which together with a Unique and Universal Identification Number, will ensure every person on the voter registry has one, and exactly one identity. Over 72% of ID Card owners (165,396) are already actively using the ID Card as voter identification with the old Voter Card being phased out by year's end. This will eliminate much of electoral fraud related to voter lists. But it will also allow us to expand to many more innovative uses.



The rapid uptake by Ni-Vanuatu of this national identity card is now at nearly 230,000 citizens or 76% of the population (300,019 by 2020 National Census). Why? Because it's efficacious in every way!

The substantially improved geographical data used for individual addresses also streamlines allocating a Ni-Vanuatu citizen to a polling station voter list. But it's also great for planning and targeting health policies to communities in need, better allocation of public benefits, education and urban planning.

For example, Vanuatu is ranked highest on the Global Index for natural disasters – cyclones, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, flooding & tsunamis. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) is now using the ID Card for disaster planning, preparation and response with conduct of Disaster Needs Surveys and allocation of relief packages via the village locator and an individual's exact location. Previously one village may have received several relief-supply packages due to the duplications multiple naming or have had several agencies to do the disaster assessments – over and over – leading to disaffection and lack of engagement in critically important response analysis. The result of better data management will be the reduction of these planning inefficiencies. It is also a tool for tracking displaced persons after natural disasters, preparing of medical supplies and assisting with planned response from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, iNGOs, NGOs and Development Partners.

The Ministry of Health used the ID Card in connection with the National Covid19 Vaccination Program and now intends to use the ID Card for future vaccination programs such as measles and for planning new clinic locations, pharmaceutical needs for specific areas and nurse education and allocation to high population growth areas. Civil Registration & Identity Management CRIM Provincial Assistant Registrars based in each of the six Provincial Hospitals capture data at the “book-ends” of life – birth & death - as well as active whole of life usage. As people access health services using the ID Cards, the previously deeply flawed Birth and Death records are systematically and progressively updated ensuring Patient Record verification is becoming more and more accurate - as is the National Voter Registry.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is also intending to use the ID Card issued at birth at hospitals/health centres and later village registration to provide MoE planners with evidence based, age specific data for future new school construction needs that are geographically established or for amalgamation due to declining cohorts/intakes. Planning & budget allocations can be forecast for new teacher numbers as well as needs for increase/decrease at Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education, school supply needs, text book orders, School Zone planning projections, movement of students due to disaster response (increased/decreased need) and student data and education outcome records.



A network of young people living in the provinces and speaking the local language were trained as Data Collection Officers (DCO). Being embedded into their respective communities, they know who lives where or which Chief or Church Elder to approach to find out if someone has died or moved to another village or island – and therefore another constituency. Armed with 400 solar powered tablets programmed with a VEEP designed App enabling offline registration, the officers moved around their locality registering citizens and establishing their legal identity. No matter how remote the village, the data is automatically synchronised when the DCOs are back online. A great way to bring the government closer to its people!

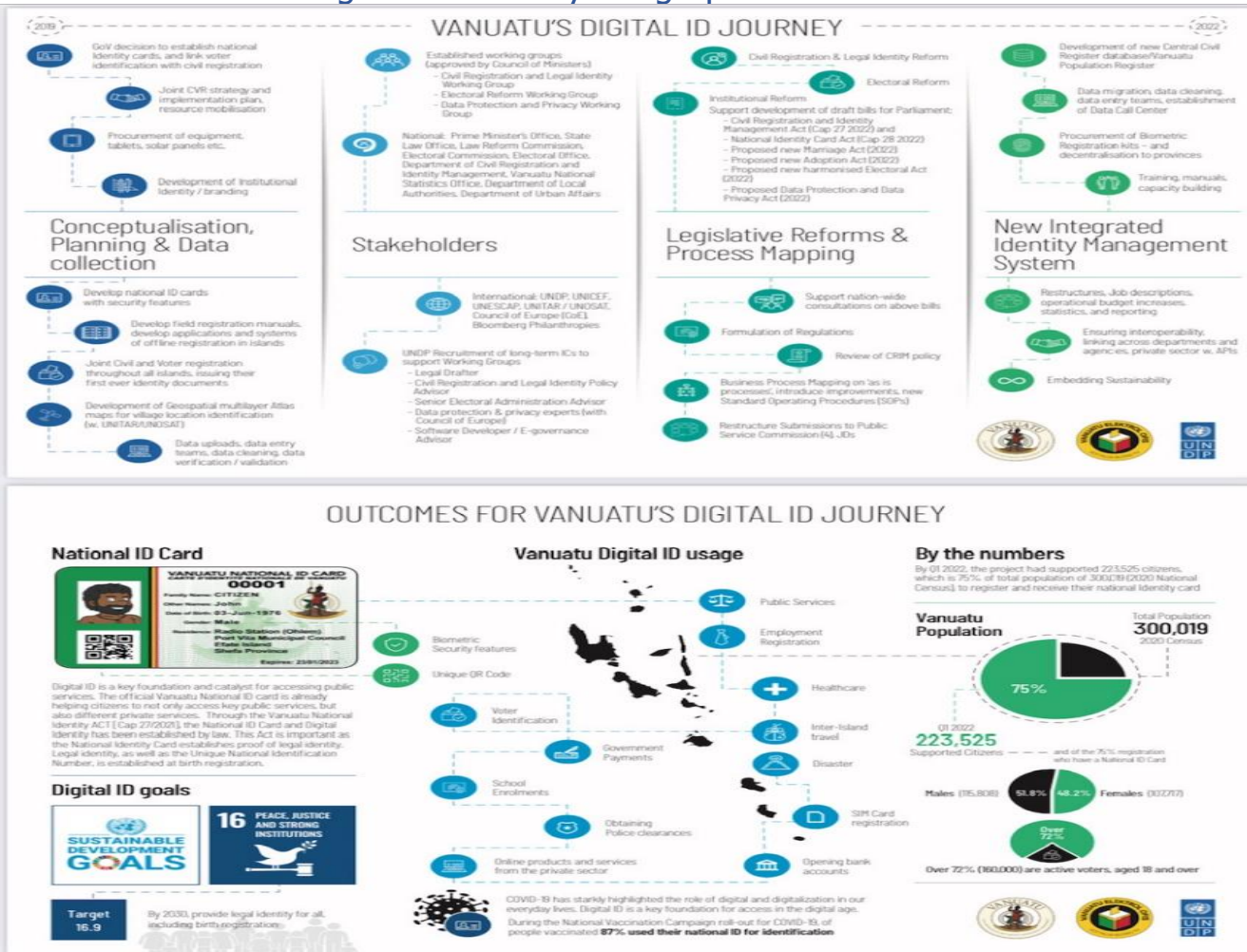
Our vision is to eventually connect all SIM cards in Vanuatu to their holder's ID, and to release a public service portal to maintain this information up to date and accurate. This, in turn, will enable the use of identification for all sorts of economic activities and will improve financial inclusion in the country. People will be able to access many government services online, saving precious time and money.

This portal is part of a wider Integrated Identity Management system, which UNDP/VEEP has designed in support of the Civil Registry and Identity Management Department. This distributed system made of microservices, a resilient architecture designed to scale to new uses, will be the one stop data platform for government and public service delivery. Our ambition is to contribute an additional 6% of GDP yearly growth thanks to this transformational project!


Please visit us at the Vanuatu Electoral Office Website and UNDP Pacific Office Website for more exciting news about this major transformational initiative in Vanuatu:



## ANNEX 3: Vanuatu Digital ID Journey infographic



## ANNEX 4: SECTOR STAKEHOLDER MAP

GoV Bodies & Agencies	GoV Ministries	Private Sector	UN Agencies	Development Partners	
Parliament	Ministry of Prime Minister	Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce & Industry	UNDP	MFAT	
Council of Ministers & DCO	Ministry of Finance & Economic Management		UNICEF	DFAT - GfG - APTC	
Courts & Judicial Services Commission			UN Women	European Union - GIZ - Council of Europe	
DSPPAC - Sector Analysts - ACU - M&E Unit - RTI	Ministry of Education		UNFPA	British Embassy	
OPSC & PSC	Ministry of Health		IOM	Embassy of France	
GRT	Ministry of Lands		WHO	Embassy of Japan - JICA	
Vanuatu National Statistics Office	Ministry of Trade - VFIPA		FAO	Peoples Republic of China	
DoWA					
VFSC	Ministry of Climate Change - NDMO		<b>NGO/CSO Sector</b>	UNOSAT/UNITAR	SPC
Stale Law Office					
LRC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs		Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO)	UNCDF	Asian Development Bank
TRBR	Ministry of Youth & Sport	Vanuatu Christian Council	ILO	World Bank	
OGCIO	Ministry of Trade	Vanuatu Skills Partnership		PIANZEA	
RBV - FIU	Ministry of Fisheries & Maritime Affairs			MSG A-WEB	



## ANNEX 5: VIRTUAL CONSULTATIONS: OUTCOMES REPORT

### **VIRTUAL CONSULTATIONS DELIVER AWARENESS FOR NEW ELECTORAL LEGISLATION – MANY VOICES SHAPING THE BILL**

On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022, Efate and offshore islands entered Level 3 Lockdown as the first community transmissions of COVID 19 (Omicron) were reported. With the new Single Harmonised Electoral Bill in Drafting Instruction's stage, it had been planned to conduct a six province (nation-wide) "Road Show." The Road Show would have included not only extensive consultation in provincial communities on the new Bill with a section-by-section explanation of the proposed Bill's segments. It had been planned to expand the narrow focus of awareness on the new Electoral Bill to include recently gazetted Acts – the Vanuatu National Identity Act (#27, 2022) and the Civil Registration and Identity Management Act (#28,2022). But with the whole nation locked down at COVID19 National Response Level 2 – how could this be done?

The proposed Bill, drafted to harmonise three pieces of electoral legislation (national, provincial and municipal elections), is very complex. It was felt that a strong program of awareness and outreach should be undertaken on the potentially contentious and sensitive features of the Bill through a nation-wide consultation program to sensitise, inform and consult on the proposed electoral reform package features. The main initiatives and innovations include:

- i) Strengthening the independence of the Electoral Commission;
- ii) Recognition of Provincial Electoral Officers;
- iii) Electoral Lists;
- iv) Campaign Financing Disclosure;
- v) Electoral Campaign & Code of Conduct;
- vi) Single Ballot Paper;
- vii) By Elections;
- viii) Special Measures for Internally Displaced Persons;
- ix) Special Voting (remote Voting);
- x) Out of Country Voting;
- xi) Electoral Petitions;
- xii) Constituency Determination;
- xiii) Expanded Electoral Offences;
- xiv) Regulations for Electoral Procedures
- xv) Special Temporary Measures for Women's Voting

With the Nationwide Lockdown announced and inter-province air and ship travel banned, the Electoral Office (EO) and the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) explored options for ensuring consultations took place to meet the schedule for presentation of the Bill to the November Parliament Sitting. The Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP) resourced through the



United Nations Development Program (UNDP) demonstrated its well-established reputation for innovative responses to meet this emerging challenge.



A professional videographer, Philippe Carrillo, was contracted to pre-record and film explanations of the Bill and animate it to make the video both lively and clear.

The Hon Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Minister of Internal Affairs, Ishmael Alatoi Kalsakau Maau'koro opened the presentation by explaining the principles and importance of electoral reform, cementing ownership of the legislation. The Hon DPM and Minister explained that legal frameworks for elections should constantly evolve and mature over time, and that is a common practice all around the world.



This segment was followed by Director General of the Ministry, CheroI Ala Ianna as well as the Chair (Electoral Commission), Principal Electoral Officer (VEO) Deputy Principal Electoral Officer and key Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) personnel presenting each area of innovation in the new Bill. In this way, the virtual audience also met many of the staff of the electoral office themselves representing different perspectives - both male and female, younger and older.

An initial step had already been undertaken through the engagement of the Voter Awareness Committee. This Committee is supported by the Vanuatu





Electoral Office and the UNDP Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP). The Voter Awareness Committee is made up of 20 participants drawn from media groups, Transparency International (Vanuatu), disability groups, Vanuatu Council of Churches and community-based NGOs working for electoral awareness. This Committee functions like a “sounding board” for election outreach and transparent sharing of electoral sector developments.

By now, all Provincial Government Councils were consulted by providing an individual virtual session with the film followed by a Live-to-Air Question and Answer session. Tafea, Torba, Sanma, Malampa, and Shefa Provincial Councils actively participated with often very lively debate and questioning by the combined participants who jointly numbered over 100. Only the Penama Council is remaining at this stage, pending their sitting in Chambers.

The same program video link has been shared with all Department of Local Authorities (DLA) staff including Area Administrators (73 Area Councils) across the whole archipelago of Vanuatu. They were all requested to provide comments. There are five members to these Area Councils drawn from Chiefs, women, youths Churches and businesses. Potentially this would see 380 well- respected and engaged community representatives engaged in the discussion process. Face-to-face visits around Efate – more readily accessed within the Lockdown Bubble - would see a further 150 people participating in village-based community consultations.

Social Media was also utilised with the film and supporting documents such as a FAQ’s Sheet, and an Electoral Reform Main Initiatives Summary uploaded to the Vanuatu Electoral Office Website and Facebook.

In mid-May, Parliament sat to consider the Supplementary Budget for 2022 as well as a raft of legislation after the normal April timing was necessarily suspended by COVID19 protocols. The Parliamentarians’ tablets will be updated with a summary of the proposed electoral innovations, the current drafting instructions for the new Bill, the video and other supporting documents. A session has been offered inside Parliament House for members to gather for a further briefing if they wish. There are 52 Parliamentarians as well as their support teams.

It is said “challenges provide opportunities.”

Certainly, the innovative approach pursued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, supported by the VEEP Project, to answer the challenge of the Nation-wide COVID19 Lockdown, gave rise to the opportunity for effective, informed, inter-active and vigorous debate – with well over 600 participating in the process - thereby continuing to shape the draft Bill through the power of their voices.