



## VANUATU Country Programme Results 2021

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 2,475,000	 USD 2,164,958	 USD 310,042	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM

**Other partners:** UN Women, Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination; Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Justice and Community Services; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education and Training; Department of Women's Affairs; National Disaster Management Office; Ministry of Youth and Sport; Vanuatu National Statistics Office; Department of Labour and Employment Services; Judiciary – Office of Public Prosecutions; ActionAid, SISTA, Vatu Mauri, ACTIV, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, ISRAAID, Silae Vanua, Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum; Vanuatu Family Health Association; Wan Smol Bag; Vanuatu Council of Churches; National Youth Council; IPPF, World Vision; Nossal Institute/University of Melbourne.

### Context

In 2021, Vanuatu was affected by a series of calamities including TC Harold, volcanic ashfall, acid rains, flooding, and COVID-19. These factors had a significant compounding impact on livelihood, including increase in food prices, food shortage and lack of work, exacerbating existing inequalities, and disproportionately impacting women, girls, and at-risk communities. The closing of schools and the return of many ni-Vanuatu to rural areas, also increased women's domestic responsibilities and unpaid labour, while damage to key infrastructures, led to limited access to healthcare services and disruption in supplies. Internal changes, such as the abolishment of the Ministry of Justice and Community services and the restructuring of other services, also impacted implementation of the Programme.

### Spotlight Initiative's Response

Despite the challenges faced by the entire EVAWG ecosystem, the Spotlight Initiative has been catalytic in mobilising UN agencies, national government partners and civil society organisations (CSOs) to combine diverse, complementary mandates, expertise, and technical contributions for effective, comprehensive, and coherent support to EVAWG in the country. The Programme supported implementation across humanitarian and development nexus, strengthening institutional capacity, and developing multi-stakeholder essential services and standard operating procedures (SOPs), including for the Clinical Management of Rape, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE), and adapted for natural disasters' response, migration and COVID19. The curricula for Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Family Life Education for in and out of school programmes, masters' trainings and trainings of trainers enabled the roll out of the programme in schools. Grants to local and grassroots organizations have yield political engagement, stronger advocacy, and increased resilience. This has been further strengthened by the renewed engagement with the EVAWG Civil Society Reference Group and the Steering Committee, now encompassing several donors, government, UN, and CSOs.

### Key Results

- ✓ **Delivering VAWG services during disaster response** (Outcome 2: Institutions and Outcome 4: Services). To respond to the increase in violence and vulnerability of women and girls during natural disasters, a Gender Based Violence in Emergencies SOP for Evacuation Centres was developed, which in coordination with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) will become a part of the National Evacuation Centre Management Guidelines. To ensure a shared ownership of the SOP, extensive consultations were coordinated by the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA), NDMO, and Vanuatu Women's Centre which created valuable forums for dialogue across sectors and government institutions, including those traditionally considered to have separate focuses such as disaster management and GBV response.
- ✓ **Strengthening access to justice & health services** (Outcome 2: Institutions, Outcome 4: Services) Spotlight strengthened the Victim Support Office in the Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) through the secondment of two forensic expert and psychiatrist to provide expert services to survivors of SGBV based at Vanuatu General Hospital working to strengthen evidence gathering for criminal prosecution of cases. The OPP is also undergoing significant refurbishment to ensure safe, confidential space for adult and children victims' access to forensic medical clinicians and counsellors on site. The nation-wide consultations on the Victim Charter led by the OPP and VWC partnership will eventually become a law that will legislate provisions ensuring safe victims' access to

justice. Strategic partnership with the Ministry of Health resulted in the establishment of a core group of clinicians which includes obstetricians/gynaecologists, psychiatrists, emergency doctors, paediatricians, public health and nurses, and midwifery managers, who supported the development of the GBV Health SOP and will ensure health facilities become “service ready” to respond to GBV and improve Clinical Management of Rape response. A training of trainers of 22 clinicians, police officers, CSOs and technical staff from the Ministry of Women and VWC was conducted to ensure the sustainable roll-out of training in the provinces.

- ✓ **Promoting respectful relationships and challenging harmful gender norms** (Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change and Outcome 6: Women’s Movement). Pre and post migration training for labour migrants and their intimate partners have developed concrete strategies, tools and skills to anticipate the changes incited by labour migration and maintain healthy, gender-transformative relationships before, during, and after the overseas work period, ultimately resulting in a reduction of violence. Three months after training 80% of participants indicated that they’d seen a significant positive change in their relationship with their partner, 68% have seen a significant positive change in their relationship with their children, and some shared examples of how they personally had reduced their use of violence. Commitment to practice positive parenting skills in communities have resulted in increased reporting of violence committed against children’s cases, and communities’ confidence in the system to respond. Several community by-laws as a result were developed by the chiefs and community members outlawing corporal punishment in homes and encouraging parents and caregivers to use positive discipline instead.
- ✓ **Engaging adolescents to promote gender equitable and violence free norms** (Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change), Strong sustained advocacy efforts have achieved significant momentum in acceptance and development of comprehensive sexuality education integration for in-and-out of school programmes. Under the leadership of the Department of Education mechanisms to operationalize and deliver CSE/FLE were strengthened through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder CSE/FLE committee, development of in-school CSE/FLE curriculum for years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and associated teacher guides, as well as training 25 Master Teachers to roll them out covering all six provinces. For out of school CSE/FLE five out of seven modules were developed and 18 trainers were trained in the National Youth Council and youth CSOs. The roll out of curriculums will commence in 2022.
- ✓ **Strengthening VAWG data capacity** (Outcome 5: Data). The programme has been successful in attaining the political commitment and the Directors of the Department of Women Affairs and National Statistical Office to lead and coordinate the national mechanism for managing administrative data collection, analysis, sharing and use. 23 GBV frontline professionals were trained who will be able to monitor VAWG response and measure the effectiveness of the referral system. Additional eight experts have been enrolled in the KnowVAWdata Initiative, a series of capacity building workshops to support and strengthen national capacity to measure VAWG through prevalence studies.
- ✓ **Increasing civil society’s capacity to advocate and influence** (Outcome 6: Women’s Movement), financial and technical support was provided to 8 local women’s rights organisations, which delivered number of national and community level advocacy campaigns. It engaged 18 prominent national level male champions of change, highlighted the role of men in preventing GBV, promoted positive and healthy behaviours in men; launched Mat Mo Pig film to showcase survivors’ challenges in accessing justice and prosecuting perpetrators, organised national dialogue with traditional male leaders to strengthen referral systems for survivors, conducted 12 traditional ceremonies creating “watchdog groups” to provide safety net for women and girls. Women led CSOs have been also funded to increase women’s economic power, agency and leadership through income generating initiatives and small loans.

### **One Story of Impact: Rod Blong Jenis**

A video advocacy campaign featured 18 prominent male leaders and champions - including Vanuatu Prime Minister - emphasized the role of ni-Vanuatu men in changing harmful norms and stopping violence, individually and collectively. The video series was shown on national television and across several venues and platforms with tens of thousands of views.

#### **In their own words...**

*"We must take a stand as a country to break the generational cycle of domestic violence and abuse. Women are equal to men and have the right to live a life without fear and grow up in a family and live in a society that respects and upholds their dignity. And this starts with us men and boys."* ~ **Hon Bob Loughman Weibur, Prime Minister of Vanuatu**

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

The social impacts of labour mobility, and the strain it faces on couples and families which can lead to violence, is widely recognised as a problem in Vanuatu. Famili I Redi is a programme that is being institutionalised as a government-led pre departure training for labour migrants and their intimate partners. Preliminary analysis indicates the impacts are lasting, with 70% indicating that their relationship with their partner had significantly improved, 75% understand significantly more about the different forms of violence, and 70% indicating they had already used the stress management strategies which support constructive decision-making and help reduce the risk of violence.