



REPUBLIC OF VANUATU



MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2005



United Nations Development Programme

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Republic of Vanuatu

Millennium Development Goals

Report 2005

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Preface

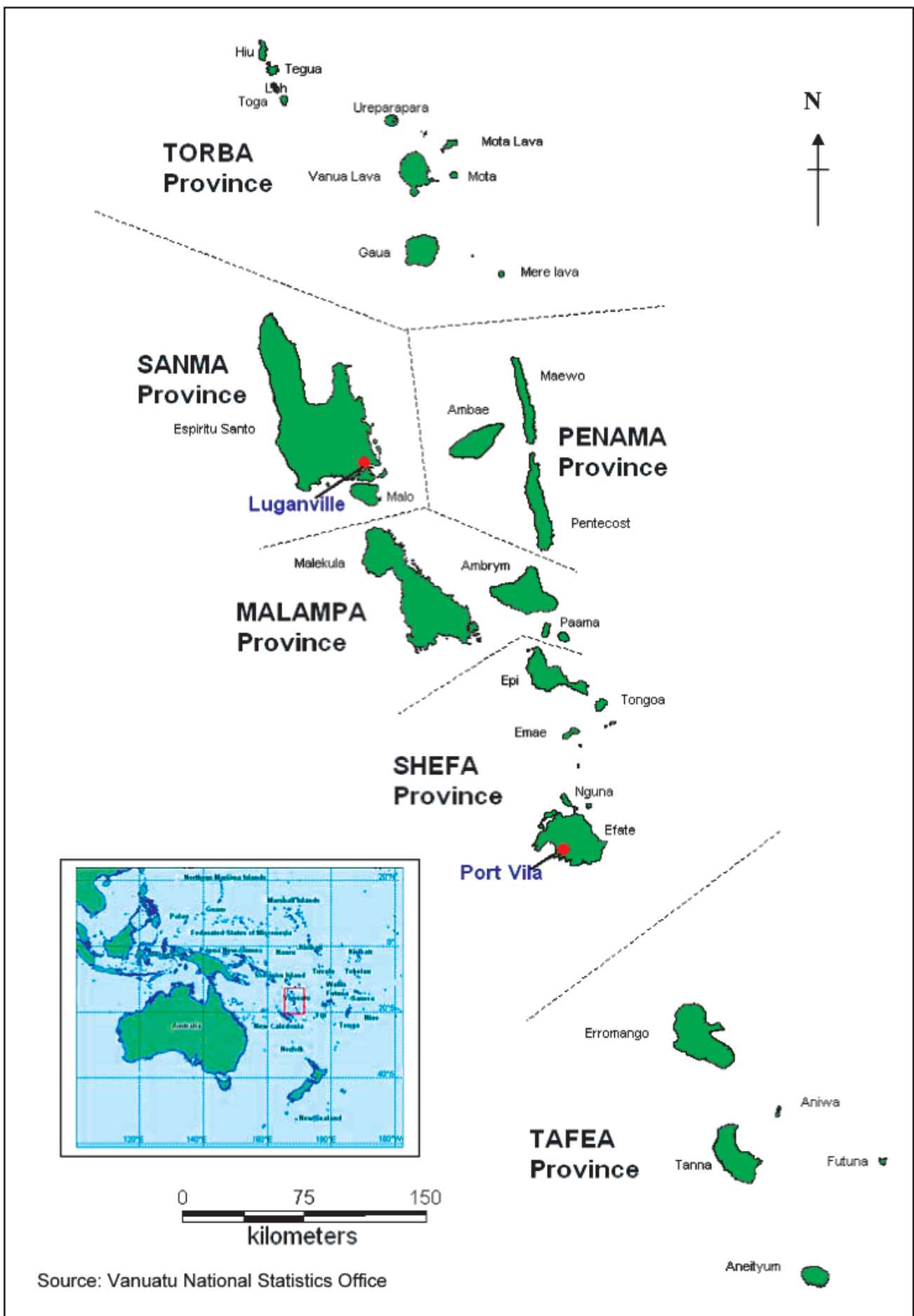
The Government of the Republic of Vanuatu endorsed the Millennium Declaration at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Declaration sets out the overall goals and specific targets with a view to reducing human poverty in the world. Towards their attainments, the Government of Vanuatu is strongly committed to implementing its Prioritised & Action Agenda as a policy that has integrated MDG Indicators in sectoral objectives and priorities.

Vanuatu's first Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report assesses the current situation and progress made in implementing specific targets of the Millennium Development Goals in the country. Prepared with joint effort by SPC and UNDP under the guidance of the National MDG Committee, it provides the situation analysis, progress to date and challenges, as well as priorities to address in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Vanuatu.

Even though some significant progress made in many areas, Vanuatu is yet to overcome obstacles and challenges in order to achieve its MDGs. I am convinced that with the continuous support and close collaboration by the international community, the UN Agencies, as well as the donor countries, Vanuatu will undoubtedly reach the Millennium Development Goals and targets by the year 2015.


.....
Honourable Ham Lini Vanuakorua MP
Prime Minister
Government of the Republic of Vanuatu







Introduction

During the 1990s, a series of global conferences was convened by the United Nations to address major economic, environmental and social concerns. These global conferences produced a political consensus on major development issues facing the world today, culminating in the Millennium Summit of September 2000 at which Vanuatu was represented by the then Prime Minister, HE Hon. Barak Sope Mautamate. Deriving from the major conferences of the 1990s, the Millennium Declaration, with its focus on human rights, security, good governance and reproductive health, along with the 8 Millennium Development Goals, constitute a broad development agenda for developing and developed nations for the next 10 years.

Box 1: The Millennium Development Goals

Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015.

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

Reduce, by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Major Diseases

Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.

Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Develop further an open, rules-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system, including a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.

This Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR) is designed to be a tool for awareness raising, advocacy, alliance building, and renewal of political commitments at the national level, as well as building capacity for monitoring and reporting on goals and targets. This MDGR is, therefore, primarily a public affairs document, especially since during its preparation there was limited consultation with the non state actors and the private sector as key partners in achieving the MDGs. As a living document, the MDGR will be revised periodically, based on consultation with development partners.

A number of additional indicators have been included in this report to better reflect the Vanuatu context.

In-country MDG activities in Vanuatu began in 2003 with MDG material included in workshops for Government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as the Vanuatu Director General's Workshop on Poverty (June 2003).

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) conducted a workshop in August 2003 with discussions on key sectors (health, education, statistics, environment, finance) to review the MDGs and derive MDG indicators for Vanuatu; identify customised targets and indicators as well as key information gaps and strategies to address these.

The Prime Minister endorsed the formation of the Vanuatu MDG National Committee (MDG NC) in mid 2004, for which the Department of Economic and Sector Planning (DESP) is the secretariat. The MDG NC, chaired by the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, has members representing planning (DESP), statistics, education, health, environment, women, global partnerships (Foreign Affairs), agriculture and the national umbrella NGO organisation. Members of the MDG NC were then tasked with establishing sector working groups comprising all stakeholders in the sector and drafting the chapters for this report.

By the end of 2004 a framework of Plan of Action was developed and adopted by the MDG NC which has formed the basis of MDG implementation - the first being the research, consultation and writing of this report. MDG reporting process does not attempt to assess the entire picture of development concerns. Rather, it identifies key issues as a basis for advocacy, policy dialogue with the government and non-government agencies for improved data monitoring and addressing development concerns to enhance the quality of lives of the people.



Socio - Economic Context

The Land

The Republic of Vanuatu comprises a chain of more than 80 islands in a 'Y' shaped chain, of which 65 are permanently inhabited. These islands extend 1,300 km along a north-south axis between latitudes 13° and 22° south, with an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 700,000km², a relatively small EEZ by Pacific island standards. The volcanic and coral platform islands are young, small and highly disturbed as a result of frequent cyclone, seismic and volcanic activity. The country has a reasonable natural resource base for achieving sustainable human development.

Most islands are either mountainous or steeply undulating, with 35% above 300m. There are nine active volcanoes, seven of which are terrestrial and two under sea. Because of the rugged and mountainous terrain most of the population live on the narrow coastal strip.

Much of the country's potential resource base is yet to be quantified. The land and the sea are the nation's major resources. There are few minerals, and little potential for industrialisation. An estimated 41% of the land is suitable for cultivation, but these amounts vary considerably from island to island. Over 90% of the land is held in customary land tenure for use by family members.

The large sea area and many islands to be covered, with rough island terrain make travel and communication between islands expensive and often very difficult. Many islands are linked by air but some can only be reached by boat, and travel within many islands is still by foot (or boat or canoe) as roads do not exist.

The People

Vanuatu's cultural and linguistic diversity has resulted in large variations between and within islands in social organisation, including land tenure systems. In Vanuatu social structure revolves around the clan, mainly patriarchal, and the clan's ownership of land, ownership and inheritance of which in customary sense is both patrilineal and matrilineal. Generally women have usufruct rights to land of their clan which can be used by the immediate family and men have primary rights to land.

Vanuatu's civil society has many different groups, both traditional and those introduced from outside. Church institutions provide an important role in uniting people, providing a sense of belonging and a strong form of social capital. Traditional chiefs play an important role in maintaining peace, law and order mainly in rural communities but also in urban areas. Elders commonly resolve conflicts and disputes.

Vanuatu's population is increasing. The 1999 Population Census showed that the urban centres of Port Vila and Luganville are increasing rapidly, with 21% of the people of Vanuatu living in these urban centres. The remaining 79% of the population live in rural areas and mostly live off the land and sea. Port Vila and Luganville grew at almost twice the amount (55%) of the rate of population growth (31%) in the 10 years between 1989 and 1999. Fertility - the number of babies being born to a woman - is declining slightly in Vanuatu (to note that birth cohorts are still increasing). The ni-Vanuatu total fertility rate decreased from 5.3 in 1989 to 4.8 in 1999, which is also reflected in the decrease in the Crude Birth Rate from 37 per 1,000 to 33 per 1,000. The rate of infant mortality - babies aged less than one year dying - has also decreased. This means that while women are having slightly fewer babies, more of the babies are surviving. The challenge is to provide the economic development and infrastructure to support the growing population - opportunities to generate income through things

like access to land, jobs, business activities, develop skills, markets for produce, and so on are required.

The Economy

National economic growth has been uneven, and in recent years has declined, although the slight growth of the past two years is projected to continue. The economy of Vanuatu has a narrow income base, with over half of economic activity being in the service sector (wholesale and retail trade, government services, transport and communication), one quarter in the agriculture sector (mostly subsistence agriculture) and one tenth in manufacturing. Tourism is the main source of foreign exchange earnings, with tourism activities mostly limited to Port Vila and surrounds. The offshore financial centre in Port Vila makes a significant contribution to the economy. The government relies heavily on external grant aid for its expenditure.

There are a number of reasons for the slow economic development including reliance on a narrow range of agricultural exports which are subject to international prices, distance from world markets, limited capacity to make full use of natural resources, the high cost of infrastructure (land, sea and air transport, communication, water, electricity), and vulnerability to natural disasters. Some commentators also point to the unstable political climate and government's difficulties in implementing good governance as other factors inhibiting economic growth. Furthermore, the lack of training opportunities has resulted in shortages of skilled people in key parts of Government as well as the private sector.

Opportunities for economic growth include the tourism, forestry, mining and fisheries sectors, however the challenge is to manage activities so urban and rural areas alike benefit from the economic opportunities and the land and sea environments of Vanuatu are preserved for future generations.

Vanuatu is ranked as a UN Least Developed Country since 1995. With a per capita GDP of less than US\$ 1,276, Vanuatu is the third poorest country in the Pacific with a national poverty incidence of 39% (1997, HIES). The Human Poverty Index (HPI) ranks Vanuatu number 13 of 15 Pacific Island Countries and 128 on the UNDP Global Human Development Index (HDI) in 2003. Vanuatu was also ranked the most vulnerable state of 110 small developing countries by a 1998 Commonwealth Secretariat report.

Government

In 1980 Vanuatu became independent from France and the United Kingdom after being jointly administered for 76 years. It is a parliamentary democracy with executive power vested in the Prime Minister and the council of 13 Ministers, which is responsible for government departments, national administration and the provision of government services. The Head of State is the President.

Following an initial period of relative political stability there have been a number of changes of government between elections over the last 10 years; changes often linked to shifting political party loyalties of elected members and poor governance issues.

In 1994 the 11 Local Government Councils established at independence to form the link between government and rural areas were restructured into six Provincial Governments to promote rural growth and devolve administration to the level where the different needs and circumstances of rural districts could be better addressed and to ensure that rural areas receive an equitable share of government services. The long term goal is the devolution of financial and administrative decision making to the Provincial Government level.



Development Goals and Objectives

In an effort to address key structural problems in the economy, Vanuatu began a Comprehensive Reform Programme (CRP) in 1997, based on three areas of reform: public sector, economic and those promoting equity and social development (supported directly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) through a US\$ 25 million loan, and integrated into assistance provided by other donors).

Public sector reform aims to improve the institutions of governance by increasing transparency, responsiveness and accountability in public sector management and reductions in the size of the public sector. Central to CRP are:

Renewing and rehabilitating the institutions of good governance, including the offices of the Ombudsman, Attorney General, the Auditor General and the Judiciary that collectively ensure accountability in Government.

Redefining the role of the public sector revolving around the core functions of law and policy design and regulation.

Improving public sector efficiencies.

The reforms are interrelated and are mutually reinforcing, leading to increased private sector activity and delivering more equitable growth. Five millennium priorities and strategies were identified through the CRP, shown in the following table:

<i>Millennium Priority</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
1. Improving the lives of the people in rural areas	<p>1.1 Ensuring basic Government services reach all rural communities</p> <p>1.2 Encouraging improved economic activities through REDI schemes in all provinces</p> <p>1.3 Expanding access to market for products from rural areas</p> <p>1.4 Improving roads, jetties and other infrastructure in rural/outer islands</p> <p>1.5 Enhancing access to rural credit at reasonable interest rates and establishing mechanisms to encourage savings in rural and urban areas</p> <p>1.6 Protecting the rural environment for the benefit of the next generation</p> <p>1.7 Developing long term sustainable government revenue sources and effective collection arrangements that support a young growing population</p>
2. Supporting private sector growth	<p>2.1 Lowering the costs of doing business, including through monitoring prices</p> <p>2.2 Providing the framework and support for sustainable growth in agriculture and tourism</p> <p>2.3 Clarifying the rights of use and development of land, including through establishing effective land dispute mechanisms</p>
3. Restoring good governance	<p>3.1 Re-establishing political stability through amendment of the Constitution and strengthening the Parliament</p> <p>3.2 Streamlining the machinery of the government by reducing the number of ministries and government agencies</p> <p>3.3 Establishing a service charter with specific commitments to better services from all ministries</p> <p>3.4 Strengthening the operation of the rule of law through enhancing the courts and the police and other legal institutions</p> <p>3.5 Improving public sector performance and motivation, including by making public services accountable if they do not perform effectively</p>

<p>4. Improving participation by civil society</p>	<p>4.1 Strengthening the role of and authority of chiefs 4.2 Re-organising arrangements for CRP consultation so as to better involve local communities 4.3 Encouraging civil society organisations to work in partnership with government 4.4 Developing greater participation in local government 4.5 Improving effectiveness of local government through implementing the report of the DRC</p>
<p>5. Closing the gap between the rich and the poor and disadvantaged groups</p>	<p>5.1 Working towards youths having universal access to school education and to training 5.2 Extending access to and improving the quality of health services 5.3 Paying greater attention to the underlying causes of poverty and social discord 5.4 Alleviating the problems related to urban drift and squatter settlements 5.5 Improving the position of and opportunities for women 5.6 Addressing issues related to youth and to youth unemployment</p>

Progress in the CRP has been monitored against the program matrix established with the ADB as part of the loan process. The matrix has been revised and updated to reflect emerging priorities and resolutions of the National Summit in July 2000, approved by Council of Ministers in March 2001. The Government has made minor changes to reflect emerging priorities, namely through the Prioritized Action Agenda (PAA) which integrates and prioritises the action agendas contained in ongoing national and provincial programs such as the CRP, Business Forum Outcomes and the Rural Economic Development Initiatives (REDI) Plans. The overall objective of this undertaking is to link policy and planning with government resources, combining the three main priority areas for government in a cohesive framework identifying priority issues and actions (a criticism of the CRP process).

The Prime Minister during the CRP summit of November 2002 announced the following priorities that were subsequently approved by the Council of Ministers and the Development Committee of Officials (DCO):

1. *Improving governance and public service delivery by providing policy stability & fiscal sustainability via a strengthened law-enforcement and macroeconomic management capacity and a small, efficient, and accountable government;*
2. *Improving the lives of the people in rural areas by improving service delivery, expanding market access to rural produce, lowering costs of credit and transportation, and ensuring sustainable use of natural resources;*
3. *Raising private investment by lowering obstacles to growth of private enterprise including lowering costs of doing business, facilitating long-term secure access to land, and providing better support services to business;*
4. *Enabling greater stakeholder participation in policy formulation by institutionalising the role of chiefs, non-governmental organisations, and civil society in decision-making at all levels of government; and,*
5. *Increasing equity in access to income and economic opportunity by all members of the community. Specific areas of focus include: enabling universal access to primary education by school-age children, universal access to basic health services, and inducing increased employment opportunity for those seeking work.*

The PAA contains a series of actions, which in turn contain detailed recommendations for implementation:

- I. ***Actions to improve governance***
Address the structural deficit by providing policy stability and stable institutions.
- II. ***Actions to raise productivity of the public service***
- III. ***Actions to increase private enterprise***
Mechanisms to foster economic growth.
- IV. ***Actions to reduce costs of transportation and utilities***
Marine transport. Air transport. Land transport. Electricity and water. Telecommunications.
- V. ***Actions to grow primary sectors***
Agriculture. Quarantine. Fisheries. Forestry. Tourism. Manufacturing. Trade. Foreign investment. Ni-Vanuatu business development. Geology and mines. Meteorological services.
- VI. ***Actions to improve access to basic services***
Pre-school, primary and junior secondary education. Senior secondary and higher education. Technical and vocational education. Health. Police and Vanuatu Mobile Force. Immigration. Local Authorities.
- VII. ***Actions to address population and employment issues***
Population issues. Unemployment. Inland migration from rural to urban sites.

It is too early to tell how successful the reforms will be. Those centred around government aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery are almost completed. Emphasis is now shifting towards promoting equitable economic growth, particularly through income generating activities in the rural sector through agriculture and tourism. Good governance, political stability and coordinated and integrated activities from government departments as well as provincial governments are essential for the successful achievement of the PAA.

Evidence - based decision making

The MDGs, with their focus on targets and indicators, place considerable emphasis on accurate statistical information. In the preparation of this report every effort has been made not to compromise the quality of the statistical data used; with statistics obtained from official sources or, where noted, from other agencies. Where there are concerns about the quality of the data these have been noted.

The Vanuatu national statistical system is working to address weaknesses in the quality, timeliness and coverage of a number of key outputs; while trying to meet existing and emerging demands for information. Government's institutional capacity for analysing statistical and other information for policy and decision making, and making necessary policy adjustments, is weak but improving through CRP initiatives. Suitably skilled people are in limited supply and capacities of statistical sections in government ministries and departments are stretched.

The Vanuatu National Statistics Office compiles statistics from the broader national statistical system, gathering information from other agencies and, for some indicators, combining this with other statistics (such as population estimates for rates per 1,000 population or per capita, or for composite indicators such as GDP). Where the Statistics Office is aware of inadequacies in coverage or quality of the information this has been noted. For example in Vanuatu it is very difficult to get the full number of births in a year. Usually these are recorded from health clinics which are spread over a large number of islands and districts with communication with the central authority difficult, while not all births occur in health clinics and are not officially recorded. A similar situation occurs with deaths, particularly infant deaths, where deaths in the home are not reported to authorities.

Despite considerable progress in improving data availability in Vanuatu since CRP, there is still clearly a pressing need for much better and more reliable data in a range of socio-economic and governance areas to better understand local socio-economic challenges and target those most in need. In this context, there is a particularly urgent need for better data on HIV/AIDS, infant mortality rates, public safety, maternal mortality rates, access to safe water, and poverty among others, ideally gender disaggregated. Strengthening the capacities of statistics units will be needed to support the collection, compilation and analysis of such essential data and information.

With the introduction of CRP, planning has been devolved to the sectors. However, due to human resource development constraints, priorities are normally poorly designed, with an absence of rigorous monitoring and measuring of services delivered. There are fairly weak linkages between the PAA and the provincial level Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) plans with the related recurrent and development budgets presented for national development activities, although this needs to be resolved.



GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target 1: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living in poverty

Information on poverty and hunger in Vanuatu is sparse because of the difficulty in defining poverty in the Vanuatu context. Absolute poverty in terms of starvation and destitution is not an issue. However, many people, particularly in rural areas, have incomes below the international poverty line of US\$1 per day. No time series data exist and there is no national comprehensive assessment of the causes and outcomes of poverty.

The 2002 Participatory Hardship Assessment of 12 village and settlement communities in four provinces found that “hardship ... is widely perceived to exist, primarily through lack of, or limited access to, basic services such as education, health, good roads and safe drinking water”¹, with many of the participants saying that hardship had worsened over the last five years.

PHA respondents identified several groups which suffer from hardship disproportionately to the rest of the community including the “jobless, landless, widows and single mothers, orphans, disabled, elderly, settlers and ‘lazy people’”². Causes of hardship for children included limited access to education, the distances children have to walk to school often over difficult terrain, child illness attributed to lack of access to health services and medicine as well as poor nutrition. Youth hardship was thought to be the result of factors such as the inability to continue schooling along with poor trade skills of youths unable to continue education. Hardships identified for women included single parenthood, unplanned pregnancies and domestic violence.

The 1998 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) economic and social data provide the only other source of information about poverty, with vulnerable groups emerging as those in urban centres without access to land, the unemployed and youth, and highlighted significant inequalities between urban (*5 times higher*) and rural income. Because of data quality concerns, results were considered preliminary and indicative of poverty levels in Vanuatu. However, it was found that the urban poor are more likely to be very poor; with majority of poor households having at least two people working in subsistence activities or paid jobs, indicating that the incomes from their labour, sale of produce or food and goods produced for home consumption is not enough to keep them out of poverty.³

Progress
Target 1 MDG
Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
Proportion of <i>households</i> below \$1 (PPP) per day	26% (1998)		13%
Poverty headcount ratio (% of population below the national poverty line) <i>household income</i>	40% (1998)		20%
Poverty gap ratio (PGR) [incidence x depth of poverty] <i>household income</i>	31% (1998)		
Share of poorest quintile (20%) in national consumption <i>household income</i>	2% (1998)		

¹ ADB, 2003, *Priorities of the People, Hardship in Vanuatu*, page 3

² IBID, page 5

³ VNSO, *Vanuatu Poverty Report*,

A significant proportion of the households of Vanuatu live on less than US\$1 per day. In 1998 about 26% of the households of Vanuatu had incomes of less than US\$1 per day (in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms⁴). However, there are concerns about the accuracy of this estimate because of poor response rates and quality of income data from the 1998 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. In addition, the 1998 data is based on household income rather than the income of people. An income survey is required to obtain the proportion of population below the US\$1 income level.

Almost half the households in Vanuatu have monthly incomes below the national poverty line (Vt 35,000). The poverty line is the estimated income required (including subsistence production) to meet minimum dietary needs, along with essential expenditures for goods and services that are required for a basic standard of living (such as soap, school fees etc). 40% of households in Vanuatu have a monthly income below the poverty line, implying that these households regularly struggle to find cash or produce subsistence goods to satisfy basic needs (such as food, transport fees).

From the 1998 HIES there are significant differences in household incomes between rural and urban areas, with household income in Port Vila almost twice the national average, while rural households had an average income of one-third the national average.

The poverty gap ratio (PGR) measures magnitude of poverty, considering both the number of poor people, and how poor they are. The PGR is the combined measurement of incidence of poverty and depth of poverty. By multiplying the incidence of poverty by the depth of poverty a measure of the magnitude of poverty results.

In Vanuatu the average income of the poor is 31% below the national poverty line. While more accurate information is needed to verify this estimate it would seem that the average income of those living in poverty in Vanuatu is very low; the poor are very poor. The poverty gap ratio is relatively high for Vanuatu because of the large proportion of households (40%) with incomes below the poverty line. The average monthly income of people below the poverty line was VUV 20,936.

The monthly income of the poorest 20% of households in Vanuatu is 2% of total monthly income. Once again, there are concerns about the data quality of this estimate which strengthens the conclusion that the poor are very poor and that income distribution in Vanuatu is very inequitable.

Challenges

There is no commonly accepted definition of what 'poverty' is to the people of Vanuatu, and such a definition must be accepted by the whole community, particularly those in urban areas and remote island villages.

While the government is currently working with communities, NGOs and donors to implement policies, programmes and projects to improve opportunities for income

⁴ PPP estimates were derived by the Vanuatu National Statistics Office. PPPs measure the relative costs of the same basket of goods in different countries to provide an indication of the differences in the spending power of a currency unit, in each place. This means that PPP conversion takes into account not only exchange rates but also the cost of goods in a country relative to what the same goods would cost in the United States in US dollars.

generation and equitable economic growth these are not referred to as poverty or hardship alleviation strategies but to “improve the wellbeing of the general population”⁵.

“To reduce the incidence of hardship in Vanuatu, ... the government [needs to] prioritise improvement of service delivery such as water supply, health, education, and roads in both rural and urban areas; and the creation of job opportunities in the urban areas through skills provision and access to credit.”⁶

Key challenges to achieving this target include translating the PAA and associated CRP, REDI and Business Forum initiatives into sustainable private sector growth and subsequent pro-poor employment and income opportunities in rural and urban areas. This will result in a healthy population with the skills to generate income through increased productivity and diversity within the agricultural sector along with other emerging sectors such as tourism; supported by an infrastructure facilitating access to local, regional and international markets.

Information needs to meet these challenges include a Household Income and Expenditure Survey of sufficient sample size and response rates to accurately derive key poverty indicators. In addition, a nationally agreed food and basic needs poverty line needs to be established to enable more accurate analysis of poverty. There should be a follow up to the Participatory Hardship Assessment to continue to depict the perceptions of the causes, effects and solutions for poverty in the wider community and how, or if, these are changing over time.

Government’s response to the increasing issue of hardship has been to introduce policies and projects that create the conditions for sustained economic growth and long-term reductions in income poverty, directly and indirectly through, for example, improving health and controlling disease to increase productivity and individuals’ capacity to generate incomes. These policies are encapsulated in the Prioritized Action Agenda (PAA), building on previous reform and development initiatives in a medium term framework to:

- ⇒ Lift the economy onto a higher and more sustainable growth path;
- ⇒ Facilitate alignment of donor and government priorities in the priority areas to maximize impacts of such investments; and
- ⇒ Promote policy stability through priorities with a life span beyond the budget election cycles.

The PAA contains a series of actions to improve governance, raise productivity of the public service, promote private enterprise, which in turn contain detailed recommendations for implementation, reduce the cost of transport and utilities, expand the primary sector, increase access to basic services such as education, health, police and local authorities and address population issues and employment opportunities.

The ADB in its strategies for equitable growth and hardship alleviation⁷ highlighted the need to improve governance; decentralise development efforts; improve quality and coverage of, as well as access to education and health services; strengthen government and NGO social support systems; and the need to remove impediments to private sector growth, in particular clarify property rights, as the over riding strategies to reduce poverty. Within these strategies, a number of detailed actions were listed as options in the PAA.

⁵ Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, *Priorities and Action Agenda*, 2004, page 1

⁶ *IBID*, page 13

⁷ ADB TA 6002-REG: *Consultative Workshops for Poverty Reduction Strategies in Selected PDMCs*



In mid 2003 the Prime Minister’s Office convened a workshop for government ministers as well as senior representatives from government and non-government organisations on poverty and governance which highlighted the global agenda and strategies for poverty alleviation including rights and sustainable livelihoods approaches and the importance of good governance in addressing poverty issues. Following this workshop the Council of Ministers directed the Prime Minister’s Office, the Department of Strategic Management and the Ministry of the Comprehensive Reform Programme to develop a national definition for ‘hardship’ along with associated policies and quantifiable indicators to measure progress in alleviating hardship (including integrating the existing initiatives in the CRP matrix)⁸. The national poverty alleviation strategy (“*Daonem Poveti*”) has yet to be released.

Target 2: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

There is no timely information available on hunger and the prevalence of underweight children, with the 1996 National Nutrition Survey being the most recent source of information. There is sufficient food available in Vanuatu’s predominantly agricultural society, with food security reinforced by customs and traditions which ensure that all family members have enough food. However “the major risk of food insecurity in Vanuatu occurs in the expanding urban communities where the adequacy and stability of food supply rely on market foods, cash incomes and the distribution of infrastructure. Rapid urbanisation and alienation of fertile land to cash cropping have also increased the demand for imported foods”⁹.

A 1993 survey found that in many parts of Vanuatu, malnutrition is seasonal and increases only when food supplies have dwindled due to a natural disaster, drought, pests, or inadequate supply.

Progress

The presence of underweight children is of particular concern because even moderate malnourishment in children inhibits cognitive development and affects health status later in life. Nutrition is particularly important for women during pregnancy and lactation if children are to be given the opportunity for sound physical and mental development. Nutritional diseases lower the body’s immune response, making those suffering more vulnerable to other more serious diseases.

Target 2 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age (%)	23% (1983)	12% (1996)	6%
Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption			

Available information suggests that under-nutrition is a significant factor in the poor health of children and adults in Vanuatu. The latest estimate available (1996) indicates that about one in 10 children is underweight, compared to one in four in 1983. The 1983 National Nutrition Survey found that over 17% of children less than five years showed evidence of acute or recent malnutrition¹⁰.

⁸ Council of Ministers Decision 77/2003

⁹ Vanuatu Common Country Assessment page 38

¹⁰ Cited in UNDP, Sustainable Human Development in Vanuatu, 1996 page 60

The Vanuatu Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 1997 - 2001 notes that dietary food energy is supplied mainly by starchy products particularly in the rural areas. In urban areas, the consumption of rice has risen partly because of the availability of rice and also because of its lower price compared to the traditional root crops consumed as staples, with the 'overall protein availability in Vanuatu decreasing by about 7% from 1972 to 1992.¹¹ The decline in the consumption of meat, fish and other seafood was attributed to the decline in the availability of animal protein by 12% during the same period.

Challenges

Two challenges have been raised regarding food security in Vanuatu: the decline in domestic food production and its availability to the general public; and the characteristics of those with insufficient food are poverty, unemployment (or underemployment), low income earners, landless and homeless. These people suffer the most from serious malnutrition (inadequate intake of energy and other nutrients) because they do not have access to land to cultivate food crops, they do not have the cash to purchase enough food for a balanced diet, or in extreme cases, both.¹²

Changing patterns of food preferences and the relatively high prices for locally produced food compared with cheaper imported commodities have led to increased reliance on imported food, particularly rice and bread (made from imported wheat), often less nutritious than traditional foods. Traditional foods have become cash crops as these are sold for much needed cash to meet other commitments such as school fees and other needs - "we sell our taro to buy rice"¹³.

Other challenges for improving the consumption of locally produced foods are problems faced by growers, namely limited access to markets, particularly in the remote outer islands, with transport difficulties and problems getting the cash to pay for the transport; gardens being spoilt by cyclones, floods, drought, volcanic ash and other natural disasters; very limited food preservation or storage options; and crops spoilt by animals because they are not fenced.

The quality of the maternal diet is a critical factor in the mother's status and health, with higher rates of anaemia reported in rural and semi-rural areas compared to urban areas, possibly reflecting the lower intake of food such as meat, fish or eggs (ie proteins). Nutritional deficiency, particularly micronutrients in women, is not well documented and further research is needed¹⁴.

In order for Vanuatu to achieve this MDG target, it is important that timely quality statistical information is available on dietary energy and food consumption. More information is needed on the social factors influencing nutrition, and ways these can be addressed. "These factors include the lack of basic nutrition education, a mother's workload, changing eating habits and lifestyles, beliefs about food, and cultural and social factors which influence the way food is distributed among family members ... [as well as the prevalence of bottle feeding as a factor in poor nutrition compared to breast feeding]"¹⁵. Once this information is available on a regular and timely basis, the capacity of key staff needs to be strengthened to enable the analysis of the information such as the derivation of econometric measures for poverty measurement and analysing dietary energy consumption levels.

¹¹ Ministry of Health, Vanuatu Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 1997 - 2001, page 9

¹² Vanuatu CAA, page 38

¹³ VNCW, Report of the Rural Women's Needs Assessment, 1995, page 48

¹⁴ CEDAW draft report page 106 in section on Article 14 - see if in final report

¹⁵ UNDP, Sustainable Human Development in Vanuatu, 1996 pages 60-61



Initiatives and responses

Baseline information is incomplete and a nutrition survey is required to collect information on dietary energy consumption.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak



GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Vanuatu's main goal in education is to provide universal primary schooling and equitable access to secondary education. The environment in which this goal must be achieved is unique, including 105 vernacular languages and operating under two official languages (English and French) and one national language (Bislama).

The Vanuatu education system comprises pre-school, primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, post secondary and adult education. A small privately run preschool system exists in urban centres and around 670 community based preschools in many rural areas. Students spend 6 years of primary schooling (Grade 1 - 6), 4 years of junior secondary studies (Grades 7 - 10), usually in boarding schools spread throughout the island group and 3 or 4 years of senior secondary education (Grades 11 - 13 or 14). Vocational training is offered for all year 6, 10 and 13 leavers. The current education system is under considerable pressure from a rapidly growing population. The annual resident population growth rate is about 2.6%, and 43% of the population is now younger than 15 years. Children enter primary education at the age of 6 or 7 and are expected to have completed at the age of 12-13.

Vanuatu has now developed and adopted an Education For All Policy, and the objective is to provide education for all children by 2015¹⁶. Formal Technical & Further Education Training (TVET) institutes in Vanuatu are the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT), the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE), the Maritime College and Nursing Training College.

Education is a major component of the national budget, as shown in Table 2.1 below, averaging around 25% over the last 7 years. While salaries require a high 84 %, the expenditure from the national budget on the provision of teaching materials has been very low, with responsibility for the provision for such teaching material largely being left to schools, thus limiting the funding available for curriculum materials, school operation and maintenance.

Table 2.1: Share of Education Expenditure in the National Recurrent Expenditure Budget (1996-2002), in million Vatu

Year	Education	Total National Budget	Percent share
1996	1,024	6,548	15.6%
1997	1,269	6,423	19.8%
1998	1,582	7,659	20.7%
1999	1,732	6,796	25.5%
2000	1,843	7,114	25.9%
2001	1,919	7,199	26.7%
2002	2,062	7,232	28.5%
2003	2,074	28.49%
2004	1,922	26.55%

In year 2003, 56.6% of the primary schools were Anglophone, somewhat lower in secondary schools consisting of 51.2%. The secondary school level is divided into junior secondary education (presently years 7 - 10) and senior secondary level, which is covered in the Anglophone schools years 11 - 13 and in the Francophone schools 11 - 14.

¹⁶ Vanuatu Education For All Policy, 2004

No guidelines exist as to the desirable proportion for the two educational languages. However, within Vanuatu's total population, the estimated share of Anglophone is about 2/3 and Francophone about 1/3¹⁷.

According to the annual report of the Ministry of Education (MOE) for 2000¹⁸, a total of 43,500 students were enrolled in primary and secondary schools during 2000. Of these, 35,000 (80%) were in primary and 8,500 in secondary as shown in table 2.2 below. Numbers enrolled by year show 5% increase¹⁹ in enrolment ratio in primary over the last years. Significantly, there is a high rate of forcing out at end of years 6 and 10 due to accessibility issue. Students repeat the year in an attempt to continue to Year 7. 21% of the primary school students were enrolled in urban areas. A working group is currently revising the system of student assessment and examinations.

Table: 2.2 Primary Enrolments by Gender and Language of Instruction (1996 - 2002)

Language/Gender	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total	31,294	28,510	34,366	34,333	35,083	36,477	37,470
Male	16,518	13,429	17,978	18,004	18,270	19,020	19,477
Female	14,776	15,081	16,388	16,329	16,813	17,457	17,993
English	18,742	19,229	20,708	20,972	18,106	22,933	23,648
Male	9,873	10,089	10,822	11,062	9,463	11,945	12,294
Female	8,869	9,140	9,886	9,910	8,643	10,988	11,354
French	12,552	12,518	13,658	13,361	16,977	13,544	13,822
Male	6,645	6,577	7,156	6,942	8,807	7,075	7,183
Female	5,907	5,941	6,502	6,419	8,170	6,469	6,639
Schools	392	376	393	398	398	405	411
Teachers	1,240	1,181	1,188	1,421	1,519	NA	NA

Source: National Statistics Office

Vanuatu's comprehensive reform program highlights the importance of the education sector. The 2001 CRP²⁰ updated policy matrix requires the Ministry of Education to "improve the quality, quantity, coverage and relevance of education to:-

- Implementing the Education Master Plan
- Reviewing and amending the Teaching Service Act
- Reviewing access to schooling based on improved data collection; and,
- Developing and operationalizing sectoral performance indicators.

There are currently 437 primary schools in the country, with 65% of the children attending Anglophone and 35% Francophone primary schools. Primary education is preceded by 1-2 years of pre-school, which is a part of the non-formal system run by communities to bring their children to school. Primary schools are mostly supported by the government or the religious authorities, though community schools also exist. Primary enrolments by gender has improved greatly at least over the last seven years, though this is not the case with language of instruction as shown in Table 2.2.above.

A small proportion of early school leavers, including those that are pushed out of the system, is trained by the non-formal education sector, but it is still very limited. However, access to life skills training for school leavers should improve greatly through

¹⁷ 1999 Census

¹⁸ MOE, 2001

¹⁹ NSO, 2001; Pacific MDG Report

²⁰ Vanuatu Government, 2001

the planned development of Year 7 and 8 community-based classes. The average student/teacher ratio in secondary remains higher (too many students per teachers) than the required standard ratio. The student/teacher ratio by province is also higher compared to the standard ratio. Secondary enrolment has increased since 1997, and with 3 new secondary schools registered in 2002, total enrolment reached 9,683, which signifies an increase of 5%²¹.

The choice of language of instruction in all schools is based on their locations and the prevailing of English or French in that community, deriving from the administration period of the Condominium. Moreover, Catholic and Protestant schools are generally Francophone while the schools established by other denominations use English as the language of instruction.

Progress

Access to education is considered as a basic human right as well as a fundamental component of both human and social development.

The proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 measures an education system's success in retaining students from one grade to the next. High drop out rates have been attributed to poor quality of schooling, discouragement over performance, the costs of education, difficulties for pupils to get to school (costs of transport, impassable routes), poor health of children preventing them from attending school, the need for children to participate in productive activities for the household as compared to attending school and 'quotas' preventing advancement of all. Students' progress to higher grades may also be limited by the availability of teachers, classrooms and educational materials.

The youth literacy rate reflects the outcomes of primary education over the previous decade for the 'youth' age group that should have completed at least primary (elementary) level education. As a measure of the effectiveness of the primary education system, it is often seen as a proxy measure of social progress and economic achievement.

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
Net enrolment ratio in primary education (6 - 12 years)	74% (1989) 75% Male 74% Female	78% (1999) 78% Male 78% Female	100%
<i>Gross enrolment ratio in primary education</i>	<i>101 Male</i> <i>100 Female</i> <i>101 Total (1990)</i>	<i>128 Male</i> <i>126 Female</i> <i>127 Total (2003)</i>	100%
Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	89% (1991)	91% (2000)	
<i>Survival rate for primary education</i>	<i>84 Male</i> <i>84 Female</i> <i>84 Total (2000)</i>	<i>82 Male</i> <i>81 Female</i> <i>82 Total (2003)</i>	
<i>Proportion of students passing the year 6 national examination</i>	<i>26 Male</i> <i>28 Female</i> <i>27 Total (1998)</i>	<i>50 Male</i> <i>55 Female</i> <i>53 Total (2003)</i>	
Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds	86% Male 85% Female 86% Total (1999)		

²¹ Annual Report, 2003, MOE. Annual Report on Primary and Secondary Statistics, 2003, MOE



Despite difficulties in government service delivery, families' financial status and children to physically get to school, over three quarters of Ni-Vanuatu children attend primary school. From population census data, there has been a slight increase in the net enrolment ratio in primary education which was 78% in 1999. The net enrolment ratio in primary education is the number of pupils in the official age group for a given level education enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. It is intended to show the extent of participation in primary education by primary age pupils. The net enrolment ratio here was calculated based on the number of Ni-Vanuatu 6 - 12 year olds attending school divided by all children aged 6 - 12 years.

There is no significant gender difference in the net enrolment ratio but there are differences between urban and rural areas. From the 1999 Census, the rural net enrolment rate was 77% compared to 83% in urban areas; again highlighting the difficulties of both education service delivery and children's attendance in rural areas. From the 1989 Census, 70% of rural children in the 6 - 9 year age group attended school compared to 84% of urban children (it is not possible to derive the 6 - 12 year age group for urban and rural areas from the 1989 Census).

For comparison purposes, the gross enrolment ratio calculated by the Ministry of Education has been included, showing a more significant increase in the number of both boys and girls attending primary school. Because of children above primary school age attending primary schools, it is not uncommon to have gross enrolment ratios of over 100%; what is more important is the trend in the enrolment rates - gross or net - over time.

The majority of children attending primary school do so for at least five years, with 91% of the number of students starting grade one in 1995 attending grade five in 2000. This gives an indication of the retention of students to grade 5 level, but as enrolment numbers have been used it is not an accurate measure of the proportion of pupils who enrolled in grade one and went on to complete grade five (ie the number enrolled in primary school at grade 5 in 2000 was 91% of those enrolled in grade 1 in 1995²²).

The primary school survival rate shows a slight decrease in 2003 compared to 2000, however as the Ministry of Education has only recently had the information to calculate survival rates, it is not possible to see the patterns over a longer period of time.

The proportion of students passing the year 6 national examination is improving but only about half of the students pass and qualify for secondary level education. Pass rates are considerably worse in rural areas than urban ones with 44% of rural males and 49% of rural females passing the year 6 exam in 2003 compared to urban pass rates of 74% for males and 79% for females. In response to the low pass rates for the national exam students in the final year of primary school and the widening gap between urban and rural primary schools, the Ministry of Education has conducted reviews and implemented strategies to improve the quality of teaching as well as the evaluation and assessment of student performance.

With the limited information available, literacy rates of 15 - 24 year old males and females are high. The 1999 literacy rate used here is a proxy for literacy, and measures the rate of completion of four or more years of formal schooling, as measured among 15 - 24 year old adults. The proportion of adults who have completed 5 years

²² The estimate is based on the Reconstructed Cohort Method, which uses data on enrolment and repeaters for two consecutive years.

of schooling is not a measure of the quality and adequacy of the literacy needed for individuals to function in a society. No time series data are available for this indicator, as the rate derived from the 1989 Census cannot be verified.

The relatively low pass rates for the national year 6 examination cast some concern about the literacy rates and raise questions about whether by the end of primary school level, young adults are equipped with the basic skills they need to fully participate in society. This is further supported by literacy and numeracy levels in primary school students which indicate that they are not acquiring adequate skills at primary school.

The Pacific Island Literacy Level (PILL) test, introduced in 1994, developed the following definition for literacy (with a similar definition for numeracy):

Literacy: The confident, appropriate and accurate use of spoken and written language for the wide variety of personal, public and creative uses demanded by the society in which the user lives.

In 2003 PILL tests were administered to 2,904 year four students (about 9 years of age) with only 39% of students demonstrating literacy (reading and writing) and 42% were considered to be numerate. Once again the differences between rural and urban areas were highlighted, with 52% literacy in urban areas compared to 35% in rural areas and 53% numeracy in urban areas compared to 40% in rural areas²³.

Challenges

The key challenges outlined by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in its 2004 - 2006 Corporate Plan which must be addressed include:

- The structure of the MoE and its Department to reduce bureaucracy, devolve to the provinces, authorities, and schools, and focus on students.
- Funding allocations and best use of existing resources, aligned to policy directions. Reviewing all budget allocations within the Ministry, systematically addressing inefficiencies, and improving systems and procedures at national and provincial levels.
- Quality of service delivery. Improved procedures.
- Ongoing strengthening of policies and plans.
- Contributing to the development of Vanuatu's first National HRD Plan.
- Improving the quality of the basic education sector and agreeing on models for how basic education will be expanded to Year 8 level.
- Moving the focus to in-service teacher training to improve the relevance and quality of teaching, whilst managing in-service training in line with demand.
- Increasing the relevance of curriculum and the availability of relevant learning materials.
- Strengthening the TVET sector and introducing new and higher level programs to meet the needs of the formal economy.
- Taking TVET programs to Year 12 to the Provinces by establishing VIT campuses.
- Reviewing and re-shaping the VITE.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

²³ Source: Ministry of Education



GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Progress

The ratios of girls to boys enrolled at different levels of education are indicators of equality of educational opportunity, measuring both fairness and efficiency. Education is one of the most important aspects of human development. Eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education would help to increase the status and capabilities of women. Female education is also an important determinant of economic development.

In situations of limited resources, families make difficult choices about sending their children to school. In some cases the value of education is perceived differently for boys and girls in that girls are more likely than boys to suffer from limited access to education, especially in rural areas. But where basic education is widely accepted and overall enrolment is high, girls tend to equal or outnumber boys at primary and secondary levels. The pattern is similar in higher education, but with larger differences between the two genders.

The ratio of literate women to men aged 15-24 years measures progress towards gender equity in literacy and learning opportunities for women in relation to men. It also measures a presumed outcome of attending school and a key indicator of empowerment of women in society. Literacy is a fundamental skill to empower women to take control of their lives, to engage directly with authority and to gain access to the wider world of learning.

Higher illiteracy rates for women are the result of lower school enrolment and early drop-outs. Moreover, because women generally have less access to information, training and literacy programmes, estimates based on enrolments may overestimate literacy for girls.

The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector measures the degree to which labour markets are open to women in industry and service sectors, which not only affects equal employment opportunity for women but also economic efficiency through flexibility of the labour market and therefore the economy's ability to adapt to change.

A significant global increase over the last decade in women's share in paid employment in the non-agricultural sector indicates that working women have become more integrated into the monetary economy through participation in the formal and informal sectors. However, labour markets remain strongly segregated. In many countries, productive work under conditions of freedom, equity and human dignity is in short supply, and this disproportionately affects women. Women are much more likely than men to work as contributing family workers, without their own pay, and in the informal sector, although there are large differentials between countries and at regional and national levels, often mirroring the relative importance of agriculture.

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015

Target 4 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status
Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (<i>tertiary is University of the South Pacific enrolments</i>)	Primary 88 (1991) Secondary 84 (1994) Tertiary 40 (1995)	Primary 92 (2002) Secondary 99 (2002) Tertiary 60 (2003)

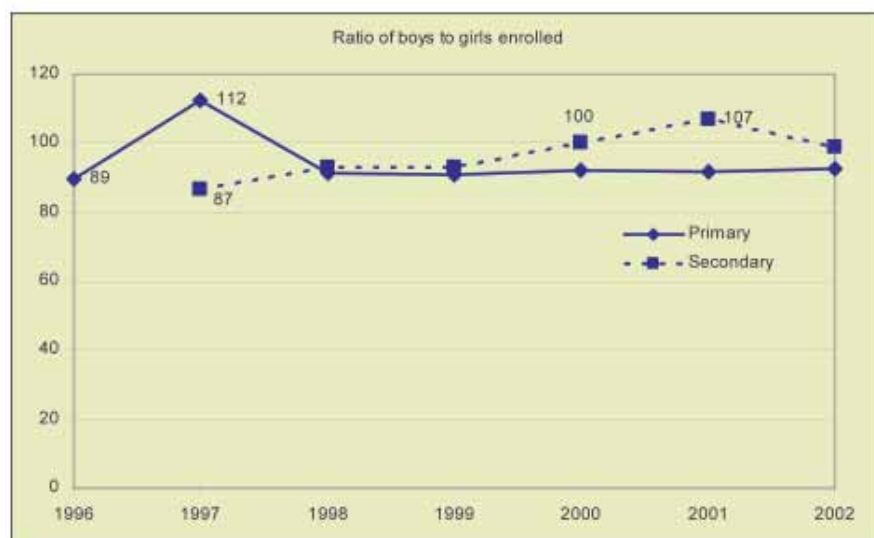


Ratio of girls to boys in pre-school education	103 (1995)	95 (2001)
Ratio of women to men receiving tertiary scholarships	50 (1999)	
Ratio of literate women to men 15-24 years old	No data	
Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector	23% (1989)	40% (1999)
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	2% (2002) 1 female 52 total	4% (2004) 2 females 52 total
Proportion of departments or ministries headed by women	18% (2003) 56 positions 10 female heads	

Source: Priorities and Action Agenda 2006 - 2015

Given concerns raised about enrolment rates and access to education, particularly secondary and post secondary education, ratios of girls to boys in primary and secondary school enrolments are improving. Over the seven years 1996 - 2002 the average ratio for primary enrolment was 94 girls per 100 boys enrolled; with relatively stable levels since 1998. During this period girls enrolled in primary school increased by 22% compared to 18% for boys - the number of girls enrolled in primary education is increasing at a faster rate than for boys; but there are still fewer girls enrolled than boys. These ratios must be considered in relation to the overall number of girls to boys in the school age population - in Vanuatu there are more boys than girls especially in the primary school age group which means that the ratio of girls to boys will always be less than 100. The net or gross enrolment ratios provide better measures of girls and boys participation in schooling.

Source: Ministry of Education, Statistics Office



Despite improvements, significantly fewer women attend tertiary education than men. In 2003 for every 100 men enrolled in University of the South Pacific (USP) either on campus (Fiji Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu) or through the in-country USP centres, there were only 60 women. In 1999 there were 50 women (115) for every 100 men (232) awarded scholarships for study through the Ministry of Education.



Vocational Training Centre	Male	Female	Total
Rural Training Centres	997	417	1,414
Youth Drop in Centres ¹	158	103	261
Vanuatu Teachers College	40	53	93
Centre Universitaire Francophone	34	37	71

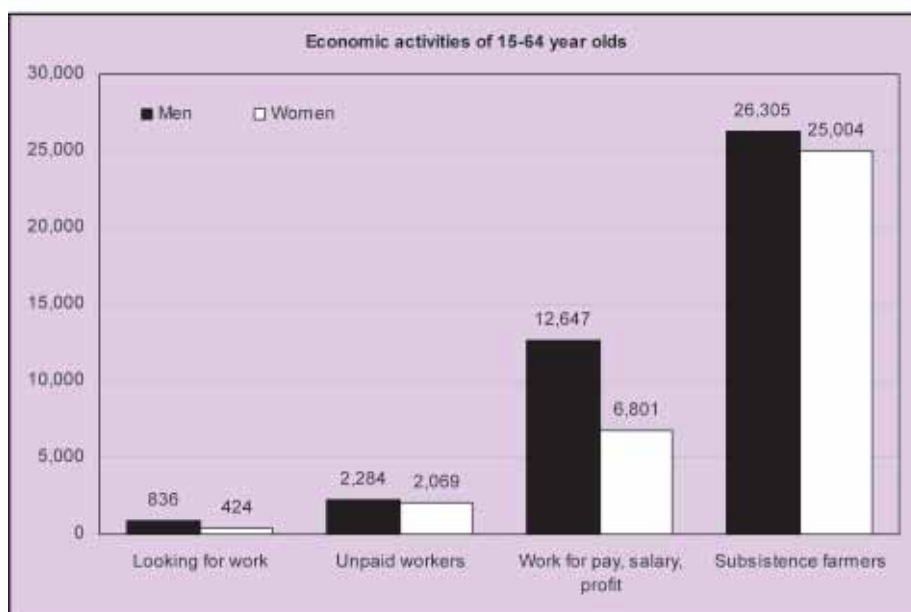
¹ For those aged 16 years and over; 18 Males and 32 females aged less than 16 years. Source: Ministry of Education

Amongst the literate, there is no significant difference between women and men. While literacy rates are low, according to the 1999 Census there are no differences between women and men aged 15 - 24 years in their level of literacy; however literacy was self assessed in the census so there could be a trend for people to overstate their literacy.

Women in wage employment are increasingly employed outside the agriculture sector. According to the 1999 Census 40% of women with paid jobs (working for wages, salaries or profit) work outside the agriculture sector. But this must be seen in the context of the economic activities of labour market in Vanuatu (1999 Census) which consists of 73% (55,652 persons) subsistence workers (including unpaid workers), 2% (1,260) looking for work and 25% (19,448) working for pay or profit.

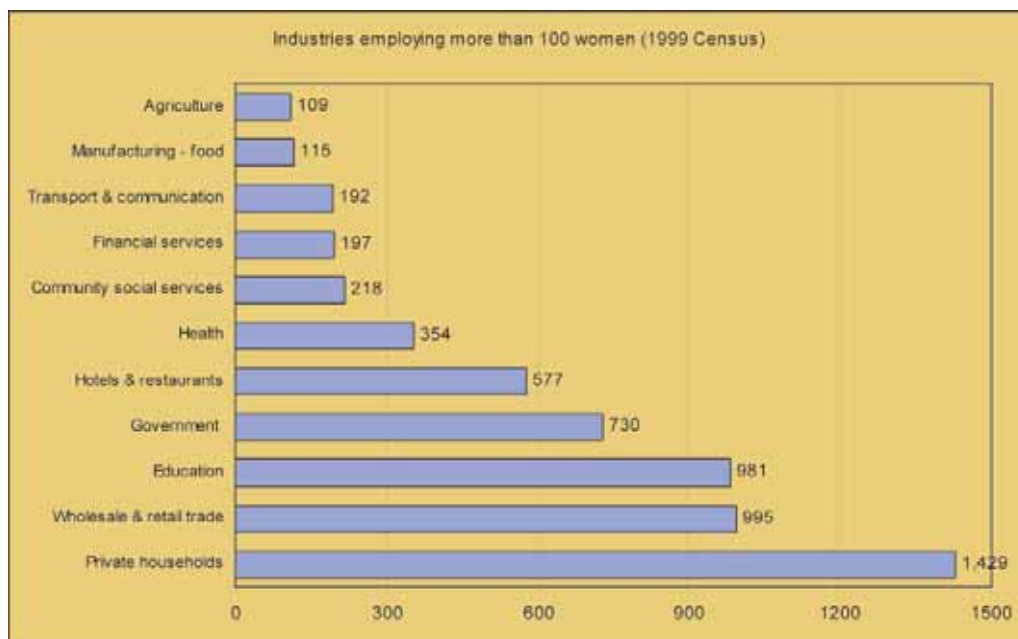
Source: 1999 Census, National Statistics Office

Employment status	Total	Female	Men
Work for pay, salary, profit	19,448	6,801	12,647
Unpaid workers	4,353	2,069	2,284
Looking for work	1,260	424	836
Subsistence farmers	51,309	25,004	26,305
Unemployment rate	1.6	1.2	2.0



Source: 1999 Census, National Statistics Office

The sectors women are employed in - called 'industries' - depict a typical distribution of women working in traditional sectors such as within private households (house girls and other domestic staff), wholesale and retail trade (sales clerks and shop assistants) and education (teaching). Within the government sector (policy, regulation etc) women make up 29% of the 2,513 employed in this sector (1999 Census).



The Government has fallen far short of its target to have 30% of parliamentary seats held by women by 2006. As noted under Article 4 in the Vanuatu CEDAW report, while government has set this goal and others to improve the proportion of women in decision making bodies, it has not followed through with financial support or policy interventions to achieve these. In the 2002 election, of the 257 candidates for the 52 seats in the lower house, only seven were women, four of whom were standing as independent candidates (four of the 68 independent candidates were women).

“Women are excluded by attitudes and behaviours that derive from the belief that women are inferior to men, that women’s place is in the kitchen and not in the public domain, that women cannot organise themselves, that women should join political parties as a way of getting support for candidature, as well as the attitudes in many religious communities promoting the subordination of women which is also enshrined in institutions and reinforced by the interpretation of scripture as the will of God.”²⁴

Women are under-represented as employees in both the public and private (formal) sectors. The public sector is a significant employer in Vanuatu, with employment in the public sector at 4,475 in 2000, compared to formal private sector employment at 9,797 (business registered for Value Added Tax (VAT)). Within the public sector, women make up 35% of employees; approximately the same as the private sector (32%). In 2000, basically one in three employees in the formal sector was female. In 2003 the public sector employed 1,781 women, representing 38% of employees. To note the increase from 2000 to 2003, which highlights only 29% in government sector in 1999 against 35% in all public sector, which also shows less women in higher positions.

At senior levels of employment the proportion of women declines, with 18% of directors or director general positions in ministries and departments held by women. “The reasons for the ‘glass ceiling’ on women’s occupational mobility are many and they include an apparent reluctance on the part of women themselves to apply for senior positions, [...] men dominate most of the decision making structures related to recruitment, appointment and promotion.”²⁵

²⁴ Government of Vanuatu, CEDAW Report, draft version, page 57

²⁵ Government of Vanuatu, CEDAW Report, draft version, page 59



Responses (Initiatives)

Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres (VRDTCA) signed a MOU with the Pacific Island Trade and Investment Commission (PITIC) in September 2004 to provide scholarships for 30 girls for two years training to improve skills and practical exercises in high value crops and local farming, management and book keeping. Trainings are basically in agriculture, carpentry, electrical wiring, computers, typing, sewing, cooking and mechanics.

Challenges

Women are less likely than men to be literate, educated to secondary and tertiary levels, in senior positions in the workforce and government, and they earn less than men. Women experience high levels of domestic and gender-based violence, have poor reproductive health and are more likely to experience poverty. While gender mainstreaming is a core strategy of the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) to achieve gender equality and women empowerment, there are no effective central mechanisms to coordinate and monitor progress.

The common view that girls and women are poor investment leads to discouragement to continue their education, which contributes to higher illiteracy rates for women and girls than boys and men, which directly affect their:

- Earning levels
- Ability to access information on their rights
- Lack of access to employment and promotional opportunities
- Ability to access essential services such as health clinics

Both women and children are prone to domestic violence, rape and sexual violence, which causes serious health problems that include sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS, depression and anxiety relating to stressful environments. Women's access to health care is not only related to unavailability of health care facilities but can also be related to women's undervaluation of self and a belief that they are not entitled. In addition, unequal access to resources and control over time, money and transport often hinder women's access to services.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak



GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

Progress

The under-five mortality rate is the probability (expressed as a rate per 1,000 live births) of a child born in a specified year dying before reaching the age of five if subject to current age-specific mortality rates.

The infant mortality rate is defined as the number of infants dying before reaching the age of one year per 1,000 live births in a given year. Although the target relates specifically to under-five mortality, infant mortality is relevant to the monitoring of the target since it represents an important component of under-five mortality. Infant mortality rates measure child survival.

The proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles is the percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of measles vaccine.

Target 5 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
<i>Life expectancy</i>	Females 69 Males 66 (1999)		na
<i>Crude birth rate per 1,000 (Ni-Vanuatu)</i>	37 (1989)	33 (1999)	
<i>Crude death rate per 1,000</i>	9 (1989)	6 (1999)	
<i>Total fertility rate (Ni-Vanuatu)</i>	5.3 (1989)	4.5 (1999)	
Under-five mortality rate per 1,000 live births	58 (1989)	33 (1999) 31 Males 33 Females	19
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	45 (1989)	27 (1995) 27 Males 26 Females	15
Proportion of 1 year-old children immunised against measles	66% (1990)	75% (2001) 66% (2003)	100%

The Master Health Services Plan 2004-2009 will provide the overall direction for all Health services in Vanuatu over the next five (5) years. The Plan focuses on five priorities as follows;

- To base the delivery of Health services on a Primary Health Care Approach
- To improve the health status of the people of Vanuatu
- To improve access to services
- To improve the quality of the services delivered
- To make more effective use of resources

The Plan also takes into account the Millennium Development Goals as the Ministry of Health has direct responsibility for a number of them. Health related indicators from the Millennium Development Goals have also been included in the Plan. Problems with data quality exist for some of the indicators, and as data quality improves, the indicators will be updated.

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Other indicators being monitored in the Master Health Services Plan 2004-2009 relevant to reducing child mortality include:

Indicator	Current status	Target
Proportion of mothers exclusive breast feeding in the first six months	10% (1996)	100%
Teenage fertility rate per 1,000 live births (15 - 19 years)	92 (1999)	
Total births to teenage mothers (% of live births)	4.9% (2003)	

Indicators for teenage pregnancy have been included here because of the high rates of infant mortality for this age group; but equally important are the high rates of maternal mortality for this group as well (see Goal 5).

Progress

Under five mortality is declining, with a 43% reduction over the 10 years between 1989 and 1999 for child mortality and 40% for infant mortality. Vanuatu seems on track to achieve the MDG target, given the considerable resources being allocated to reducing infant and child mortality. The next time this indicator can be reliably updated will be from the 2009 population census.

This indicator, which relates directly to the target, measures child survival. It also reflects the social, economic and environmental conditions in which children (and others in society) live, including their health care. Because data on the incidence and prevalence of diseases (morbidity data) are frequently unavailable, mortality rates are often used to identify vulnerable populations. The under-five mortality rate captures more than 90% of global mortality among children under the age of 18.

At the provincial level there is considerable variation in the levels of infant and child mortality; with the worst rates in the most northern province of Torba (Torres and Banks island groups). Clearly there is a need for preventive and curative mother and child health to improve in this province which the Ministry of Health is working to rectify through the reallocation of resources into Torba as well as remote areas of Santo and Malakula.²⁶ In addition there will be a Torba Provincial Outreach Hospital, staffed by rotating health professionals from Luganville hospital.

Key target 5 Indicators	Malampa	Penama	Sanma	Shefa	Tafea	Torba
Total population	32,705	26,646	25,346	25,083	29,047	7,757
Annual Population Growth Rate (%)	1.4	1.7	3.0 / 4.1*	2.6 / 4.2*	2.5	2.5
Crude Birth Rate (CBR)	26.0	30.0	29.0	26.0	31.0	30.0
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	5.0	5.2	5.1	4.0	5.1	5.9
Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) - Total	24	23	29	21	34	39
IMR - Males	25	24	28	21	35	40
IMR - Females	23	23	29	20	32	38
Mortality Rate 1-4 years - Total	5	5	7	4	9	11
1-4 years - Males	5	5	7	4	9	11
1-4 years - Females	4	5	7	4	9	11
Average Life Expectancy at Birth - Total	65.8	67.0	67.1	69.6	68.4	59.3
Males	62.2	65.2	64.8	68.9	64.4	66.6
Females	69.4	68.8	69.3	70.2	72.4	51.9
One year olds immunized for measles (2003)	44	77	84	63	76	30

* First number is the rural growth and the second is the urban rate. Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office for all indicators except measles immunization from the Ministry of Health. 1999 census.

²⁶ Ministry of Health, 2004, Master Health Services Plan 2004-2009, page 70



Immunization rates for measles are continuing to improve. Immunization rates from the Ministry of Health Provincial Health Information System for 2003 are included in the above table; however the wide range in rates implies that the data is not complete.

The indicator provides a measure of the coverage and the quality of the child health care system in the country. Immunization is an essential component for reducing under-five mortality. Governments in developing countries usually finance immunization against measles and diphtheria, perussis (whooping cough) and tetanus (DPT) as part of the basic health package. Among these vaccine-preventable diseases of childhood, measles is the leading cause of child mortality. Health and other programmes targeted at these specific causes are one practical means of reducing child mortality.

Challenges

The geographical lay-out of the islands and the scattered rural community settlements are regarded as on going challenges for adequate coverage. There are places in the moumtains and coastal areas where the means of communication are limited and people refuse to have vaccinations. These are communities where implementers are unclear about the age of the target group, and experience difficulties to ensure better planning and more successful outreach programmes.

Tracking Progress		Assessment		
Monitoring and evaluation components				
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak	
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak	
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak	
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak	
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak	
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak	



GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Progress

Target 6: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

Despite general improvements, maternal health remains a serious concern in Vanuatu. The maternal mortality ratio, which is directly related to the target, monitors deaths related to pregnancy. Such deaths are affected by various factors, including general health status, education and services during pregnancy and childbirth. The low social and economic status of girls and women is a fundamental determinant of maternal mortality in many countries. Low status limits the access of girls and women to education and good nutrition as well as to the economic resources needed to pay for health care or family planning services.

The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is the percentage of deliveries attended by personnel trained to give the necessary supervision, care and advice to women during pregnancy, labour and the post-partum period; to conduct deliveries on their own; and to care for newborns. Skilled health personnel include only those who are properly trained and who have appropriate equipment and drugs. Traditional birth attendants, even if they have received a short training course, are not to be included.

Measuring maternal mortality accurately is notoriously difficult, except where there is comprehensive registration of deaths and causes of death as is the case in Vanuatu. Several process indicators have been proposed for tracking progress by focusing on professional care during pregnancy and childbirth, particularly for the management of complications. The most widely available indicator is the proportion of women who deliver with the assistance of a medically trained health care provider. (Women's Maternal Health has wider focus which covers other areas of RH such as Family Planning, Reproductive Tract Infections and quality of and access to Emergency Obstetrical Care.

Most of this section provides general information on the goal instead of Vanuatu.

Results of the KAP Study analysed by UNFPA (Bill House) in 1999 identifies some of the socio-economic determinants of demographic behaviour, including knowledge and use of family planning as well as unmet need for family planning. For example, the analysis suggests a minimum of 24% of all women of reproductive age in Vanuatu have an unmet need for limiting additional births.

Target 6 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
Maternal mortality ratio	96 (1998)		na
<i>Number of maternal deaths</i>	2 (1998)		
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	79% (1990-95)	88% (1999)	100%

Source: Ministry of Health, 1990-95 proportion of births attended by skilled personnel. United Nations Human Development Report

Progress

No reliable information is available to calculate the maternal mortality ratio in Vanuatu. The Ministry of Health estimates that 50-60% of births occur in the home outside the health care system. The 1998 maternal mortality ratio is included here but a target has not been defined based on this as it is based on incomplete information on maternal deaths.

Components of the MMR	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Maternal deaths	4	2	0	0	NA	
Live births	2,411	2,077	2,084	2,222	NA	5,903

Source: Ministry of Health, 2002

Leading causes of maternal death are similar to those reported regionally and globally: postpartum haemorrhage, pre-eclampsia, obstructed labour, puerperal sepsis, and complications of unsafe abortion. Important indirect causes include anaemia and malaria. Consequently, actions to improve the level of emergency obstetric care, as well as improving overall access to health care during pregnancy and childbirth, are priorities. Maternal health will also benefit from strategies that focus on improving nutrition for women and girls, on combating infectious and non-communicable diseases, on addressing reproductive health needs, and addressing issues such as violence against women.

Considerable progress has been made in the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. Clearly some mothers are more aware of the importance of proper medical care during pregnancy, for births and after delivery. This rate provides an indication of the proportion of deliveries that take place in government managed health facilities. In Vanuatu, there is some concern that not all the population has the same access to high quality health services; which is particularly important in the case of birth as any complications during (and post) delivery must be treated immediately by properly trained medical professionals. In remote island and rural communities in Vanuatu, this emergency care sometimes is not available in time. In 2002, the Ministry of Health reported that 2,118 women had postnatal examinations, 58% of women delivering, indicating that post-natal health services are reasonably well attended by those participating in the 'formal' health system.

The indicator is a measure of a health system's ability to provide adequate care for pregnant women. Concerns have been expressed that the term skilled attendant may not adequately capture women's access to good quality care, particularly when complications arise. Lack of access to or use of essential obstetric services is a crucial factor contributing to high maternal mortality, particularly emergency services when complications arise.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak



GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER MAJOR DISEASES

Progress

HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women is the percentage of pregnant women aged 15-24 whose blood samples test positive for HIV. HIV infection leads to AIDS. Without treatment, average survival from the time of infection is about nine years. Access to treatment is uneven, and no vaccine is currently available.

Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate is the number of women aged 15-49 in marital or consensual unions who are practising contraception by using condoms as a proportion of all women of the same age group in consensual unions who are practising, or whose sexual partners are practising, any form of contraception.

The condom use rate is used to monitor progress towards halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, because condoms are the only contraceptive method effective in reducing the spread of HIV, along with abstinence. Because the condom use rate is measured only among women in unions, this indicator needs to be supplemented by an indicator on condom use in high-risk situations.

Condom use at last high-risk sex is the percentage of young people aged 15-24 reporting the use of a condom during sexual intercourse with a non-regular sexual partner in the last 12 months.

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Percentage of population aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS is the share of women and men aged 15-24 who correctly identify the two major ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV (using condoms and limiting sex to one faithful, uninfected partner, and abstinence), who reject the two most common local misconceptions about HIV transmission and who know that a healthy looking person can transmit HIV. The indicator reflects the success of national information, education and communication programmes and other efforts in promoting knowledge of valid HIV prevention methods and reducing misconceptions about the disease.

The contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is the percentage of women who are practising, or whose sexual partners are practising, any form of contraception. It is usually reported for women ages 15-49 in marital or consensual unions.

Strictly defined, the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS is the estimated number of children who have lost their mother, father or both parents to AIDS before age 15. In practice, the impact of the AIDS epidemic on orphans is measured through the ratio of orphans to non-orphans who are in school.

Target 7 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women	0	No positive case found in that category	Halt HIV spread by 2015
STI prevalence among 15-24 year olds			
Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate	Current qualitative & quantitative results (2005-2007)		
Condom use at last high-risk sex			
Percentage of population ages 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS			
The contraceptive prevalence rate	15% (1991)	28% (1999)	
Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14	Indicator not applicable		

Source: Ministry of Health

Progress

No prevalence information is available about HIV in Vanuatu, with two female AIDS cases since 2002.

Because HIV prevalence is not routinely monitored at present among high risk groups, and is not routinely tested at antenatal clinics, the actual extent of HIV infection in Vanuatu is not known. High risk groups include sex workers, their clients (including seafarers and other mobile populations), those who engage in “survival sex” (those who exchange sex in return for favours, clothing, abusive substances, meals, etc.), men who have sex with men, young people deprived of parental care, and because institutional mechanisms need strengthening, there are concerns about contaminated blood supplies. There are indications, based on the high rates of STIs in Vanuatu, that if HIV begins to spread, it would become a major problem.

In generalised epidemics (with prevalence consistently at more than 1% among pregnant women), the infection rate for pregnant women is similar to the overall rate for the adult population. Therefore, this indicator is a measure of spread of the epidemic. In low-level and concentrated epidemics, HIV prevalence is monitored in groups with high risk behaviour (because prevalence among pregnant women is low).

No information is available about the population with comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS. However, a number of NGOs have been very active in STI/HIV/AIDS awareness raising and education, with many NGOs contributing towards awareness raising in their general programmes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the level would be moderate to high in certain areas. Over the past decade the Wan Smolbag Theatre Group has produced dramas (‘live’ throughout Vanuatu and video) aimed at raising awareness about safe sex. The Wan Smolbag radio soap-opera “Serah’s Family” intended to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS has been broadcast four times a week since 2000. The Vanuatu Family Health Association which promotes safe sex and condom use recently produced a draft pictorial workbook on sex education for schools in conjunction with the Ministry of Health. The Vanuatu Family Health Association also present a twice weekly radio programme on issues of reproductive health.

Consistent use of condoms in non-regular sexual partnerships substantially reduces the risk of sexual HIV transmission as well as STI transmission. This is especially important for young people, who often experience the highest rates of HIV infection because they have low prior exposure to infection and (typically) relatively high numbers of non-regular sexual partners. Consistent condom use with non-regular sexual partners is important even in countries where HIV prevalence is low, because it can prevent the spread of HIV in circumstances where non-regular relationships are common. Condom use is one measure of protection against HIV/AIDS. Equally important are delaying age at first sex, reducing the number of non-regular sexual partners and being faithful to one partner.

A 1998 study found that the level of information on contraception, condom use and safe sex practices was extremely low. The use of condoms was problematic, with females reporting considerable male resistance to using them and being accused of being promiscuous if suggesting condom use. The Ministry of Health has tried to increase availability to condoms through a wide distribution network but there are concerns that this is still erratic. While teenagers and youth might now better understand how HIV is transmitted after the numerous awareness raising activities conducted since the late 1990s, a ‘Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices’ type survey is required to see to what extent knowledge has improved.



The Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) is increasing, although still just over one quarter of couples are making informed decisions about family planning, birth timing and birth spacing. It is likely that the CPR is in fact higher than that reported through the Ministry of Health and NGO partners in family planning, as sexually active people have access to contraception from private medical practitioners (who do not always provide the information to the Ministry of Health) or buy condoms.

The CPR is useful in tracking progress towards health, gender and poverty goals. It also serves as a proxy measure of access to reproductive health services that are essential for meeting many of the goals, especially the child and maternity mortality and HIV/AIDS goals. Contraceptive methods include condoms, female and male sterilisation, injectable and oral hormones, intrauterine devices, diaphragms, spermicides and natural family planning, as well as lactational amenorrhoea (lack of menstruation during breastfeeding) where it is cited as a method.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

Progress

Prevalence of malaria is the number of cases of malaria per 100,000 people, incidence rates apply only to those who have been tested for malaria, not the entire population. Death rates associated with malaria are number of deaths caused by malaria per 100,000 people. The indicator allows highly endemic countries like Vanuatu to monitor disease and death from malaria, which have been increasing over the last two decades due to deteriorating health systems, growing drug and insecticide resistance, periodic changes in weather patterns, civil unrest, human migration and population displacement.

Malaria prevention is measured as the percentage of children aged 0-59 months (under five years) sleeping under insecticide-treated bed nets. Malaria treatment among children is measured as the proportion of children aged 0-59 months who were ill with the fever in the two weeks before the survey and who received appropriate antimalarial drugs.

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Tuberculosis prevalence is the number of cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people; notification rates apply only to those who have been tested for tuberculosis, not the entire population. Death rates associated with tuberculosis are deaths caused by tuberculosis per 100,000 people. A tuberculosis case is defined as a patient in whom tuberculosis has been bacteriologically confirmed or diagnosed by a clinician. Detecting and curing tuberculosis are key interventions for addressing poverty and inequality. Prevalence and deaths are more sensitive markers of the changing burden of tuberculosis than incidence (new cases), although data on trends in incidence are far more comprehensive and give the best overview of the impact of global tuberculosis control.

The tuberculosis detection rate is the percentage of estimated new infectious tuberculosis cases detected under the directly observed treatment, short course (DOTS) case detection and treatment strategy. The cure rate is the percentage of new, registered smear-positive (infectious) cases that were cured or in which a full course of DOTS was completed.

Since tuberculosis is an airborne contagious disease, primary control is effected through finding and treating infectious cases and thus limiting the risk of acquiring infection. The recommended approach to primary control is the DOTS strategy, an inexpensive strategy that could prevent millions of tuberculosis cases and deaths over the coming decade. DOTS is a proven system based on accurate diagnosis and consistent treatment with a full course of a cocktail of anti-tuberculosis drugs (isoniazid, rifampicin, pyrazinamide, streptomycin and ethambutol). DOTS requires government commitment, careful detection, consistent treatment, uninterrupted supply of anti-tuberculosis drugs and a monitoring and reporting system to evaluate treatment outcomes for each patient.

Target 8 MDG Indicators

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status	2015 Target
<i>Incidence</i> and death rates associated with malaria (reported per 100,000 population)	<i>Incidence</i> 8,471 (1992) <i>Death</i> 16 (1992)	<i>Incidence</i> 6,930 (2002) 1,385 (2004) <i>Death</i> 2 (2002) 2 (2004)	<i>Incidence</i> less than 8,471
Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures	Prevention 13% (2002)	Reduce by 50% by 2005	0 cases by 2011
<i>Notification</i> and death rates associated with tuberculosis (reported per 100,000 population)	<i>Notification</i> 96 (1990) <i>Death</i> 3 (1994)	<i>Notification</i> 76 (2000) <i>Death</i> 16 (2002)	31%
Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and successfully treated under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)	Detection 32 (1999) Treated 88 (1999)	Detection 71 (2001) Treated 89 (2000)	70%+
<i>Diabetes prevalence</i>	3% (1996)		
<i>Hypertension prevalence</i>	13% (1996) 15% Males 11% Females		
<i>Proportion obese and overweight</i>	<i>Obese</i> 16% (1996) 12% Males 20% Females <i>Overweight</i> 33% (1996) 34% Males 32% Females		

Source: Malaria incidence and death rates, tuberculosis notification and death rates, DOTS rates all from WHO. Malaria death rate 1992 calculated with the 1993 population, 26 deaths in 1992 ; Malaria death rate 2002 calculated with the 2000 population, 4 deaths in 2002. Ministry of Health diabetes, hypertension, obesity, overweight and proportion using malaria prevention methods.



Progress

Malaria continues to be a major disease threat in Vanuatu, with the rate declining by 18% in the 10 years up to 2002. “Malaria continues to be a major cause of morbidity and a significant cost to the community and health system.”²⁷ It is one of the major reasons for hospital admissions in all age groups.

In the following table, five year averages have been used for 1993 and 1998 (mid years) for the number of cases and the API²⁸, while for 2001, it is the number reported in that year, as are the number of nets in the population. The number of confirmed malaria cases decreased significantly to the mid-90's, with 2001 showing an increase in the number of cases, possibly due to improved testing.

Malaria Indicator	1993	1998	2001
Number of microscopically confirmed cases	12,302	5,924	7,647
Number of cases due to plasmodium falciparum	8,182	3,268	3,402
Number of nets in the population	36,861	104,184	121,654
API : Annual Parasite Incidence per 1,000 population	78	32	39

Source: Ministry of Health

Despite programmes to increase access to treated bed nets, the proportion of children under five years having adequate malaria protection is low.

Efforts to eliminate tuberculosis through finding and treating infectious cases need to continue. While the notification rate has declined by 21% there has been an increase in the tuberculosis death rate, implying that either patients are not getting treatment in time or not taking the full course of treatments, or that the treatment regime was unsuccessful.

Challenges

The burden of NCD related illness on the health care system and communities is expected to increase. Due to the very significant NCD disease burden, which is expected to increase, Vanuatu has adopted NCD indicators under its Master Health Services Plan 2004-2009. There are increasing indications of the effectiveness of prevention approaches to NCDs. For example, research indicates that lifestyle interventions can significantly reduce the incidence of Type 2 diabetes in high risk populations over the short-term (4-6 years).

In 2003, 7% of admissions to the hospital in Port Vila were NCD related; 29% of which were admissions for hypertension and 23% for diabetes. There were 5 diabetes amputations and the average length of stay for diabetes admissions was 13 days; diabetes admissions are estimated to cost approximately VUV 14,000 in direct medical costs. In 2003 this amounted to around VUV 1,302,000 for the Port Vila hospital alone. Of particular concern is that the average age of diagnosis for NCD cases was 41 years, and this will inevitably result in shortened life expectancy and lost opportunities for sufferers. Outpatient consultations for NCD related illnesses continue to increase for both new and known cases.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

²⁷ Ministry of Health, 2004, Master Health Services Plan 2004-2009, page 38

²⁸ Five year average used because of data coverage concerns for individual years and the variability in cases reported from one year to the next.



GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Progress

“Sustainable development is when people using their wisdom and knowledge of our resources work together to improve living standards for present and future generations”²⁹

Vanuatu’s national sustainable development (SD) policies are the course of action that has been agreed to be pursued in fulfilment of the 14 SD priority areas and 5 cross-sectoral areas identified as important for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in Bridgetown, Barbados in 1994, and reaffirmed during the SIDS Conference in Mauritius in 2005.

This target mainly involves three government departments in Vanuatu - the Department of Forestry which is responsible for the sustainable management of Vanuatu’s forest resources, to achieve greater social and economic benefits for current and future generation; Environment Unit which is responsible for researching, raising awareness, formulating and implementing government policies on the management of Vanuatu’s environment in an ecologically sustainable manner; and the Energy Unit, tasked with identification, implementation, management and evaluation of energy projects, as well as monitoring petroleum and electrification activities in Vanuatu. Government has clearly recognised the importance of sustainable development and environmental resources but the process of integration is a major challenge.

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Vanuatu is a predominantly agrarian society, and 80% of its population depends directly on agriculture for their livelihood, through subsistence production³⁰. Vanuatu is an island nation and hence has a considerable coastline in relation to its area. Ecologically sustainable forest management involves balancing use of forest resources with the maintenance of the ecological processes that sustain forests ecosystems, the conservation of the biological diversity associated with forests and the protection of water quality and associated aquatic habitats. The principal national goal for the forest sector is to achieve greater social and economic benefits for current and future generations³¹. Forests cover approximately 35% of total land area, down from 70% in 1980; 40% is taken up by other vegetation including commercial plantation and smallholder agriculture and 23% in other uses. The National Forest Policy aiming at achieving Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) highlights the key roles as outlined in the SFM. According to the National Forest Policy (1997), the national sustainable yield is 68,000 cubic meters.

Vanuatu remains under threat over the loss of its biodiversity due to clearing of vegetation and agriculture activities and poor management of land and water systems, such as clearing and over-use of land within water catchment, over-extraction of water, wild domestic stock fouling rivers, streams and springs and impact of introduced species such as the Tilapia and Gampusia (western mosquito fish) in particular, and the distribution and abundance of native fauna. Being small islands, the coral terraces (coastal fringe) occupy 5% of the land area of Vanuatu, and supports 26% of its population³².

²⁹ National Conference on Sustainable Development, Conference Report, 1996

³⁰ Vanuatu, CCA,2001; BPOA+10 Vanuatu Report, 2004

³¹ Department of Forestry

³² Lands Department, 1992

Challenges

The majority of Vanuatu's population lives on bio-fuel energy. Only a small proportion of Vanuatu's population lives on diesel-generated electricity, which is supplied, mainly in the two urban centres of Port Vila and Loganville. Others are hydropower, fossil fuel, and solar. The conservation of all energy sources including geothermal, wind power and biomass is a major objective of Vanuatu Government's energy policy.

Critical issues of concern to Vanuatu's environment are similar to the other small Pacific island nations and these are:-

Illegal activities (logging, hunting, fishing, poaching) resulting in exploitation of resources;

Inadequate monitoring, regulation, and management systems for natural resources and protected areas; and

Natural disasters resulting in exploitation of resources, drought, fires and food insecurity.

Information is very scarce in relation to forested land area. Inventory is done infrequently due to the costs involved. There is need for an updated forestry policy with an emphasis on promoting sustainability in utilization of resources. Vanuatu's fragile ecosystems and social environment are under stress due to factors such as natural disasters, rapid population growth, changing lifestyles and consumption pattern. Depletion of sea resources and concentrated near-shore fishing is causing severe damage to community-based seas resources.

Vanuatu is prone to natural disasters. OCHA³³ ranks Vanuatu twelfth in the whole Asia Pacific Region for the frequency and severity of its natural disasters. On average, one damaging cyclone passes through its waters every year, and periodic larger events like Uma (1987) and Prema (1993) caused extensive damage. On worst affected islands they render thousands homeless by damaging houses, schools and public buildings, flooding gardens and destroying most commercial and subsistence crops as well as coastal vessels on which fishing and transport depend.

Many constraints exist in Vanuatu in the development of renewable energy including the lack of resources and political will to push through non-renewable energy and conservation plans³⁴.

A priority activity for the Environment and Energy units is to integrate sustainable environmental management into national and provincial development planning as well as harmonising all of the applicable legislation to ensure that issues such as environment impact assessments are standardised across all sectors - currently different legislations have different procedures and standards for ensuring sustainable environmental management.

Efforts to mainstream sustainable environmental management are further complicated by the different planning and policy frameworks which environmental management spans. At the national level is the Prioritised Action Agenda while at the provincial level there are the Rural Economic Development Initiatives and each sector (health, education, agriculture, tourism etc) has their own strategic plans. Only once a coherent framework is achieved, applicable at all levels of administration, can meaningful targets and indicators be developed and monitored for sustainable development and environmental management fully mainstreamed.

³³ UN Office - Humanitarian Affairs (UNDP, Suva)

³⁴ Barbados Program of Action +10, National Assessment Report (page 41)

Challenges

Challenges remain in relation to the ecological sustainability of forestry logging. Currently there is no benchmark to determine the effect of ecological sustainability in relation to logging. Though logging re-entry will remain an important indicator for sustainable logging, national land tenure system hinders this process to be effectively practised and land is turned into other different land use thus the investments from the Government Forestry Institution and Logging Investors appears as wastages.

Challenges also remain with over-harvesting of resources (fish, shellfish, crabs, coconut crabs and other marine edible species) for home and commercial use. New and sophisticated fishing technologies contributing to increases in catches are affecting other marine species also. People move to coastal areas to have access to sea and commercial activities thus putting pressure on coastlines, thus the decline in the traditional respect for resources management systems and disregard to conservations and control of government. The main problem therefore remains where there is increased pressure on natural resources. Increase in population results in overexploitation of commercial resources due to the need for cash income, which leads to disrespect of local community leaders and their resources management decisions.

Initiatives and Responses

Vanuatu's PAA stresses the importance of sustainable environmental development. The Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002 enables Vanuatu to maintain environmental quality through the sustainable management of natural resources for the security and benefits of present and future generations³⁵. The public is being educated and made more aware of the value of energy conservation, particularly fossil fuel and biomass energy, which are costly and harmful to the environment. The Energy Unit is commencing a major series of renewable energy projects, aimed at harnessing alternative forms of energy including solar and hydro projects, throughout Vanuatu and particularly in remote rural areas.

A National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy was established in 1999 to coincide with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that was ratified and came into force in March 1993, to conserve and manage biodiversity and establish mechanisms that are affordable, culturally appropriate and within the people's capacity to implement³⁶.

The government's forestation and reforestation efforts began in 1993 with the "Free Seedling Program" on a collaborative effort with the Vanuatu's Chamber of Commerce & Industries. The impact of the Strategy came with the ban of export of round logs, conservation and measure for sandalwood and spontaneous development of 100 protected areas. The Vatthe conservation area covering 2,300 hectares of pristine forests and coastlines in the Big Bay on Espiritu Santo is owned and managed by two villages in the area as an eco-tourism business. Traditional measures have also been in practice with support and advice from the Government agencies such as Environment Unit and Fisheries Department to protect coastlines such as banning of fish harvesting for certain periods, banning of coral and sand mining from beaches, and the preservation of mangroves and sea-grasses in some areas.

All land belongs to indigenous Ni-Vanuatu. Government does not own forestland. However, logging is regulated and guided by the standard Code of Logging Practice established under the Forestry Order No.26 of 1998, which monitors and allows selected forest areas in Vanuatu to be harvested with minimum impact, aiming at balancing

³⁵ PAA 1993 (page 42)

³⁶ Environment Unit, Vanuatu National Biodiversity Strategy, 1999



the needs of protection of environmental values with safe commercial consideration. One major initiative is the training of logging operators, and the establishment of the Licensing Schemer to improve forest operators' standards. Traditionally, reforestation has been going on by communities, with the government and development partners' assistance. With the "Year of Sustainable Forest" in 2002, commercial reforestation has been ongoing over the last three years, and the department has recorded that more than 300 hectares have been established throughout Vanuatu between 2002 and 2004. All aspects of forestry management, conservation, forest development, industrial utilization, and all research, extension, training, education and forest administration all supports the government's goal towards sustainable forest management.

Effective community and NGO partnerships exist for sustainable environmental management and interventions. While some traditional practices might impact adversely on the environment, communities are very aware of their reliance on marine and terrestrial ecosystems for their livelihoods. For example, the Environment Unit received donor funding to control invasive species in the coral reefs of Santo. These funds were disbursed to the Department of Fisheries who contracted local communities to eradicate the pest.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

Introduction

Safe and reliable drinking water is a critical national issue. There is disparity between provision of water in rural and urban areas. In urban areas, 49.6% of households have piped water directly to their own household use, whereas in rural areas, the main source of water comes from rivers and springs. Where there is piped water in rural areas, this is usually shared (about 19.3% according to the 1999 Census). Sanitation has improved from 1989 to 1999, with more facilities in the urban than rural areas.

Challenges

The challenges facing rural water systems including old and poorly situated communal tanks and pipes, often dry in dry seasons, means families walk long distances to secondary water sources. Problems in the urban areas include old dilapidated water systems that do not have the physical capacity to service the large number now living in urban areas; water pollution through human waste and inadequate disposal of household rubbish, the grossly inadequate sanitation facilities in the hastily erected and overcrowded squatter settlements. In some areas, up to twenty families share the communal standpipes, making the potential for transmission of communicable

diseases in the communities very high. There is need for community training in water management including changing behaviour and to manage systems, develop more stringent standards of water quality and adequate planning and management of water resources.

Initiatives and Responses

The Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources is tasked to ensure that rural communities have access to fresh, potable water supply and that water resources are properly utilized to foster rural economic development. Programmes of development include direct feed system, indirect gravity feed or drilling of boreholes with hand pump systems. The use of hand pumps has increased in the last couple of years, many funded by Vanuatu's development partners.

A project to highlight is the water catchment management plan for the Tagabe river at the informal settlement at Black Sands where the Environment Unit is working with the community, land owners, provincial government and the water utility to introduce a water catchment management regime (including sanitation) in a water catchment where an informal settlement is established which is outside the municipal boundary and land owners, because of their customary land ownership title, do not have to comply with any building, sanitation, water, access or other regulations.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Up to 30 or 40% of urban population already live in informal settlements in and around the boundary of Port Vila and Luganville, Vanuatu's two main urban centres. These settlements will continue to grow while migrants continue to live on illegal land, with usually only one person in the family earning an income, while the labour market cannot absorb the growing supply of urban labour. The major group of people in these settlements are from the outer islands of Vanuatu, or outer rural areas of Efate or Santo who have not been able to find a job immediately and so cannot afford to pay rent. With most informal housing situations, families erect settlements based on verbal arrangements, thus living in high risk situation with regard to poor health and natural disasters.



Challenges

The main challenges for these dwellers occur mainly in the urban areas rather than in the rural areas. Living conditions in these settlements are generally sub-standard, as they are composed mostly of one-room dwellings, with little space. Many dwellings do not shelter from rain and are at very high risks during cyclone seasons, with no water supply and poor toilets and sanitation, making settlers susceptible to diseases and breeding of mosquitoes. The Government with the assistance of the World Bank has made consultation on the extension of the urban Port Vila but up to now no firm decision has been made on proposed extended boundary.

Tracking Progress		Assessment		
Monitoring and evaluation components				
Data collection capacity	strong	fair		weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair		weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair		weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair		weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair		weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair		weak



GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.

Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota-free access for least developed countries' exports; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.

Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly).

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

The primary purpose of Goal 8 is to build an MDG-partnership between rich and poor countries. It fundamentally calls for more and better development assistance, a more open and fair framework for trade, and a new international financial architecture, facilitating developing countries achievement of the MDGs.

The 2002 Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development resulted in commitments from major donors to start to reverse the decline in official development assistance and focus more on poverty reduction, education and health to help countries realise the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Commitments and targets relevant to achievement of the MDGs were also adopted through the Doha Ministerial Declaration (November 2001).

These initiatives were further reinforced by the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation in 2003, which sets a "way forward." Under the Rome Declaration, activities were identified to enhance harmonisation and further develop global partnerships for development that have implications for Vanuatu including:

- ⇒ the establishment of a definitive development framework reflective of country development priorities for both the medium and long term, within which the MDGs would form a basis for monitoring development progress;
- ⇒ development of a consultative mechanism within government systems for enhanced engagement of development partners; and
- ⇒ institutional reforms (that may entail a review of fiduciary standards, accountability frameworks and financial management systems), which will enable increasing reliance by development partners on country systems.³⁷

Official Development Assistance (ODA)

Vanuatu is heavily dependent on ODA both in terms of financing development priorities and technical assistance and capacity building. Cash grants and aid in kind represented 26% of the 2004 government budget appropriation (30% in 2001).

Unfortunately it is not possible to get accurate figures on the total ODA received in Vanuatu, particularly the significant contributions made to and within the NGO and church sectors. The aid from key donors is shown in the following table.

Aggregate aid flows into Vanuatu, million Vatu (1997-2002)

Donor	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Australia	1,088	1,194	1,386	1,036	1,263	1,376
New Zealand	392	392	370	337	280	332
European Union	604	194	142	266	651	660
France	975	891	898	1,354	523	233
Japan	352	777	773	970	n.a	n.a
Others	556	1,598	1,937	2,151	1,141	n.a
Total	3,968	5,046	5,506	6,113	3,858	2,601
2002 Vatu amount¹	3,434	4,532	5,059	5,770	3,781	2,601

¹ Simple calculation using annual rate of inflation from the consumer price index; indicative only of 2002 Vatu amounts. Source: DESP.



In terms of sectors receiving ODA, a large share has been consistently allocated to education and infrastructure, however as these ODA statistics do not include all donors, nor all recipients of ODA outside government, it is not possible to make definitive conclusions about ODA flows.

Sector	1997	1998	1999	2000
Agriculture	18%	18%	15%	13%
Health	3%	4%	5%	5%
Education	32%	28%	35%	31%
Infrastructure	22%	29%	21%	30%
Private Sector	1%	1%	2%	1%
Other Government ¹	19%	15%	19%	18%
NGO	5%	5%	2%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹ Including institutional strengthening. Source: DESP

Foreign direct investment

The level of foreign investment in Vanuatu has declined from an annual average of 27% contribution to GDP from 1987 - 1995 to about 20% in recent years. Reforms aimed at improving private sector investment do not seem to have resulted in a thriving business environment, although government has intervened in some investment schemes, particularly those involving the sale (lease) of large areas of land (in some cases islands) because correct procedures had not been followed (such as environmental impact assessments).

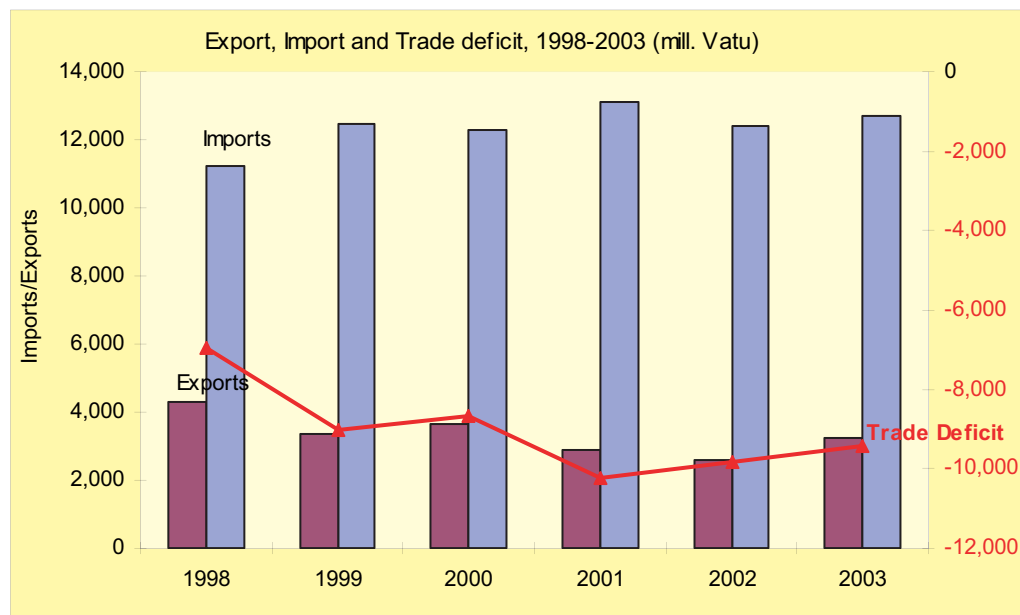
“The cost of doing business in Vanuatu is high for several reasons including: lack of benefits from economies of scale due to the smallness of the market; regulatory barriers to entry providing incumbents with market power; natural monopolies that raise the prices of their services above the marginal cost of provision; and macroeconomic risks including exchange rate risk that leads to higher risk premium on domestic investment.”³⁸

Foreign direct investment is facilitated through the Vanuatu Investment Promotion Authority (VIPA) - a ‘one stop shop’ approach to assist investment registration, licensing, visa and other requirements. Some tariffs have been significantly reduced to encourage investment and legislation which gave nationals exclusive rights to some investment types have been annulled. At the same time evaluation of investment proposals has been strengthened in line with social and environmental protection goals.

Globalisation and market access

Barriers to Vanuatu effectively trading with the rest of the world are both technical and a result of a lack of productive capacity. For example, Vanuatu has free access to the European Union market but because it is unable to meet the technical entry requirements of these markets in areas including health protection, animal or plant life or the environment, exports are limited.

³⁸ ADB, 2002, Vanuatu Economic Performance and Challenges Ahead, pages xvii-xviii



Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

Trade liberalisation policies were introduced as part of Vanuatu's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). A number of policy changes aimed at promoting international trade including reducing import duties and export taxes resulted, some of which have been expensive to implement. Negotiations to fully accede to the WTO are ongoing with some concerns that the costs will outweigh the benefits.

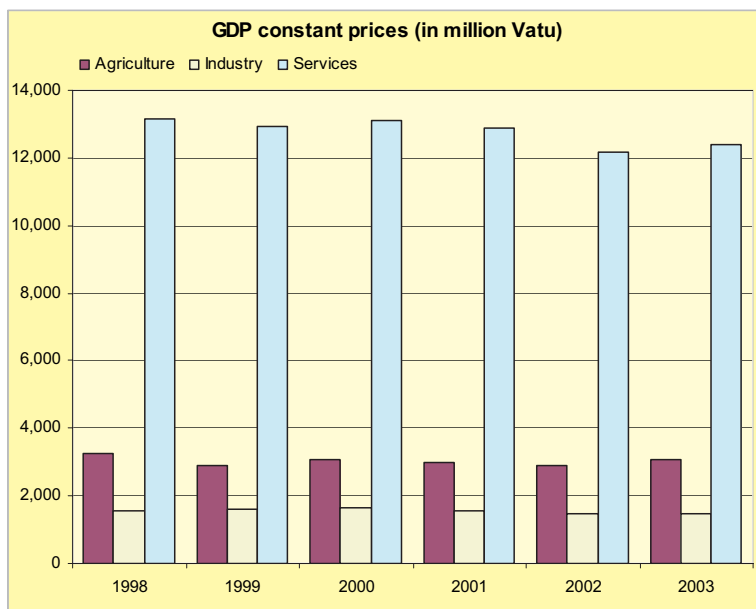
The major obstacle to economic development in Vanuatu is not primarily a lack of access to major foreign markets. As a least-developed country (LDC), Vanuatu already has duty-free access to Australia, New Zealand, the United States and the 25-member European Union. Whilst much focus has rightly been placed on World Trade Organisation membership and formulating a position for the Economic Partnership Agreements with the European Union (for example see Grynberg and Joy (2000), Gay (2003), Gay (2004)) there has been a relative lack of attention to domestic trade policy. Vanuatu's task is therefore one of designing domestic trade policy in such a way as to raise domestic production for both home and foreign markets.

In addition, the ratification of other regional and bilateral agreements such as the Pacific Islands Trade Agreement (PICTA), the Pacific Closer Economic Relations Agreement (PACER) and the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement has lowered tariffs and associated government import tax and duty revenues. Preferential access to the Australian and New Zealand markets is ensured under the SPARTECA agreement, with some concerns about this eroding due to cheaper priced commodities from other markets, particularly Asia.

Economic development in Vanuatu is hampered by the small size of the local market combined with the high cost of inputs (land, labour, capital and utilities), aggravated by the geographical fragmentation of the country, weak infrastructure for roads, ports and airports, shortages of skilled labour, large variability in access to services between urban and rural areas and erratic outputs from the agricultural sector (because of poor market access, storage and transport difficulties, natural disasters, the informal nature of production and custom obligations). In real terms Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has not improved significantly since 1997.



Tourism and agriculture, as well as retail trade, hotels and restaurants, make up the majority of the productive sectors of the economy. This reflects the highly dualistic nature of the economy with most of the 80% rural population involved with subsistence agriculture. Primary sector production varies markedly from year to year because of bad weather conditions, international commodity prices and export restrictions on products like kava. Sustainable environmental management is imperative for medium- and long-term prospects for both tourism and agriculture.



Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

Government is optimistic in its projections for economic growth, with a medium term target (to 2006) of 2.8% annual growth in real GDP, led by the agriculture and services sectors.

Government has a target of 2.5% rate of annual inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). “The overall price level in the medium term will depend largely on the Government maintaining prudent fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies, price changes by monopolies in the economy, notably utility companies and changes in the international economic environment.”³⁹

Government fiscal reforms and general tightening of expenditure is evident in the budget appropriation trends over the past four years, with grants and aid in kind levels fluctuating (although as this is forecast aid and not actual ODA received, it is difficult to assess the real trend). The table below shows the broad structure of government recurrent expenditure. Budget recurrent expenditure for the Ministry of Health during this period is an average of 11% of the government contribution, compared to 23% for the Ministry of Education.

	2004	2003	2002	2001
Total government budget	8,515,775,588	9,358,325,000	8,468,709,000	8,733,272,617
Total grants & aid in kind ¹	2,997,490,396	4,908,825,110	3,256,102,445	3,826,190,181
Total	11,513,265,984	14,267,150,110	11,724,811,445	12,559,462,798
% Government	74%	66%	72%	70%

¹ Does not include loans. Source: Government of Vanuatu Budget 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001.

³⁹ Government of Vanuatu, Budget 2004 Volume 1, page 4

Government has a target of bringing wages and salaries to 50% of recurrent expenditure by 2006, with the overall level from the 2004 budget at 51%. However, within key ministries and areas such as health, education, and environment, salaries represent the largest recurrent expenditure. In 2004, salaries for the Ministry of Health represented 62% of the government recurrent budget, compared with 84% in the Ministry of Education, 63% in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries, 89% in the Environment Unit and 83% in the Energy Unit. Analysis of government recurrent expenditure and budgets must take into account the reliance on grants and aid in kind for major undertakings by ministries and departments, necessary given the narrow revenue base for government to fund its operations.

The persistently high budget deficit in the mid- to late-1990s, slow and negative growth in economic activity and the depreciation of the Vatu against major currencies have contributed to increases in government debt, with debt reaching about 40% of national income in 2001 (bearing in mind that national income at the same time was contracting). In part, this was the cumulative result of successive governments from the mid- to late-1990s borrowing both domestically and internationally to finance budgets. Another significant contribution is the loss of revenue from import duties and taxes, required for entry into the WTO and other regional trade agreements, which the government has to some extent off set by the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT). However, much of this is external debt from concessional loans from donor agencies and external borrowing is now curtailed.

	In million Vatu				
Central Government Debt	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Domestic debt	2,461	2,406	2,431	2,786	3,207
Foreign debt	6,739	8,262	10,650	9,947	9,680
Multi lateral	5,377	6,321	8,617	8,773	9,165
Bilateral	1,362	1,941	2,033	1,174	514

Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

The Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) and its current transformation of the Prioritized Action Agenda (PAA) contain national level planning and policy direction from a 'top down' approach. The initial CRP framework was mainly based around strategies for economic development and improving governance. The next step in this planning process is to develop a Medium Term Development Strategy, linking the development objectives with budgetary resources and to refine the PAA statements so as to include priority policy initiatives in the medium term at the provincial level, incorporating the strategies identified in the Rural Economic Development Initiatives (REDI), widened to incorporate all sustainable development issues with strategies and policies to mainstream and integrate women, youth, the very poor and environmental management. This would result in a 'bottom up' approach to sustainable development planning.

Governance

The government's response to the problems of political instability leading to changes in government along with policy and public sector personnel and the lack of long-term economic strategy impeding long term business investment was the introduction of CRP. The challenge is to separate policy from political instability for the formulation and implementation of long-term policies. The political and public sector reforms in CRP have included strengthening the role of parliament, improving the executive



institutions of government, the judiciary, the offices of the auditor general, ombudsman and the attorney general as well as reviewing parts of the constitution. The number of government ministries has been reduced, several state owned enterprises were restructured or sold, as well as tax and tariff systems were revised.

A key aspect of good governance is fair and impartial dispute resolution, and in Vanuatu where government mechanisms in this area fail (or are not possible in remote island areas), it is typically traditional chiefs and church communities which bring about conflict resolution.

Progress

Official development assistance (ODA) comprises grants and loans to developing countries that are undertaken by the official sector with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective and at concessional financial terms (if a loan, having a grant element of at least 25%). Technical cooperation is included. Grants, loans and credits for military purposes are excluded.

The World Summit on Social Development at Copenhagen in 1995 suggested the possibility of “mutual commitment between interested developed and developing country partners to allocate, on average, 20% of ODA and 20% of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes”. These programmes comprise basic education, basic health, population and reproductive health programmes, and poverty-focused water and sanitation projects.

ODA to basic social services includes aid for primary education, basic life skills for youth and adults and early childhood education; basic health care, basic health infrastructure, basic nutrition, infectious disease control, health education and health personnel development.

Untied bilateral ODA is assistance from country to country for which the associated goods and services may be fully and freely procured in substantially all countries. Tying procurement from aid contracts to suppliers in the donor country reduces its cost effectiveness. Recognising this, OECD/DAC member countries have raised the share of their aid that is untied. The share of untied aid to the least developed countries has risen relatively slowly, but the situation is likely to improve with the implementation of the new Recommendation on Untying Aid to the Least Developed Countries.

The UN recommends that countries themselves compile statistical indicators for ODA instead of relying on OECD estimates.

External debt service refers to principal repayments and interest payments made to non-residents in foreign currency, goods or services. The targets on debt relief also address the need to make debt sustainable in the long term. The indicator is one measure of whether debt levels are sustainable.

Targets 12 - 14 MDG Indicators⁴⁰

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status
ODA volume received US\$ million Vatu million	50 5,800 (1990)	46 6,373 (2002)
Proportion of ODA to basic social services (actual disbursements) ¹ Vatu million % project aid	400 17% (1990)	
Proportion of bilateral ODA that is untied (actual disbursements)		
ODA received in small island developing states as proportion of their GNIs ²	30.6% (1990)	20% (2002)
Trade balance as a percentage of GNP	-47.4% (1990)	-33.1% (2002)
Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services	2.1% (1990)	1.1% (2001)

¹ Source: 1990 Sustainable Human Development in Vanuatu, Table 10. Note that multi sector project aid was not included in the total.

² 2002 % derived from Vatu 6,373 million ODA received (source: Pacific Regional MDG Report 2004) divided by GNI of Vatu 32,252 million (source: <http://www.spc.int/prism/country/vu/stats>)

The ODA received as a proportion of Gross National Income (GNI) has declined; reflecting the stable level of ODA received. This conclusion is based on the ODA received from major donors and more information is required about ODA flows to both government and non government organisations in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu's negative trade balance (from its reliance on imported goods and narrow export base) as a proportion of GNP is decreasing. This is an indicator of the pressure on the Vanuatu economy from its trade imbalance with the rest of the world. Because of the high trade deficit, this figure is high, although there have been some improvements since 1990.

The available data show debt service is a low percentage of exports, indicating that debt levels are sustainable by international standards. To gain a more complete picture of the sustainability of debt payments, it is useful to look at other indicators, such as the ratio of total debt to gross national income (40% in 2001), the size of international reserves relative to total debt (for the past three years maintaining a healthy balance), and debt maturing within a year's time. However, government initiatives for financial reform and a tight fiscal policy have stabilised debt levels (with external debt being mostly from concessional loans).

Challenges

National economic growth has not increased at the same pace as population growth or people's aspirations for sustainable livelihoods. It is imperative that government develop and implement targeted strategies to create economic opportunities in rural areas while managing aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

⁴⁰ Note that indicators relevant for the national MDG reporting have been included; those for developed country assistance etc are available from the 2004 Pacific Islands Regional MDG Report and other agencies such as OECD, the UN and the ADB. Unless the source is otherwise stated, statistics are from the Pacific Islands Regional MDG Report 2004.



ODA levels are not likely to increase from current amounts and aid must be used effectively to realise development aspirations. The CRP, PAA and other policy frameworks now in place are providing the means for increased donor coordination in the priority areas identified by government and communities. However, these initiatives in donor coordination and aid harmonisation are only beginning and there is still considerable room for improvement. The significant contribution made by NGOs, community and faith based groups towards economic and social development needs to be incorporated into government development strategies and these groups more closely involved in the development planning process. National forums have gone some way towards this, as has the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between government and the national umbrella NGO organisation to formalize working relationships strategies between the two partners.

The relatively low, and arguably stagnant, outputs from the agricultural sector raise questions about the effectiveness of agricultural policies since there do not seem to be apparent changes in technology, productivity, 'value added' processing, supply of inputs and marketing and distribution channels in this sector as reflected in agriculture's share of GDP.

Viable regional and international markets need to be identified and exploited for exports, particularly for those from the predominant primary sector, with the possibilities of value added processing and niche markets enabling more stable prices from such exports (such as organic products). For this to be effective in income redistribution and equitable economic development, financing options for commercially viable small and medium sized business enterprises must be identified for people with the skills to take advantage of such opportunities, with the infrastructure in place to get goods to markets. The establishment of an Export Processing Zone is also under investigation as is the possibilities of exporting labour (for example for seasonal agricultural work in New Zealand and Australia) in regional and sub-regional trade agreements.

The tourism sector has been highlighted as a key growth sector which could make significant contributions towards economic development if managed so that the physical environment and livelihoods of people are not compromised. Once again growth will only be possible with appropriately skilled people and infrastructure support.

Foreign direct investment needs to be monitored and managed to ensure that long term development goals are not compromised for short term gains.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

In Vanuatu 18% of the population is aged 15 - 24 years. The high proportion of the population under the age of 25 years has put considerable pressure on resources for basic social services including health and education. The education system is under considerable pressure to deliver education beyond primary level to youth for both higher academic as well as vocational qualifications. Youth struggle within the education system to advance to senior levels because of the limited number of places available and struggle to enter the work force which is capable of “employing at most only 15% of new entrants into the labour force every year [estimated to be 3,500 students leaving the education system annually].”⁴¹ This has contributed to high rates of unemployment as well as underemployment particularly in the urban areas where, unlike in the rural areas, limited access to land means that the conventional means of income generation through agriculture or other ‘land based’ activities do not exist.

“The system of selective screening - albeit based on merit - into secondary schools has created a problem that, if not properly handled, could spell real problems for Vanuatu. Primary education is provided for the first six years, and has recently been extended to eight years. After this, 20% of any age group continues to secondary school while 80% aged 14 years becomes the ‘drop outs from the education system. A small proportion of this group can get into technical training institutes but the majority adds to their kinds in the villages. The Vanuatu Agricultural College is a massive investment attempting to address the ‘drop out’ that traditionally join the ‘walkabouts’ in society.”⁴²

Progress

Here unemployed is defined as the proportion of youth looking for work divided by the workforce, which includes subsistence activities. The indicator monitors the degree to which the youth labour force is utilised in the economy and therefore serves as a measure of the success of strategies to create jobs for youth.

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status
Unemployment rate of 15-24 year-olds, each sex and total	2% Female 4% Male 3% Total (1999)	

Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

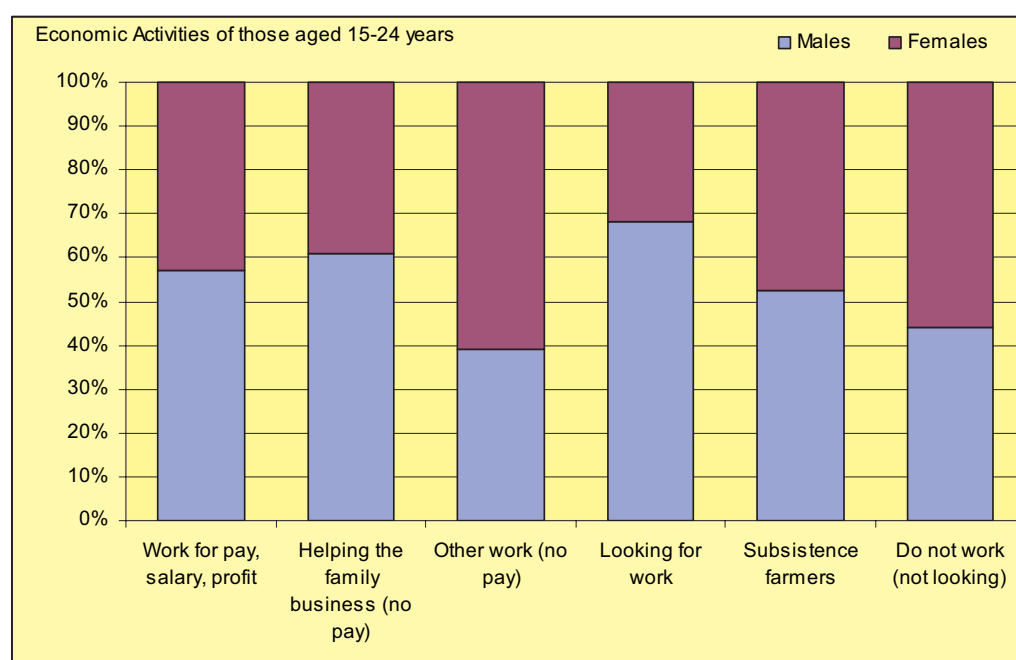
Formal measures of unemployment do not measure the magnitude of youth unemployment in Vanuatu. The table below shows the economic activities of those aged 15 - 24 years, with the most significant activity being subsistence farming for 48% of youth. Of utmost concern is the conclusion that 33% of youth are not working and not looking for work - not able to get jobs nor to be subsistence farmers, this group has bowed out of the labour market. This group comprises women who are working in the home as well as those who are at school or other training or are unable to work because of long term illness or disability.

⁴¹ BPOA+10 Report, page 9

⁴² BPOA+10 Report, page 48



Economic Activity, 15-24 years	Males	Females
Work for pay, salary, profit	2,353	1,765
Helping the family business (no pay)	158	102
Other work (no pay)	427	663
Looking for work	469	219
Subsistence farmers	8,425	7,672
Do not work (not looking)	4,743	6,063
Not stated	76	76
Total	16,651	16,560



Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

A much higher number of males than females are looking for work while a higher number of women are doing other unpaid work (most likely work in the home) than men.

Challenges

Clearly, strategies to create jobs for youth have not succeeded; and given the absorptive capacity of the current labour market it is doubtful that there will ever be enough jobs of suitable skill levels for youth. Providing youth with appropriate skills to work is also a major challenge, with a shortage of skilled professional and technical people on one hand, and on the other, an education and training system which cannot cater for the number of students nor the skills required.

A full labour force survey is required to find out the level of underemployment, joblessness, employment history and skills of all working age people but particularly for youth. This information could then be matched against an assessment of the labour market and the likely future demands for labour to identify opportunities to improve youth employment rates and the type of jobs they are likely to get.

Initiatives and responses

There is a major reform underway in the Ministry of Education to ensure unified and universal schooling to eight years (from the current six), developing senior secondary (pre-tertiary) education and creating options for vocational education and training. Key tasks are the formulation of curriculum and desired outcomes of years 7 and 8 and defining the education and other pathways for graduates after year 8. Government is planning to move to the “year 8” structure from the beginning of 2006.

Government has recognised the need to improve the delivery of vocational education and training both in terms of the geographic coverage and course curriculum. The mandate of the Ministry of Youth Development and Training mainly concerns non-formal vocational education (such as Vanuatu Community Certificate courses) and training while the Ministry of Education’s formal training centres are the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT), the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE) and the Maritime College. Government is also in the initial stages of implementing an open and distance education policy to improve access to education services at all levels of schooling.

The Department of Women’s Affairs (DWA) recently conducted a feasibility study of distance learning options to encourage more women to carry on to tertiary studies in Vanuatu, and various options were identified to improve the number of women proceeding to tertiary level studies, discussed under Goal 3.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak

Target 17 In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries

The proportion of population with access to affordable, essential drugs on a sustainable basis is the percentage of the population that has access to a minimum of 20 most essential drugs.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed the Model List of Essential Drugs, which is regularly updated through widespread consultations with member states and other partners. Progress in access to essential medicines is thus the result of combined effort by governments, strategic partners such as United Nations agencies, public-private partnerships, non-government organisations and professional associations.

Millions of people die prematurely or suffer unnecessarily each year from diseases or conditions for which effective medicines or vaccines exist. Essential drugs save lives and improve health, but their potential can only be realised if they are accessible, rationally used and of good quality.

No reliable data is available for this target in Vanuatu.



Target 18 In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

A universally accessible and efficient telecommunications network is an essential infrastructure for any knowledge-based economy. Telecommunication infrastructure has important spill over effects to other sectors of the economy, helping in reducing the costs of production, efficient delivery of public services and reduction of poverty. Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL) has a monopoly on the provision of telecommunication services until 2012 under a concession contract to operate the domestic and international telecommunications system.

“The spread of utility services including supply of electricity and telephone services has been poor due to institutional weakness, lack of legislative support, and the market rigidity arising from concession contracts granted to incumbents.”⁴³

TVL currently has a monopoly on the provision of internet services. Access is expensive, with high monthly internet ‘plan’ charges in addition to charges for telephone calls. TVL provides a free service to schools but not to other not for profit organisations. The rural population of Vanuatu lacks access to very basic services (in 1999, only 34% of all households used electricity for the main type of lighting, 61% urban and 7% of rural households; and even for some, access to utilities in urban centres of Port Vila and Luganville is so expensive that it is prohibitive. Disparities in access to technology are likely to continue to grow, particularly between urban and rural populations, and even more so in an archipelago like Vanuatu.

Progress

These indicators are important tools for monitoring progress towards Goal 8, because effective communication between those involved in the development process is not possible without the necessary infrastructure. Personal computers and telephones allow people to exchange experiences and learn from each other, enabling higher returns on investment and avoiding problems of duplication or missing information. The use of information and communication technologies can make governments more transparent, thereby reducing corruption and leading to better governance. It can help people in rural areas find out about market prices and sell their products at a better price. It can also overcome traditional barriers to better education by making books available online and opening the door to e-learning.

Indicator	Baseline for Vanuatu	Most Recent Status
Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100 population	2 (2002) 0.4 telephone lines 2 cellular subscribers	
Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet users per 100 population		

Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

In 2002 the national telephone density for fixed access telephone in Vanuatu was about 0.4, well below the world average of 10 and developed country density of about 50, with more cellular subscribers than fixed phone ones. The introduction of mobile cellular phones has considerably increased access to telecommunications, with an increase of 32% in cellular subscribers between 2002 and 2003.

⁴³ ADB, 2002, Economic Performance and Challenges Ahead, page 273

Telephone Service Subscribers		2001	2002	2003
Fixed Phone	Residential	273	379	572
	Business	258	395	423
	Government	30	14	55
	Total	561	788	1050
Mobile Phone	Residential	0	2,842	3,993
	Business	0	477	403
	Government	0	53	47
	Total	0	3,372	4,443
All phones	Residential	273	3,221	4,565
	Business	258	872	826
	Government	30	67	102
	Total	561	4,160	5,493

Source: Vanuatu National Statistics Office

No reliable information is available on personal computers in use and internet users. However, given the low rates of electricity available and access to telephones, particularly in rural areas, the levels for these indicators would be very small. For a predominantly rural population with relatively low literacy levels, limited access to electricity and utilities, computer use is understandably low.

Tracking Progress			
Monitoring and evaluation components	Assessment		
Data collection capacity	strong	fair	weak
Quality of recent survey information	strong	fair	weak
Statistical tracking capacity	strong	fair	weak
Statistical analysis capacity	strong	fair	weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanisms	strong	fair	weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	strong	fair	weak


**Status at a Glance
Table**

Summary of programs towards the Millennium Development Goals		
GOALS/ TARGETS	WILL THE GOAL OR TARGET BE MET?	STATE OF NATIONAL SUPPORT
EXTREME POVERTY Halve the proportion of people living below the national poverty line by 2015	Unlikely	Good
HIV/AIDS Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/ AIDS by 2015	No Data	Good
HUNGER Halve the proportion of underweight among under-five year olds by 2015	Potentially	Good
BASIC AMENITIES Halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water	Potentially	Good
UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION Achieve universal primary education by 2015	Potentially	Good
GENDER EQUALITY Achieve equal access for boys and girls to primary and secondary schooling by 2015	Potentially	Good
MATERNAL HEALTH Reduce maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters by 2015	Potentially	Strong
CHILD MORTALITY Reduce under-five mortality by two thirds by 2015	Potentially	Strong
ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY Reverse loss of environmental resources by 2015	Likely	Weak
OTHER COUNTRY SPECIFIC GOALS AND TARGETS	?	?

STATISTICS
AT A
GLANCE
TABLE

INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES	LATEST YEAR & INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE	PERIODICITY	COVERAGE	DATA DISAGGREGATION (SEX, REGION etc)	USE OF DATA IN POLICY MAKING	QUALITY OF DATA
Poverty ⇒ Vanuatu Poverty Report ⇒ Vanuatu Household Income and Expenditure Survey	NSO NSO 1998	Not defined	National	Province	Fair	
Hunger ⇒ National Nutrition Survey ⇒ Vanuatu Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition 1997-2001	MoH 1996 MoH	To be indicated	National National		Weak	Weak
Education ⇒ Vanuatu Education For All Policy ⇒ Vanuatu National Census ⇒ Ministry of Education Annual Report ⇒ Ministry of Education Annual Report ⇒ Ministry of Education Annual Report on Primary and Secondary Statistics	MoE 2004 NSO 1999 MoE 2000 MoE 2003 MoE 2003	Not defined 10 yearly Annually Annually Annually	National National National National National		Fair	Fair
Gender Equality ⇒ Vanuatu National Census ⇒ Vanuatu CEDAW Report	NSO 1999	10 yearly	National		Weak	Weak
Child Mortality ⇒ National Health Development Plan ⇒ Master Health Service Plan 2004-2009 ⇒ MOH Annual Report	MoH 1990 MoH 2004 MoH 2004	 6 yearly Annually	National National National	Province Province Province	 Fair	 Fair
Maternal Health ⇒ MOH Annual Report ⇒ UNDP Human Development Report 2005	MoH 2002	Annually	National	Province	Fair	Fair



cont'...

INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES	LATEST YEAR & INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE	PERIODICITY	COVERAGE	DATA DISAGGREGATION (SEX, REGION etc)	USE OF DATA IN POLICY MAKING	QUALITY OF DATA
HIV/ AIDS Ministry of Health (no data available)						
Malaria and other major diseases ⇒ Master of Health Services Plan 2004-2009	MoH 2004	6 yearly	National	Province	Fair	Fair
Environmental Resources ⇒ National Conference on Sustainable Development Report ⇒ Vanuatu CCA ⇒ BPOA +10 Vanuatu Report ⇒ Barbados Program of Action + National Assessment Report ⇒ Vanuatu National Biodiversity Strategy ⇒ Lands Department, VANRIS	VEU 2006 VEU 2001 VEU 2004 VEU VEU 1999 Lands 1992	Not defined Not defined Not defined Not defined Not defined				
Drinking Water and Sanitation ⇒ Vanuatu National Census	NSO 1999	Every 10 yrs	National	Enumeration Area	Fair	Fair
Partnership for Development ⇒ 2004 Pacific Is Regional MDG Report ⇒ DESP Administrative Records ⇒ Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2004 National Accounts of Vanuatu ⇒ Statistical Year Book of Vanuatu 2002 ⇒ Vanuatu Economic Performance and Challenges Ahead 2002 ADB ⇒ Government of Vanuatu Budget 2004,2003,2002,2001 ⇒ Sustainable Human Development in Vanuatu 1990	DESP DESP NSO 2004 NSO 2002 DESP DESP 2001-2004	Not defined Daily Annually Annually Not defined Annually Not defined	Annual Annual Annual Annual Annual Annual Not defined		Fair	Fair

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