

# VESP View

## VANUATU EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

September 2018  
Issue 13: Improving Gender Equity and  
Social Inclusion across the Ministry



**The VESP gender disability and social inclusion team has been collaborating closely with their counterparts at the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) to develop awareness raising packages and information. These awareness training packages can be delivered to staff in provinces and schools to support the delivery of education through a safe and welcoming environment. There are also case studies that provide insight and further understanding of the way ahead.**

The Government of Vanuatu has a clear, ongoing commitment to give every child the best opportunity to access a quality, inclusive education. Evidence of this commitment is through endorsement of the Pacific Islands' Basic Education Action Plan and the ratification of two important and influential international conventions: The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The MoET has developed three policies in support of these commitments: the Inclusive Education Policy (2011), the Child Safeguarding Policy (2017) and the Gender Equity in Education Policy (reviewed in 2018).

Over the past 12 months the Ministry has introduced a number of targeted actions aimed at raising awareness of each of these policies and the implications for MoET, provinces and schools if the policies are to be implemented effectively. Ministry senior staff and VESP have worked together to develop an approach to professional learning to ensure that "key enablers" of the policies (managers, school leaders, school support personnel, teacher educators) have the necessary knowledge and skills to support positive change in Vanuatu.

The MoET Women's leadership network also provides support and actively contributes to MoET efforts in raising awareness about each policy. Members act as ambassadors and help to influence their local communities, school committees in raising awareness about Child Safeguarding, Gender Based Violence packages and MoET policies in relation to inclusive education and gender equity.

### Awareness Raising at the Ministry Senior Management Level

Working alongside the MoET Inclusive Education Officer and the MoET Child-protection and Gender Focal Point, VESP has supported the development of two new awareness training modules to support MoET policies: the Child Safeguarding package (including inputs and training through Save the Children) and a second and complementary awareness-raising package on Gender Based Violence (GBV).

The Child Safeguarding package is intended to build awareness amongst MoET managers on their roles and responsibilities in their oversight of the Ministry's child safeguarding policy. The awareness raising is intended to also provide understanding and skills to the MoET managers, so they can support their teachers and schools to appropriately respond to any reported cases of harm or abuse against children. On behalf of the Ministry, the Director General of Education, Bergmans Iati, launched the awareness and training package in Mid-July. The materials have now been refined and will be translated.



The second awareness raising and training package focuses on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and was provided to MoET senior managers on 25th September 2018, following its launch by the MoET Director of Education Services, Roy Obed. The training module was also structured to provide MoET managers with increased understanding of their roles in identifying some of the key challenges in addressing GBV issues when they arise in schools. The training should also help them respond appropriately to any incidence of Gender Based Violence that is reported in their schools and school communities.



Each of the training modules were developed using data and evidence gathered from several sources and activities, including a survey with professional educators, their school committees and communities, as well as inputs from a Gender Based Violence Reference Group and the MoET Women’s Leadership Network. The modules will be handed over to MoET for wider dissemination in the next months, after being translated and packaged.

“The Gender Based Violence awareness-raising training module for educators is an important workshop and one that should not be regarded as the first and last. We should and must champion the mitigation of actions against those considered to be the minority or marginalized”.

*MoET Director of Education Services, Roy Obed*

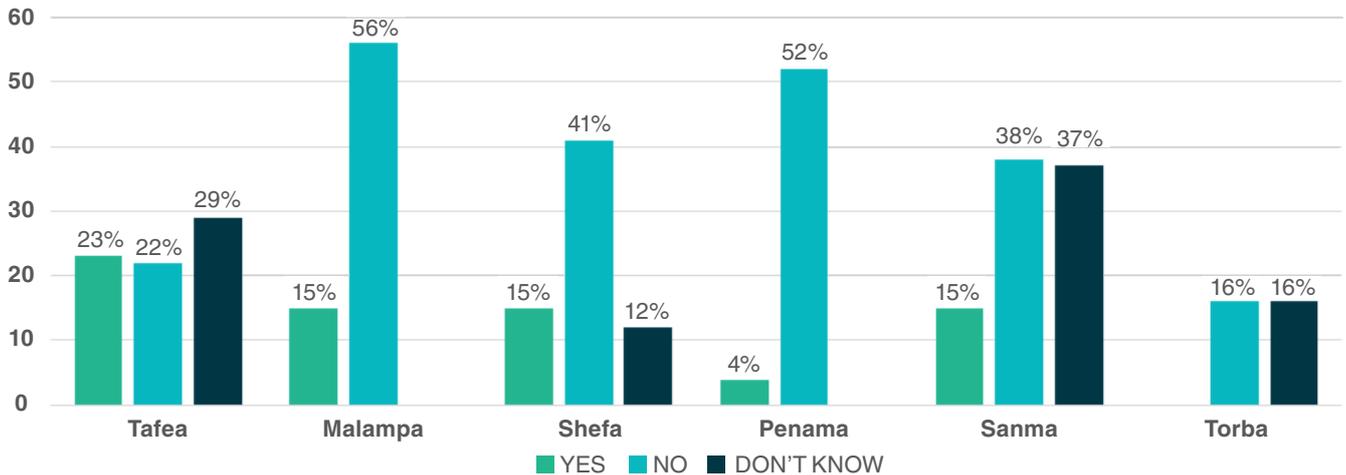
**Case studies that help identify how to work with schools and communities for better access to education**

Following the pilot survey in 2017, the survey on perceptions and awareness of educators and their communities on the MoET Inclusive Education Policy was completed in May 2018, working with a broader range of schools in geographically dispersed locations. The structured interviews allowed for discussions with school principals, teachers, chairs of school committees and parents from the 41 schools across the six provinces that were included. The MoET Child-protection and Gender Focal Point accompanied the survey team and raised awareness about the Inclusive Education Policy, the Gender Equity in Education Policy and the Child Safeguarding policy.

As part of this focus on the MoET Inclusive Education Policy, three schools have been participating in a case study, documenting their learning journey on how to adopt and implement practices designed to be inclusive of all children in their communities. The three case study schools are Fokona, Matarisu and Ekipe; an awareness package developed from the case study will be shared and circulated in late 2018. An accompanying 15-minute video and a book will provide information and examples of inclusion practices and will be rolled-out to schools across Vanuatu. Using these case studies and supported materials, schools will be able to learn from the experience of others and develop their own plan to promote Inclusive Education, giving each child in their communities the opportunity for equal access to education.

The concept of Inclusive Education itself remains unclear among many professional educators and more effort is needed to provide schools and staff with information on their roles and the Ministry’s expectations.

**Overall percentage by province who have seen or heard about the MoET Inclusive Education Policy**



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