

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT 2010 – 2015

INTRODUCTION

Faced with global regional and national challenges, Vanuatu, as a small island state, needs to redirect its valuable limited resources to achieve an effective commitment to education. It strongly believes that in order to achieve strong economic growth and sustainable development, it needs to encourage the **development of human resources** as a national priority. Its position is that investing in **human development** should be balanced between physical, academic and spiritual dimensions to reap a long term benefit for the nation.

The policy statement is based on the principles found in the **Education for All Goals** and the **Millennium Development Goals**, and the Government of Vanuatu four year matrix documents. The overarching aim is to provide a **better education for all**.

In 2006, an education summit was held after a nationwide consultation. The outcome of the education summit was the *Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy* document. The *Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy* document pointed out weaknesses and challenges in the education system.

In December 2009, the Government of Vanuatu and its Development Partners approved the *Vanuatu Education Road Map* (VERM), and signed a *Joint Partnership Arrangement*. The Pool Partners are Australia, New Zealand and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Non-

pool partners who have signed (as at the end of April 2010) include the Peace Corps, UNESCO, the European Union, and the World Bank. A *Grant Financing Arrangement* involving the Governments of Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand has also been signed.

The objective of these arrangements is to support the three goals of the VERM:

- **Strategic Goal 1 (Access):** to increase equitable access to education for all people at all levels of education in Vanuatu;
- **Strategic Goal 2 (Quality):** To improve the quality of education in Vanuatu;
- **Strategic Goal 3 (Management):** To improve and strengthen the management of the education system in Vanuatu.

This policy is designed to address the challenges facing the Vanuatu education system through the mechanism of a **Sector Wide Approach** (SWAp).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this statement is to set down the broader policy directions of the Government of Vanuatu for the development of its education system for the six years from 2010 to 2015. The period 2010 - 2015 has been chosen to align this policy statement with the Millennium Development Goal 2 (achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015).

VISION

Proud of our unique identity, we commit ourselves totally to the development of good and responsible citizens through the implementation of a comprehensive quality education system for all and by all.

OBJECTIVES

The ultimate aim of the education system is to empower all children, youth and citizens of Vanuatu to be proactive, to exercise appropriate choices in their daily life, to be responsible for their actions, and to contribute wisely by recognising and making good use of available opportunities for the development of this nation.

Without becoming too ambitious, we need to:

- Build an education system which enables the promotion of our national culture and enhances our spirit of togetherness;
- Promote respect for others, and support the values enshrined in our Constitution, regardless of the many languages, cultures and religions that exist in Vanuatu;
- Build an education system which contributes to poverty alleviation, to strong economic growth and to sustainable development;
- Build an education system which will add **value** to all citizens of this nation;

- Provide equal opportunity for all children to have **access** to **quality** education;
- Provide better **facilities** in a secure and safe environment, to facilitate quality learning and teaching for children and teachers;
- Develop an education system that aims to provide knowledgeable and skilled human resources;
- Lift standards of **literacy** and **numeracy** to at least regional standards;
- Encourage bilingualism in French and English throughout Vanuatu;
- Facilitate **access** to tertiary and technical education;
- Increase the number of scholarships to encourage all eligible citizens to seek further university studies, nationally, regionally and internationally;
- Promote professional development of teachers and continue to provide and improve in-service training;
- Promote a spirit of partnership between the Government and stakeholders in the development of education;
- Persuade communities and the population at large to value education;
- Strengthen the administration, financial management and accountability of schools to encourage self reliance and self-management in schools;
- Review the Teaching Service Commission, and strengthen its role and structure, so that it can carry out its functions effectively; and
- Create an effective education system that the Government can sustain in the future.

BASIC EDUCATION

Basic education refers to a whole range of educational activities taking place in various settings (formal, non formal and informal). These educational activities aim to meet basic learning needs. According to the International Standard Classification of Education, basic education comprises primary education (the first stage of basic education) and lower secondary education (the second stage). In some countries (developing countries in particular), basic education often includes early childhood education and/or adult literacy programmes.

Universal basic education is regarded as a priority for developing countries, and is the focus of the *Education for All* movement led by UNESCO. It is also included in the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs). MDG Goal number 2 is to achieve Universal Primary Education

(by 2015). In Vanuatu, primary education refers to Years 1 to 6. While the scope of what is called “primary education” varies between countries, in many countries it means the first 8 years of schooling.

Many studies have proved the benefits of basic education on public health (for example, fewer diseases), on society (for example, longer life expectancy, and reduction in crime) and on the economy (for example, through a higher skill level and productivity in the population). Other benefits, although more difficult to measure, include the impact of basic education in supporting democracy and understanding of human rights, and in helping to achieve improved governance and political stability. Basic education also increases understanding of non-violent ways to solve problems and mutual understanding between groups in conflict.

The Government of Vanuatu takes the view that basic education in Vanuatu needs to be interpreted broadly. The *Vanuatu Education Road Map* states that, while basic education is taken to include early childhood education and Years 1 to 8, the Government of Vanuatu also sees the provision of education to students in Years 9 and 10 as “basic education”. Basic education in Vanuatu extends from early childhood education through primary schooling and early secondary schooling up to Year 10.

The intention is to ensure that more children enrol in primary school, and that young people stay in school and receive a good education. While other sectors of education are important, improving basic education will receive top priority and the major share of resources.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy on basic education in Vanuatu is to

- set the strategic direction for basic education in Vanuatu;
- identify and prioritise the main issues that help to realise the effective and efficient planning, development and implementation of Basic Education in Vanuatu; and
- assist the Government of Vanuatu to achieve the *Millennium Development Goals* and the *Education for All* goals.

Strategic Goal

The strategic goal for the basic education policy is to provide equitable access for all children to quality basic education in Vanuatu.

Policy Objectives for Basic Education

The policy objectives for basic education in Vanuatu relate to the three key goals of the *Vanuatu Education Road Map*. These three goals focus on improvements to access, quality and management.

Access

- To provide opportunities for all children aged 6 up to 15 years of age to enrol in school on an equitable basis;
- To achieve a 100% enrolment rate for primary education by 2015;
- To achieve a 100% transition rate from Year 6 to Year 7 by 2015; and
- To establish and maintain a suitable learning environment for children in basic education by providing an adequate number of qualified teachers, curriculum materials, classrooms, dormitories, and water and sanitation facilities.

Quality

- To improve the educational achievement of all students;
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- To improve completion rates up to year 10 by 2015;
- To develop and implement revised curricula that develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to prepare students for lifelong learning; and
- To prepare students for further education and training, including the development of the technical and vocational skills needed in the work force.

Management

- To ensure that all Government and Government assisted schools in Vanuatu implement the School Grants scheme effectively in order to remove financial barriers that prevent some children from accessing education;
- To ensure that the Ministry of Education establishes and monitors performance standards aimed at improving quality in education institutions that receive public funds;
- To ensure that all education institutions maintain quality standards in the infrastructure and equipment necessary to offer basic education of good quality; and
- To strengthen management, administration, and supervision of all aspects of school programmes to improve learning achievement.

Policy Principles

This policy for Basic Education is based on the following principles:

- Education is a fundamental human right.
- Every child is entitled to quality basic education.
- Basic Education is the basis of children's development, and it helps each individual to have a successful and productive future.
- Basic Education provides a foundation for lifelong education for all sectors of the population.
- Basic Education enhances life chances and ensures an active role for children in society.
- Basic Education encompasses the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of children.
- Basic Education shapes behaviour and attitudes, so that children can acquire values accepted by the wider society in which they are to live.
- Basic Education encourages and prepares children to be self reliant and responsible, and to be resourceful in the community.
- Basic Education develops good citizens and good leaders.
- Basic Education encourages children to respect traditional and cultural values, sustainable development and the natural environment, and the religious beliefs, norms and expectations of Vanuatu society.
- Basic education aims to create an understanding that girls and boys should get equal opportunities.
- Basic education helps children to recognise, understand and appreciate the diversity of Vanuatu culture.
- Basic education promotes understanding and tolerance among people, to enable them to live in peace and harmony.
- Targeted benchmarks will be set for students at specified levels.

PROPOSED EDUCATION STRUCTURE

The proposed Formal Education Structure in Vanuatu shall comprise:

- Pre-School Level (Early Childhood Education) Kindergarten 1 & 2
- Primary Education Years 1 to 6
- Junior Secondary School Years 7 to 10
- Senior Secondary School Years 11 to 13
- Senior Technical Colleges Years 11 to 13
- Tertiary Education

⇒ Pre-School Level (Early Childhood Education) (Kindergarten - K1 and K2)

Education starts at the pre-school level. There is a range of formal and informal early childhood education arrangements in place, including kindergarten and home care. Kindergarten levels 1 and 2 offer initial learning experiences to children at the ages of 4 and 5.

Early Child Education needs to be revisited, in order to facilitate entry into free primary education. The Government will explore measures to provide assistance to preschools in the areas of facilities, early childhood teacher training, teachers, and curriculum and learning materials.

⇒ Primary Education Year 1 to 6

Primary Education in Vanuatu covers Year 1 to Year 6. Primary education is the priority sector for the development of the Vanuatu education system.

It is the intention of the Government to commence phasing out primary school fees in 2010 through the introduction of increased school grants, and to ensure that all children have access to free primary education by 2012.

The assessment at Years 4 & 6 to test achievement levels of students in literacy and numeracy through the Vanuatu Standardized Test of Achievement (VANSTA) will be extended to Year 8 Level.

Concepts of sustainable development will be introduced at this stage with regard to issues involving health and the environment.

The Government of Vanuatu will work to improve the quality of primary education by considering policies relating to curriculum development and learning materials, teacher education, and improved facilities.

⇒ **Junior Secondary Education Years 7 to 10**

Junior Secondary Education covers Years 7 to 10. There is a variety of arrangements for delivery of secondary schooling in Vanuatu. Different policies shall apply in different areas. Some junior secondary colleges enrol students in Years 7 to 10. Some colleges enrol students in Years 9 to 12. Some colleges enrol students in Years 9 to 13. Emphasis will be given to both French and English in all these colleges.

Centre Schools enrol students from K1 to Year 8. The Government of Vanuatu has determined that Centre Schools, which enrol students in Years 7 and 8, and which are close to secondary schools, will transfer those students to the nearest secondary school, by 2011. That is, Centre schools located in areas close to a Junior Secondary School will be required to cease enrolling students in Years 7 and 8. The development of Centre Schools in urban areas and heavily populated areas will cease in 2010. Years 7 and 8 children in these areas will be accommodated in secondary schools, since there is considerable excess capacity existing in the relevant secondary schools. The intention of this policy is to allow spaces to be made available to cater for the increase in enrolment anticipated as free universal primary education is implemented. It is expected that the free universal primary education policy will allow more students to enrol than previously attended primary schools. This new arrangement will provide a better education to students in these specific classes (Years 7 and 8).

The following principles apply:

- Centre Schools located close to a secondary school will cease to enrol Years 7 & 8 at the beginning of the 2010 academic year, in order to absorb the anticipated increase in enrolment as the fee free primary initiative is implemented.
- Selected secondary schools will continue to accommodate Years 7 & 8.
- Selected centre schools and/or secondary schools will administer feeder schools to enable economies of scale, sharing of resources and better management of schools.
- Selected schools, whether already established or new establishments, will enrol Years 7 & 8 students only, to enable economies of scale.
- Centre schools in particular rural and remote areas will be encouraged.
- Special exemptions will be given by the Ministry of Education to allow some designated Centre Schools, in areas where access is difficult, to continue to enrol students in Years 7 and 8. The exemption will be provided on condition that the schools are well resourced (with teachers, facilities and good teaching and learning materials). The criteria which the Ministry of Education will consider in determining if Centre Schools will continue to enrol students at these levels include
 - distance from a secondary school;

- high cost of transportation to travel to a secondary school;
- frequency of transport services in the area in question;
- the degree of risk associated with travel, particularly in bad weather; and
- the social impact of removing the child from the home.

The Government of Vanuatu policy is to provide opportunities at Junior Secondary School levels for students to develop basic skills and particular aptitudes in technical and vocational studies. While academic subjects will be taught, there will be opportunities for students at this level of education to study appropriate technical, practical and vocational programmes that are integrated within the curriculum of the Junior Secondary Schools.

A national assessment shall assess the performance of all students moving on from Year 10 to Year 11.

⇒ **Senior Secondary School Years 11 to 13**

Senior Secondary Education shall comprise Years 11 to Year 13. Senior secondary education must be reorganised to prepare children effectively for tertiary studies. At least two colleges will be developed as specialist schools designated as centres of excellence. The objective of this proposed reorganisation is to deliver a better quality of education at higher levels of the secondary school system, and to maximize use of scarce resources such as well qualified specialist teachers. The national assessment at the end of Year 10 will give guidance on selection for entry to these institutions.

A national assessment shall assess the performance of all students moving on from Year 12 to Year 13.

A national assessment shall assess the performance of all students moving on from Year 13 to tertiary studies (including university studies).

⇒ **Senior Technical Colleges Years 11 to 13**

The policy of the Government of Vanuatu is to establish a limited number of Senior Technical Colleges for students in Years 11 to 13. The national assessment at the end of Year 10 will give guidance on selection for entry to these institutions. These senior technical colleges will develop students' technical, practical and vocational skills. Preparation for specified trades shall be offered in these specialised technical establishments. These Senior Technical Colleges will offer a curriculum focusing on more advanced technical and vocational education and training.

⇒ **Tertiary Education**

The Ministry of Education will continue to promote access through increased scholarships for tertiary studies.

The Ministry of Education will continue to work in collaboration with regional and international institutions to facilitate recognition of programmes offered by national institutions (for example,

the Vanuatu Institute of Technology, the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education, the Vanuatu School of Nursing, the Police College, Vanuatu Agriculture College (in Santo) and the Vanuatu Maritime College (in Santo).

EDUCATION POLICIES

⇒ Legislation

The Government of Vanuatu will review all education legislation, including the Education Act, the Teaching Services Act, and legislation relating to the Vanuatu Institute of Technology and the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education. The purpose of the review will be to update and modernise current education legislation.

⇒ Land Acquisition

The Ministry of Education shall implement the decisions on land acquisition made by the Council of Ministers in July 2009. The Ministry of Education will work collaboratively with the Ministry of Lands to ensure that all public school land is surveyed, a valuation is determined, and that the land is compulsorily acquired or leased by the Government (as secured Government investments) by 2012. The Government's policy on rationalization of schools will be considered as decisions on land acquisition are made.

Land on which secondary schools and technical colleges are located will be compulsorily acquired by the Government. Appropriate lease arrangements will be negotiated for primary schools.

⇒ Scholarships and Human Resources Development

The Government of Vanuatu shall make available scholarships to assist people wishing to acquire a qualification, or to upgrade an existing qualification, according to the proportions listed below:

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) level	5%
Masters level	25%
Degree level	40%
Diploma level	30%

The Government of Vanuatu shall develop a National Human Resources Development Plan. This plan will be designed to develop skills to address the priority needs of Vanuatu through scholarship distribution.

The Ministry of Education shall ensure that the allocation of scholarships is made fairly and without discrimination towards either Francophone or Anglophone students. Awards shall be made promptly once a student has met the qualifying criteria. The time taken for the award of scholarships to students after completing Years 13 and 14 will be reduced to a minimum, so that they can progress their further study without interruption.

⇒ **Curriculum**

The Ministry of Education shall continue its curriculum development work to reform and modernise the pre-school, primary and secondary school curriculum. Particular consideration will be given to the development of appropriate curricula for the Junior Secondary Schools and the Senior Technical Colleges. Appropriate curricula will be developed for technical and vocational education and training programmes.

⇒ **Assessment**

Current arrangements for assessment of student achievement will continue at the end of Years 10, 12 and 13/14. The Government of Vanuatu has established a Task Force to review assessment arrangements, in line with the curriculum reform, and will consider the report of the Task Force and make appropriate decisions when the report has been completed and analysed.

⇒ **School Grant Subsidy**

A School Grant subsidy per student will be paid to all Government and Government-assisted primary schools enrolling students in Years 1 to 6 in 2010 and thereafter. The Ministry of Education shall make provision for an increased school grant subsidy for students in Years 7 – 10 in public and Government assisted schools over time, as resources permit. The school grant will fund the costs of tuition only. Other costs such as boarding fees or the cost of school uniforms are the responsibility of parents.

⇒ **Teachers**

The Ministry of Education has initiated a study of the costs, effectiveness and distribution of teachers in order to ensure that the teacher management system in Vanuatu is efficient and effective. The Government of Vanuatu will consider the report of the study and make appropriate decisions when the report has been completed and analysed.

⇒ **Development of Minimum Standards**

Current standards for the education system in Vanuatu are defined in the Education Regulation Order No 44 of 2005. These standards will be reviewed by the Ministry of Education, and adapted if necessary in order to define minimum standards for the whole education system of Vanuatu.

The Government of Vanuatu will ensure that standards are set so that all teachers are competent and well qualified. Minimum standards for staffing schedules for schools, for educational textbooks, equipment and other learning materials for schools, for classrooms and other school buildings, for health and safety requirements, and for administration and management of schools will be reviewed. Existing minimum standards that are appropriate will be implemented, or new minimum standards will be set, as resources permit.

⇒ **Ancillary Staff (Financial Officers/Bursars)**

As resources permit, the Government of Vanuatu will give consideration to the appointment of financial officers in provincial education offices and/or bursars in secondary schools.

⇒ **Vanuatu Institute of Technology**

Following the review of the legislation governing the functions and operation of the Vanuatu Institute of Technology, the Government of Vanuatu will take steps to improve the quality of technical and vocational education delivered in Vanuatu, and will ensure that more people have access to good quality technical and vocational education through enrolment in recognised certificates and diploma qualifications.

⇒ **Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education**

Following the review of the legislation governing the functions and operation of the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education, the Government of Vanuatu will take steps to improve the quality of teacher education delivered in Vanuatu. Both pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher professional development are included within teacher education. The possibility of offering recognised undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes in teaching through the Vanuatu Institute of Education will be examined.

⇒ **Adult and Community (Non-Formal) Education**

The Ministry of Education will support the development of adult education and community education in the non-formal sector, and will work constructively with Non-Government Organisations operating in this field. As resources permit, it will give consideration to implementing the recommendations in the UNESCO Belém Framework for Action (December 2009) relating to adult and community education, particularly the provisions relating to adult literacy and increased investment in adult education and learning. Life skills programmes will be offered and developed in whatever language participants are comfortable with.

⇒ **Inclusive and Special Education**

The Ministry of Education will give consideration, as resources permit, to providing support to implement its *Inclusive Education Policy and Strategic Plan 2010-2020*. As a first priority, it will consider support for the training of teacher educators to achieve qualifications that will enable them in turn to train teachers to assist children with special needs. Children with special needs include the visually impaired (the blind and the near-sighted), the hearing impaired (the deaf), children who are physically disabled, and children who are intellectually disabled (for example, children affected by Down syndrome).

Proposed Education Chart of Vanuatu

