



# Ministry of Education and Training



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Principal ICT Conference

Malaopa College in collaboration with ViewPX hosted a one-week Principals ICT conference from the 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> of August 2020 which saw Principals, IT teachers and a few regular teachers from Shefa, Sanma, Malampa and Tafea provinces as participants. On an opening remark to officially open the 4<sup>th</sup> PITcon 2020 the Director Education Services, Samuel Katipa acknowledged the major organizers and host such as Malapoa college and ViewPx for the PITcon 2020 for the taking the lead in this initiative. On another note, he made welcome remarks and acknowledges the participants for taking their time out to attend this conference, which was schedule during the one-week school holidays. He also stressed the importance having female IT personnel in a profession usually male-dominated.

For the ICT team in Vanuatu, the covid-19 pandemic is seen as a blessing in disguise, which enabled Malapoa College as one of the major school in Port Vila to make use of their ICT tools and skills. Hence, with the assistance from ViewPx and other major schools in Port Vila and the Tafea team, schools were able to shift from the normal traditional face-face classroom to an online platform via Moodle. Students are able to continue learning during and after a catastrophe, regardless of time and place. The theme for the PITcon 2020, “Resilient and Responsive Education System”.

The concept of traditional education has changed radically within the last couple of years. Being physically present in a classroom is not the only learning option anymore — not with the rise of the internet and new technologies, at least. Nowadays, you have access to a quality education whenever and wherever you want, as long as you have access to a computer. We are now entering a new era — the revolution of online education.

There is no need to discount the skepticism surrounding education through the internet. It is hard to understand the notion of leaving behind the conventional classroom, especially if it's to face this vast space called The Internet and also if it's to prepare for this pandemic or any unexpected natural disasters.

The PITcon 2020 training modules include Moodle level 1 & 2, which allows participants to discover how to create an AWS account, creating an AWS instance Installing and configuring Moodle as well as Moodle Maintenance AWS Backup and Restore. The Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform, offering over 175 fully featured services from data centers globally. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—are using AWS to lower costs, become more agile, and innovate faster.

One of the main facilitator Dr Dominik Maximilián Ramík originally from Czech Republic who wishes to settle in Vanuatu. He is currently based on Tanna as an IT teacher at the Lowanatom College, since 2013. His input to the training deals mainly with how to set up a Proxy Server- Caching Internet content and Kolibri offline content. In simple terms, the participants were trained to set up security measures for their networks and how to monitor internet users, specifically students, which will avoid them from surfing inappropriate sites on the net. KOLIBRI on the other hand, is specially designed to provide

offline access to accurate and openly licensed educational content library. This will obviously benefit mostly schools from remote islands in Vanuatu with very limited access to internet services.

Equally important, there were other significant presentations from major ICT companies and organizations in Port Vila such as TRBR, OGCIO, MoET IT, Pacific Networks, Pacific IT Solutions, Interchange, Vodafone, E-learning and Quality Assurance, E-learning AUF, E-learning NUV, E-Learning USP, Smart Sisters and Oxfam.

More than 100 participants of the PITCon 2020 were fortunate to receive not only critical knowledge, information and skills in ICT for their schools but will also be awarded with a certificate of participation. On a closing note during the official closing, the PEO Shefa stated, "Water cuts through rock not because of its strength but because of its persistence" In addition, "Success is not built upon success but it is built upon failure, frustration and catastrophes". The next PITcon is scheduled for 2021 and the executive is still looking at the two possible hosts, Tafea Province and Sanma Province.