



Beijing + 25

National Review Report

Government of Vanuatu



Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS) responsible for the national machinery for women, the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA), I take this opportunity to thank the National Government in its commitment to achieving gender equality and enabling the empowerment of women and girls.

I sincerely thank our government partners both at national and sub-national levels for their continuous commitment to working with MJCS to ensure that women and girls are included and participating at all levels of development and humanitarian action. Collaboration with communities, churches and chiefs has also contributed to ongoing social and behavioural change to support gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

I acknowledge the solidarity and collaborative efforts of our Non-Government Organization (NGO) partners. Over the past five years, we have worked together in addressing and progressing the status of women and girls through various gender programs.

Without the support of our development partners, many of our achievements, over the past years, would not be possible. Our sincere thanks.

Our collaborative efforts resulted in the launching of the National Gender Equality Policy in 2016, which has become the mechanism supporting the lobbying and advocacy for gender equality and empowerment for women and girls. This is reflected in the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030) commitments under the Society Pillar. Across the 13 Government Ministries, different sectoral policies have mainstreamed gender, protection and social inclusion. In addition, legislations have been amended to consider gender and new legislations have been drafted with gender, protection and social inclusion components.

In the next five years, the National and Provincial Governments will continue to work with communities and partners to progress gender equality and a supportive environment for the advancement of women and girls in Vanuatu.



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Section 1: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

Important achievements over the last five years

This Report on Vanuatu's implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, covering the period 1 May 2014 – 1 May 2019, authored by the Department of Women Affairs (DWA), comprises inputs from key government ministries, NGO and CSO partners and a process of stakeholder consultations that were held at national level (May 28, 2019) and in the provinces of Tafea and Sanma (May 21-22, 2019).

Vanuatu has made important gains in ensuring equality before the law, eliminating violence against women, enabling women's political participation, women's economic empowerment and gender responsive disaster risk reduction, resilience and humanitarian response.

Gender policies and mainstreaming gender

- 1.1 In 2016, The Government of Vanuatu launched the National Gender Equality Policy (NGEP) 2015 - 2019.
- 1.2 The 2017 Council of Ministers' Paper (Decision 94, 2017) calls for adopting gender responsive planning and budgeting in five (5) Ministries (Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Internal Affairs (Department of Local Authorities including Municipalities and Provincial Government). The National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2016- 2030 also includes the requirement for gender responsive planning and budgeting under the Society Pillar.
- 1.3 Other key national policies mainstreaming gender include:
 - National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018-2025,
 - Sanma Strategic Development Plan 2017-2026,
 - Tafea Provincial Strategic Plan 2018 – 2030,
 - Vanuatu National Water Policy 2017-2030,
 - The National Strategy for the Justice and Community Services Sector, 2018 – 2021,
 - The National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018 – 2030,
 - Public Works Department Strategic Plan 2018,
 - Vanuatu Agricultural Sector Policy 2015 – 2030, and
 - National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster Induced Displacement, 2018.

- 1.4 With the establishment of the Human Rights Committee in 2014, the Government is planning a scoping study in 2019 on the feasibility and durability of establishing a national human rights mechanism.
- 1.5 The combined 4th and 5th CEDAW reports were submitted in February 2016. The Optional Protocol Report was submitted in June 2016 and the focus since has been on implementing the recommendations and concluding statements.

Legislative reforms

- 1.6 Legislative reforms to the Family Protection Act have sought to provide greater protection for women experiencing gender based violence and Temporary Special Measures have increased women's representation in decision-making. These legislative reforms have been led by the Department of Women's Affairs and Ministry of Justice and Community Services.
- 1.7 A Council of Ministers' Paper calls for 40% representation of women in national task forces and committees. Together with the Amendment for Temporary Special Measures (TSM) in the Municipal Act and People's Representation Act in 2014, women's representation as Municipal Counsellors has remained at a steady 33%; there has been an increase in the number of women Director Generals (0 to 15% in 5 years) and Directors (4 –21% in 5 years). The Vanuatu Public Service Commission appointed, for the first time, two (2) women as Director Generals (DGs) in 2018 and the appointments of the women at Director-level positions were made in February 2019.
- 1.8 In 2017, because of the work of the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA), for the first time in one of the most patriarchal islands (Tanna), a woman contested in the provincial elections.
- 1.9 In 2016 and 2017, DWA supported the Vanuatu Christian Council with training in human rights and gender. This resulted in increasing the number of women as pastors, church elders, deaconesses and in administrative executive positions of the church.

Women's Economic Empowerment

- 1.10 The UN Women's Markets for Change Project (M4C) funded by the Australian Government and Government of Canada, has seen an increase in the number of women market vendors joining formal market vendors' associations. Three new associations have been set up in the past five years (Silae Vanua, Northern Islands and Marobe Tanvasoko Market Vendors' Associations) and women occupy 100% of leadership roles in these.

Humanitarian Response

- 1.11 The Gender and Protection Cluster (GPC), led by the Department of Women's Affairs, was formally established under the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) structure in 2015. In addition to the wider Gender and Protection

Cluster, there are three sub-clusters addressing gender-based violence, child protection and disability inclusion in humanitarian action. The GPC serves as a coordination mechanism for over 20 government and non-government agencies working in the sector. The GPC has played an important role in ensuring gender, protection and social inclusion is addressed in cross-sectoral disaster risk reduction, preparedness and resilience, as well as in response and recovery during the Efate flash floods (2014), Tropical Cyclone Pam (2015), Tropical Cyclone Cook and Tropical Cyclone Donna (2017), Tropical Cyclone Hola (2018), Ambae Lombenben volcano response (2017-2019), tsunami affecting Aneityum (2018), the Ambryn earthquake/volcano activity (2018-2019) and Tropical Cyclone Oma (2019).

National Machinery

- 1.12 Following decentralization, DWA now has Desk Officers in 5 out of 6 provinces (with Penama Province being the exception).
- 1.13 The Department of Finance and Treasury has allocated some resources in the national budget to cover gender mainstreaming and budget allocations for integrating gender in crosscutting sectors such as health, education, law, and security.
- 1.14 As a result of supporting equal job opportunities for women in the Finance Department, 60% of staff in this department are women.

Challenges/setbacks in the last five years

- 1.15 The delayed launch of the National Gender Equality Policy reflects limited political will. A lack of dedicated funding from National Government to implement the Policy will affect its effectiveness and the absence of monitoring and evaluation frameworks will make it challenging to assess progress.
- 1.16 The lack of political will and financial support limits the scope of up-scaling an innovative approach piloted by DWA and MJCS under the Family Protection Act (FPA) to improve reporting and response to violence against women.
- 1.17 Community structures are changing and traditional authorities such as chiefs are no longer playing an active role in addressing family issues in their communities. Consequently, influencing social norms that perpetuate the acceptance of violence has become more challenging.
- 1.18 Despite advancement in improving women's participation in decision-making, progress has been slow. In the last two elections, no women were elected to parliament. In five (5) out of six (6) provincial councils, no women have been elected and in one council, there is one (1) female councillor out of seventeen (17). This is a result of lack of political will from political parties and leaders, poor representation of women in executive positions within political parties, and the dynamics of a traditional patriarchal context, which prescribes rigid gender

roles excluding women from formal decision-making spaces such as the parliament.

- 1.19 With a large proportion of the population (75%) living in rural areas, a large percentage of women depend largely on natural resources to earn an income. Particular groups of women such as widows, women with children separated from their husbands, and single mothers have limited access to earn income, with a key factor being lack of land ownership.
- 1.20 The lack of long-term funding support from the Government and donor agencies makes it challenging to implement and mainstream large scale and multi-year initiatives to address gender across sectors. Further, gaps in alignment between provincial and national planning and the tendency for sectors to work in silos hinders a synergistic approach to progressing gender equality.

Top five priorities for the last five years

- Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice
- Eliminating violence against women and girls
- Political participation and representation
- Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises
- Gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience building

- 2.1 The work of advancing women's rights remains a priority for Government and our many achievements include the ongoing implementation of the National Gender Equality Policy (2015-2019).
- 2.2 The Government continues its efforts in addressing violence against women through the Family Protection Act (FPA) and the Penal Code Act (PCA).
- 2.3 Churches are running programs to raise awareness of gender equality and address gender-based violence. The Vanuatu Council of Churches also developed the National Gender and Faith Policy in 2017.
- 2.4 The Family Violence Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Vanuatu Police Force (2015) outline the criminal nature of family violence incidents, promote a no-drop policy, articulate the quality of evidence and the quality of response expected, including the inappropriateness of responding with roundtable reconciliation meetings.
- 2.5 The Foreign Services Act encourages women to participate. While there are no female ambassadors yet, processes for selection have been reformed making it easier for women to apply.
- 2.6 The Public Service Act has also reformed its promotion processes to be based on merit and due process making it possible for females to be promoted into senior positions.

- 2.7 The Municipalities Act was amended in 2013 to include 30% of seats reserved for women. This amendment allowed for Temporary Special Measures to elect women into municipal level government in the last five years.
- 2.8 The Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO) has provided Mock Elections for Malapoa College Students to raise awareness on gender issues in elections, annually since 2015.
- 2.9 The Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) provided provincial contestant training to women from Tafea, Shefa and Sanma Provinces (2016-2017).
- 2.10 DWA also conducted gender, human rights and ethical decision-making trainings for elected women councillors of Luganville and Port Vila.
- 2.11 DWA through support from the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) provided Adaptive Leadership Training and training to women on understanding the role of councillors.
- 2.12 Oxfam provided financial support to Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW) to support its 'Women in Politics Program' with its call to Government to have 50% women in Parliament and Provincial Government.
- 2.13 With financial assistance from Telecommunications and Radio Broadcasting Regulator, Department of Consumer Affairs, the Women and Girls in ICT project, has delivered an ecommerce website to support market vendors to access a cost effective trading system. Shop Vanuatu will increase economic opportunities for Ni-Vanuatu vendors especially women and girls to grow their small businesses and create economic security for themselves, their families and communities by providing access to the worldwide online marketplace.
- 2.14 The UN Women's Markets for Change Project (M4C), funded by the Australian Government and Government of Canada includes over 3,700 members in the Northern Islands Market Vendors' Association in Sanma Province and Silae Vanua Market Vendors' Association in Shefa Province. The project teaches MVA executives to lead and manage the 3,700 association members (mostly women) and provides training to women in areas including financial literacy, agricultural productivity, leadership, communications and running a small business.
- 2.15 The National Disaster Management Office's Policy on Climate Change and Disaster Induced Displacement (2018) mainstreams gender, protection and social inclusion in preparedness, response and resilience.
- 2.16 The draft Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) Schools Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building Handbook, funded by UNICEF, includes gender responsive planning such as facilities for menstrual hygiene management, gender balance on School Disaster Management Committees and DRR decision-making bodies and processes. The needs of women and girls and people living with disabilities are being included in school safety plans. The

Handbook will be finalised in 2019 with the accompanying training to be rolled out at the area council level.

- 2.17 The Water Resource Management Act was amended in 2016 to require a minimum 40% representation of women on rural water committees.
- 2.18 In Shefa and Sanma Provinces, disaster risk reduction, safety and security has been mainstreamed into UN Women's Markets 4 Change Project. Climate change and disaster risk reduction assessments have been undertaken in 8 project market sites and have led to the development of market disaster preparedness and action plans that are aligned to the National Disaster Plan. Vendors and local authorities have been trained in disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures. The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) has also conducted assessments of the market place, evaluating safety and security risks for women vendors and trained vendors in awareness of their rights and how to identify different forms of violence in their communities and homes.
- 2.19 The Australian Government's Disaster Ready project partners Plan/ActionAid, Act for Peace/Vanuatu Christian Council, CARE, Oxfam, Save the Children and World Vision have strengthened women and girl's leadership in disaster planning, resilience and response through Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs), School Disaster Committees and Women's Weather Watch Program ('Women Wetem Weta').

Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

- Women living in remote and rural areas
 - Women living with disabilities
 - Younger women
 - Women in humanitarian settings
- 3.1 Women are participating in community led saving and loans groups called 'Waste Not Want Not.' One group's savings of VT 852,715 (approximately USD 7,375) was shared between group members to support school fees and health of children.
 - 3.2 VANWODS, a micro credit agency, provides access to financial support in the form of savings and credit to over 8,000 active members, especially women, in the informal sector.
 - 3.3 Education, awareness and norms change has resulted in more rural community leaders recognizing women in leadership roles as contributors to development.
 - 3.4 Some progress was made in the number of women living with a disability participating in sports. Women representatives in the Paralympic Commonwealth Games also won medals in the past five years.

- 3.5 Mainstreaming gender into the MoET National Inclusive Education Policy and Strategic Plan (2010-2020) and the MoET National Disability Inclusion Policy for the TVET Sector (2016-2020) has resulted in improvements to women's access to vocational training. Consequently, more women and girls, including those living with disabilities, are entering technical areas of work and more girls are moving into traditional male jobs.
- 3.6 Commencing in late 2017, CARE's, Australian Aid funded, Young Women's Leadership Program (YWLP) is supporting emerging young women leaders aged 18-30 in Shefa and Tafea Provinces over a 12 month period. The program includes workshops to build practical skills and knowledge on gender equality and ending violence against women and girls; internships; mentoring by experienced ni-Vanuatu women leaders; small community projects; sessions with family members on gender equality and women's leadership; field visits to key Vanuatu service providers and institutions; exchange visits to regional women's organizations and advocacy initiatives. There are currently 20 graduates with a further 30 commencing the program in June 2019.
- 3.7 CARE's, other program, Gender Equality Together (also funded by Australian Aid), is supporting girls and boys (aged 15-25) to make good choices in their relationships. The *Good Relationships Free from Violence* project (part of Gender Equality Together) through its life skills curriculum is enabling young women and men to create new and positive norms in their communities. The project teaches young women and men that all people have the right to live free from violence and encourages them to take a closer look at their own beliefs and behaviors. This curriculum is helping communities to build a culture that treats men and women equally.
- 3.8 World Vision's '*Stay in the Game*' menstrual health project for young women and girls in sport is providing education, training and products to support improved menstrual hygiene management.
- 3.9 '*Gudfala Laef*' Sunday & Sabbath school's gender equality program run by World Vision, teaches positive gender norms and gender equality to boys and girls aged 5-12 years. The curriculum focusses on rebalancing gender roles and responsibilities, safe play, and disability inclusion. Another World Vision project, '*Vanuatu Rispek*' is a campaign targeted at young people aged 12-25 years, raising awareness on healthy relationships.
- 3.10 As a result of amendments to the Decentralisation Act#16 (2013), Area Councils' sectoral representatives include women. The Sub-national Development Planning framework includes elements of gender sensitive disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management.
- 3.11 There is strong collaboration between government and CSOs/NGOs working on gender equality through the Gender and Protection Cluster (GPC). There are currently over 20 members of the GPC including government agencies, national

NGOs, INGOs, and UN Agencies. DWA is the lead agency; CARE and Save the Children are co-leads. In the past five years, technical assistance has also been provided to DWA and the GPC by UNDP and is currently being provided by UN Women and Australia Assists. Assessment forms used by the GPC and other agencies involved in disaster response are inclusive and based on Global Protection Cluster standards. At the evacuation centres in Penama and Sanma Provinces, the GPC advocated for the rights of women, girls and people living with disabilities during the two Ambae evacuations in 2017 and 2018. Information, education and communications materials including the rights of evacuees, referral pathways and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) were also developed and socialised within affected communities and responders during the Ambae, Ambrym and TC Oma responses.

- 3.12 Following the Council of Minister's Decision (August 2, 2018), people living with disabilities were evacuated from Ambae (Penama Province) to Luganville (Sanma Province), where they could access specialized services during the Ambae State of Emergency. To respond to their needs, the first ever joint Cluster in Vanuatu was activated (Gender and Protection and Health), to provide and facilitate services including shelter, health, food, WASH, assistive devices and psycho-social support for a period of three months. Over 50% of these evacuees were women and children. The joint Gender and Protection and Health Cluster was able to provide this response due to support from the National Disaster Management Office, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and strong collaboration with partners across government, NGOs, private sector and communities.
- 3.13 To address gender-based violence and child protection issues during disasters, workshops on appropriate responses were held with faith leaders during the Ambae response in 2018.
- 3.14 Vanuatu Christian Council, as part of their advocacy on gender in disaster response have a sub-working group, through an Act for Peace program which promotes gender equality in emergency response through churches.
- 3.15 During the Ambae response, some evacuation centers which were accessible for people living with disabilities were established.
- 3.16 UNICEF trained government and NGO service providers to provide psycho social support within evacuation centres and communities faced by displacement during the Ambae response.
- 3.17 UNFPA provided 1,000 dignity kits to displaced women and girls from Ambae to assist with menstrual hygiene, sanitation and daily needs.
- 3.18 Oxfam's cash transfer program assisted displaced members of Ambae Island communities, now living in Santo (and their host communities) prioritizing people living with disabilities to receive assistance first.

- 3.19 Vanuatu Women’s Centre has counselling centres in all provinces of Vanuatu to assist survivors of gender based and other forms of violence with services including counselling, legal, referral and rehabilitation support. VWC also provides awareness raising to communities (including women, men, girls and boys) on eliminating violence against women and girls. During the Ambae emergency and resettlement phases, VWC provided services in evacuation centres and displacement sites in the islands of Ambae, Maewo and Santo.
- 3.20 Counselling centres established by Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA), in the provinces of Sanma and Tafea, provide support on sexual reproductive health, access to justice in emergencies and recovery and services to women displaced/affected by disasters and girls forced into dropping out of school or coerced into early marriage and/or engaging in commercial or transactional sex.
- 3.21 CARE’s programs on women’s leadership in emergencies in Ambae and Maewo (targeting both host communities and Ambae evacuees) focussed on confidence building and self-esteem; building an understanding of the humanitarian system, the different agencies providing support and how to access it; rights and entitlements including PSEA policies of INGOs and the Government; and response services for those experiencing gender -based violence. CARE also trained Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) and promoted women’s equal representation on these committees.

Humanitarian Crisis

YES NO

- 4.1 Vanuatu is the worlds most at risk country to natural disasters. It has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence and is at the bottom globally in relation to women’s political participation in parliament and ministerial level. Women face many barriers to participating in decision making from the national to community level and they are largely left out of the chief system of informal governance. These issues are exacerbated and affect women and girls even more so during times of humanitarian crisis. Due to climate change, the geographical location of Vanuatu and presence of geo-hazards, Vanuatu has been affected by two large-scale disasters in the past 5 years – Tropical Cyclone Pam (2015) affected 188,000 people across 6 provinces and the Ambae Lombenben Volcano eruptions (2017-2018) caused the displacement and resettlement of 11,000 people from Ambae to multiple islands. In the past 5 years, Vanuatu has also faced multiple earthquakes, cyclones, floods, other volcanic eruptions and tsunamis; causing damage across the country and heightening the vulnerability of women, children and other marginalized groups.
- 4.2 Gaps in human resources in government departments and turnover due to lack of permanent positions affect key sectors involved in humanitarian response in the Government led cluster system. The Department of Women’s Affairs leads

the Gender and Protection Cluster (GPC). The wider GPC also includes three (3) sub-clusters - Gender Based Violence (led by DWA) Child Protection (led by MJCS Child Desk) and Disability Inclusion (led by MJCS Disability Desk). Due to the cross cutting nature of gender, protection and social inclusion, emergencies cause the regular development work of the Department and its counterparts working in GBV, child protection and disability inclusion to be disrupted as staff are engaged in coordinating and implementing response. This was experienced in the two Ambae evacuations for example, where nine (9) out of twelve (12) staff from DWA and six (6) staff from MJCS were deployed to respond in different phases for periods ranging from 1 week to 3 months. These deployments affected ongoing work in humanitarian and other gender equality and social inclusion programs such as the development of a national gender mainstreaming framework and decentralisation of development service delivery to the provincial level.

- 4.3 However, humanitarian crises have also led to opportunities for the Vanuatu Government, NGOs, private sector, donors, civil society, churches, chiefs and communities to work together in responding to critical needs. The work undertaken in risk reduction, preparedness, response, recovery and resilience has allowed staff to strengthen their capacity and systems for responding to gender, protection and social inclusion issues. This has also assisted in building relationships across sectoral response and leveraging entry points for gender mainstreaming.
- 4.4 As the main care givers and providers of household work in Vanuatu, women are most affected by destruction to food, water sources and shelter as a result of climate change and natural disasters. They are also the most affected by lack of access to land during times of non-disaster, disaster and resettlement phases. The pressures of displacement and resettlement can lead to an increase in gender based violence and other forms of violence against women and girls, trauma, and loss of safeguards of land, shelter and income. The risk of rise in transactional sex work and early and forced marriages of women and girls has also been identified during protection monitoring. In this context, the Gender and Protection Cluster has been able to work with communities in the preparedness, evacuation, displacement and resettlement phases to raise awareness of women's leadership, rights of evacuees, child protection, violence prevention and referral pathways for survivors of gender based violence. This links in with work being undertaken in the development sector on the elimination of violence against women and girls.
- 4.5 In the case of the Ambae evacuation, church and community leaders were trained in community based disaster risk management, community based protection and peace-building by Vanuatu Christian Council and Act for Peace. They also received training in responding to family violence and child protection.

- 4.6 During the response to the Ambrym Volcanic Eruption and Earthquake (2018-2019), Vanuatu Red Cross Society also raised awareness on gender equality, sexual gender based violence, child protection and referral pathways.
- 4.7 Ongoing disasters and the need for preparedness and resilience has also allowed the voice, representation and leadership of women on Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees and Women's Groups, facilitating their participation in decisions over agriculture, food security and climate adaptation. These initiatives have increased women's agency across the humanitarian-development spectrum and had wider benefits for example, women's contribution to community disaster plans has demonstrated inclusive practices of ensuring resources are distributed fairly.

Top five priorities in the coming five years

Consultations with communities and partners have identified the below areas as priorities. However, the DWA review of the National Gender Equality Policy in September 2019 will further refine priority areas for the next five years.

- Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls
 - Eliminating violence against women and girls
 - Political participation and representation
 - Gender-responsive budgeting
 - Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building
- 5.1 The Government will continue to promote gender responsive planning and budgeting across national policies and programming as per the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030), will develop a national gender guideline and advocate for a greater amount of the national budget to be allocated towards addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- 5.2 The Government, in consolidating its progress in promoting gender equality will review the national machinery, the National Gender Equality Policy and its implementation frameworks at the national and sub- national levels.
- 5.3 There will be more training for women in business.
- 5.4 Scoping will be undertaken on developing relevant gender-specific courses at the Emalus Campus (University of the South Pacific) in Port Vila.
- 5.5 There will be a focus on improving women's access to finance to enhance economic development in rural and urban areas.
- 5.6 A National Framework on eliminating violence against women and girls (EVAWG) will be established. This will address the EVAWG in both development and humanitarian settings.

- 5.7 Inclusive referral pathways for all EVAWG services (including counselling, health, police, justice, NGOs) will be strengthened, protocols will be developed; prevention, response and access to justice programs will be increased and work will continue on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). These initiatives will be undertaken in partnership with Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti, funded by the Australian Government; in partnership with UN Women under the New Zealand Government funded Pacific Partnership and in partnership with other government ministries and UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women under the European Union funded Spotlight initiative.
- 5.8 Training will be conducted for health care providers, police and justice sectors in identifying and supporting women who experience sexual and physical violence, including clinical management of sexual violence.
- 5.9 There will be a continuance of programs that aim to change the behaviour of men and promote healthy relationships among diverse girls and boys (e.g. World Vision’s Men’s Behavioural Change and *‘Vanuatu Rispek’* campaign; CARE’s *‘Good Relationships Free from Violence’* Program and Vanuatu Women’s Centre *‘Male Advocacy Program’*).
- 5.10 The Government will explore increased support services for women and children victims of gender-based violence; including increasing the number of doctors with authority to verify/deal with incidents of sexual violence; and increasing resource allocations to the Family Protection Unit of the Police.
- 5.11 Led by DWA, efforts will be made to promote a unified approach between the Government and CSOs in working to end violence against women and girls.
- 5.12 A constitutional review will be undertaken to instigate political party reforms aimed at ensuring a percentage of women are nominated by political parties to contest parliamentary elections.
- 5.13 Continued efforts will be made to promote women’s leadership in decision making at all levels – national, provincial, municipalities, churches, and communities.
- 5.14 The Government is committed to increasing gender equality advocacy at all levels.
- 5.15 There will be continuing focus to empower women working in the informal sector, including training to set up small businesses, climate smart agricultural practices and food security
- 5.16 The Government of Vanuatu will monitor implementation of gender responsive policies, legislation and programs that include areas of gender responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building.
- 5.17 Over the next 5 years, efforts will be made to work with Government policy makers, partners and donors to advocate for development and humanitarian

programs to include gender responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience elements. This also requires actions, indicators and budgets to address gender, protection and social inclusion

- 5.18 The Government of Vanuatu will work with key disaster risk reduction and resilience programs such as the Australian Government funded Disaster Ready and Australia Pacific Climate Change Partnership, European Commission funded Green Climate Fund and UNDP funded Pacific Resilience Governance Program to increase gender, protection and social inclusion elements. This includes programs targeting women's leadership in resilience and disaster risk reduction, increasing the evidence base across sectors for gender responsive initiatives, training of policy makers and community members to develop gender responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience budgets; and strategies to ensure that gender, protection and social inclusion is mainstreamed across policies, programs and legislation of other sectors.
- 5.19 The Government of Vanuatu will work with churches and other partners to map all evacuation centres, including identifying risks against women and girls and areas to be addressed for disability inclusion. The Government of Vanuatu will also work with church partners on the theology of DRM to raise awareness in communities about disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience.
- 5.20 Government of Vanuatu will work with partners to ensure that all citizens are registered and have a valid national ID card to 1) provide an accurate and ethical information and evidence base for authorities and service providers and 2) ensure adequate delivery of services and support to all displaced and host populations and prioritisation of assistance to the most vulnerable as a disaster preparedness measure.
- 5.21 Strengthening decentralisation will be undertaken across ministries to ensure that each province has gender responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building elements in their 5 year Provincial Strategies and Provincial Disaster Plans.
- 5.22 In alignment with the Vanuatu Agricultural Sector Policy 2015 – 2030, work will be undertaken to empower and train women to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change in their agricultural practices for household consumption and small business.

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Inclusive development, shared prosperity & decent work

- ☑ Strengthened / enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation
- ☑ Introduced / strengthened gender-responsive active labor market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)
- ☑ Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace
- ☑ Improved financial inclusion and access to credit, including for self-employed women
- ☑ Supported transition from informal to formal work, including legal and policy measures that benefit women in informal employment

- 6.1 Laws and workplace policies were strengthened and enforced to prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and promote equal pay.
- 6.2 The Vanuatu Public Service Commission has for the first time appointed two (2) female Director Generals – they work in the Ministry for Internal Affairs and the Ministry for Justice and Community Services. In total eight (8) women were appointed as Directors (Departments of Finance, Environment, Women’s Affairs, Geo Hazards, Labour, Tertiary Education, Bio-Security and Civil Aviation). These women were appointed with their 35 male counterparts by merits that qualified them for the posts. The newly appointed female Commissioner for Labour who is in charge of implementing the National Employment Act has recently conducted a review of the Act and advocates strongly on the above issues. As of 2016, 48% of women are employed in the service sector and 17% in the industry sector. The first female Ni Vanuatu (as opposed to an expatriate) was appointed as a Supreme Court Judge in May 2019.
- 6.3 Gender-responsive active labour market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies) were introduced and strengthened.
- 6.4 The Markets 4 Change (M4C) is a UN Women regional project in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which works with the Government, the Local Authorities and Market Vendors’ Associations to promote women’s economic empowerment and strengthen the capacity of women who sell food produce at the markets. Through the M4C Project, market vendors’ associations have been established to represent the interest of market vendors with local government authorities and

market management for example the Northern Islands Market Vendors Association in Sanma Province now has more than 3,000 members. As a result of this program, in Sanma province, about 50% of women have now opened bank accounts with the National Bank of Vanuatu and make weekly savings/contributions to the National Provident Fund. Women have been able to invest in capital goods (e.g. some women have been able to purchase a transport vehicle after being able to access a bank loan).

- 6.5 The Vanuatu Skills Partnership Program has helped women in Sanma to up-skill their hat weaving skills and now they have customers in Port Vila and can export hats overseas.
- 6.6 The Vanuatu Skills Partnership program also up-skills rural women, including women with disabilities. For example, there are currently two women with a disability taking the lead in weaving and selling of handicrafts in Torba Province.
- 6.7 Vanuatu women also participate in seasonal work in Australia and New Zealand, which is Government supported. The Commissioner of Labour is exploring collaborations with productive sectors to provide continued employment for workers who return to Vanuatu, especially women in rural areas.
- 6.8 Rural Training Centers provide technical training and up-skill high school dropouts and other interested individuals, especially women in rural areas.
- 6.9 The Employment Act (1983) has been amended and prohibits sexual discrimination. The Government and private sector have codes of conduct addressing sexual harassment. The Public Service Commission is also looking into dealing with instances of extra marital affairs within and outside the public service.
- 6.10 The Reserve Bank of Vanuatu has developed a National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2018-2023) that provides a road map for the financial inclusion journey with the ultimate aim of improving access to and usage of appropriate financial services by the underserved adult population and micro small and medium sizes enterprises (MSMEs) in Vanuatu. In 2016, at the Alliance for Financial Inclusion Global Policy Forum (in Fiji) Vanuatu joined other countries in agreeing to work towards addressing the gender gap in financial inclusion. Data currently shows that in Vanuatu, only 37% of adults aged 15 years and over have a commercial bank account, while another 10% access financial services from other formal providers such as credit unions, microfinance, insurance, mobile money or finance companies. Furthermore, 32% of adults are excluded from both formal and informal financial services.
- 6.11 It is expected that by 2023 an additional 54,000 adults will be active users of formal or semi-formal financial services, of which 50% will be women. There will be a need to ensure a suite of MSME business financing products are available, which are tailored to the needs of businesses led by women and youth. Currently

in Vanuatu, 60% of MSMEs are owned by men, followed by 20% women, 12% are within the youth category and 8% other category such as shareholders, business associates and family entrepreneurs. Currently, VANWODS also provides credit to people with disabilities.

- 6.12 More and more women are buying land in Efate (Port Vila) and Luganville (Santo). Even women on low incomes and women in the informal sector are saving to purchase land. However, despite amendments to the Land Reform Act, women still face barriers in access and ownership.
- 6.13 Some women in the informal sector are yet to see the significance and relevance in transitioning to formal work. Some working in the informal sector also prefer diversifying and enlarging their business. For example, UN Women's M4C Project participants, women working in handicrafts, and women in flower selling associations use their profits to diversify into other forms of businesses such as public transport ownership or rental houses. This is also the case with seasonal workers, who have returned from overseas to start businesses.

Recognizing/reducing/redistributing unpaid care and domestic work and promoting work-family conciliation

- 7.1 The Employment Act has been amended to provide for paternity leave. However, challenges remain - maternity leave is not always fully paid and domestic work is poorly paid (often below minimum wage) with no paid superannuation. Women who are pregnant are often laid off from employment. In 2018, the National Provident Fund held a meeting with all government agencies and the general public to emphasise their commitment to enforce the Vanuatu National Provident Fund (VNPF) Act especially concerning domestic workers (mostly cleaners, nannies and cooks employed by households). This includes paying minimum wage and VNPF benefits.
- 7.2 The Department of Energy/Vanuatu Rural Electrification Program in partnership with Pacific Communication Solutions is providing a lower electricity rate to people living with a disability. The Department of Water and Wash Cluster has also helped improve water access and proper sanitation to homes.
- 7.3 NGO partners such as ADRA, CARE, Oxfam, World Vision and VWC are delivering gender equality programs which emphasise the importance of and encourage the participation of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work.

Austerity Measures

8. YES NO

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

- ☑ Promoted poor women's access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures
 - ☑ Supported women's entrepreneurship and business development activities
 - ☑ Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)
 - ☑ Introduced/strengthened low-cost legal services for women living in poverty
- 9.1 The Government promoted poor women's access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures in the past five (5) years.
 - 9.2 The seasonal workers programs (Australia Seasonal Worker Program, and New Zealand Recognized Seasonal Employer Scheme) have provided unemployed women both in rural and urban centres (Port Vila and Santo) with access to income.
 - 9.3 Other training programs such as those provided by UN Women's M4C Project, Vanuatu Skills Partnership, Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, VANWODS, and community owned Rural Training Centres (RTCs) have up-skilled women to find employment and establish small businesses.
 - 9.4 Vocational life skills programs through Vanuatu Youth Council, Youth Challenge and through churches are supporting women who have employment.
 - 9.5 The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) and the Public Solicitor's Office provide cash to their clients in need. VWC has a lawyer on staff that provides free legal aid in their Port Vila office and can be contacted through their help line across the country.

Improving access to social protection for women & girls

- ☑ Introduced or strengthened unconditional cash transfers
- 10.1 In the Ambae Cash Transfer Response, where over 2,769 evacuee and host families received cash assistance (over 13,000 individuals in total); families were given the choice to nominate who in the family should receive the cash transfer. The majority of recipients of the cash transfer program were ultimately women (58%). The majority of cash transfer staff implementing and leading the

operation were also female. The Ambae Cash Transfer Response was implemented by Oxfam in partnership with Department of Local Authorities, Sanma Provincial Government, Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association, Vanuatu Red Cross Society, ANZ and NBV Banks and funded by the New Zealand Government and the Cargill Foundation of the United States.

- 10.2 The Vanuatu National Cash and Voucher Assistance Feasibility Study was conducted by Oxfam in 2018 (funded through the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Program) and a recommendation in the Report is to include gender and protection analysis to mitigate risks in cash transfer programs (CTP). The Study recommends that "a gender and protection analysis is required before implementing CTP in Vanuatu and should be integrated into all needs and market assessments to ensure the correct approach is taken in light of the context and program. The assessment results present a complex picture (notably, differing preferences for male or female recipients, and the prevalence of gender-based violence), so the household recipient of the CTP should not be automatically assumed".
- 10.3 Female vendors and recipients were dominant in Oxfam's most recent cash transfer program innovations pilot to test the delivery of smart vouchers using block chain technology; "UnBlocked Cash". Out of the 28 vendors trained on the use of a smartphone application to accept smart voucher payments, 21 were women. As a secondary objective, the program focused on meeting the needs of marginalised members of the community – the majority of who are typically female widows and single mothers. In total, 81% of the recipients enrolled in the pilot were women.

Improving health outcomes for women & girls

- Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services
 - Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, mental, maternal health and HIV services
 - Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns
 - Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers
 - Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programmes
- 11.1 The focus has been on ensuring women experience pregnancy and child birth without suffering injury or losing their lives. This includes developing and implementing clear referral guidelines and protocols to improve management of services to pregnant women and deliveries within the health system.

- 11.2 Efforts are being made to ensure that all women including those who live in rural areas and teenage girls can access quality of antenatal intrapartum, post-natal and neonatal care.
- 11.3 The Government has established antenatal clinics, obstetrics and referral services in all provinces.
- 11.4 The Government has established a training institution to build midwifery skills for nurses in an effort to strengthen the quality of antenatal and post-natal care services and meet the high demand for women who need health services.
- 11.5 The Government has provided trainings on family planning for health providers to ensure all products; services and information are available in all health facilities for women and teenage girls to access.
- 11.6 Cervical screening is available in all health facilities for young girls and women.
- 11.7 The HPV vaccine is given out in schools for all girls age 10 -12 years.
- 11.8 Early new born care training has been rolled out in Lenakel Hospital in Tanna Province, Northern District Hospital in Sanma Province and Vila Central Hospital in Shefa Province. These trainings will continue to be rolled out to ensure good quality practices are implemented in all delivery rooms reducing the risk of neonatal deaths.
- 11.9 Prevention of Mother to Child Transmissions (PMTCT) training has been rolled out in the provinces to provide a good quality care of clinical procedures performed by health workers to prevent the spread of HIV from mother to child.
- 11.10 HIV and STI treatment is also available in the provinces to halt the spread of HIV and reduce the prevalence of STIs, and improve the quality of life of people living with HIV in Vanuatu. Duo-testing for HIV & STIs is performed in health facilities, including counselling and testing to make sure all men and women get tested and treated. Integration of HIV and STI programmes within reproductive health services has been established to ensure HIV positive women have access to family planning and antenatal care.
- 11.11 Gender awareness for health workers in the provinces is also a part of the gender based violence training package being rolled out to ensure that people in communities have the right information to stop gender based violence. In addition, the training will ensure that quality care in hospitals or health centres is provided and a well-structured referral system is followed.
- 11.12 Adolescent training has been rolled out in the provinces targeting youth aged 13 years and above to support a better understanding of sexuality and sexual reproductive health so that they are able to make informed decisions and access essential health products when and where they need them.

Improving education outcomes for women & girls

- ☑ Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes
- ☑ Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education
- ☑ Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals
- ☑ Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls
- ☑ Increased access to skills and training in new and emerging fields, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and digital fluency and literacy
- ☑ Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene management especially in schools and other education/training settings
- ☑ Strengthened measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to enable adolescent girls to continue their education in the case of pregnancy and/or motherhood

12.1 Currently the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) within the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) is coordinating an ongoing project centred on strengthening the implementation of Family Life Education (FLE), which promotes human rights and gender equality in schools and communities.

12.2 Under the current curriculum reform, Family Life Education (FLE) is a stand-alone subject for Years 11 to 13, however the syllabus and the Teacher Guide are still under development and in the process of finalization. The quality assurance is being done by the EQAP/SPC team in order to align all senior secondary syllabi with the regional standards. Inputs from UNFPA are assisting in ensuring that the FLE curricula are aligned to international standards. The Year 11 FLE syllabus will be implemented in schools in 2020. At the Junior Secondary level, FLE is not a stand-alone subject but incorporated in the 'Health and Physical Education' (HPE) syllabus (yet to be developed). FLE components are included in the 'Living in our Community' Years 1 to 3 syllabus and in the 'Science and Health' Years 4 to 6 syllabus. Year 1 to 4 Teacher Guides are already in schools and CDU is currently developing the Year 5 Teacher's Guide.

12.3 MoET is making efforts to implement the National Inclusive Education Policy, DWA National Gender Equality Policy and MoET Child Safeguarding Policy 2017. As part of the implementation plans of these policies, awareness campaigns are ongoing in schools and communities.

12.4 MoET acknowledges that a healthy child in school survives through all levels of schooling. MoET has collaborated with UNICEF, Live & Learn and other

stakeholders to raise awareness on the importance of health and hygiene especially with specific consideration to girls. Other initiatives being considered:

- Schools have at least one bathroom with a shower, have doors that can be locked from inside, and good lighting so girls and female teachers feel safe and are confident attending school because they know that they are able to manage their menstruation needs throughout the day.
- While hygiene and menstrual hygiene are taught in the classroom as part of lessons there is still a need to have a “girl talk” so female teachers can talk to girls more about what happens when they menstruate and the best way to manage that in school, including disposal of sanitary pads. If girls are not being taught about menstrual hygiene management at home due to cultural sensitivity, female teachers are able to fill this knowledge gap in school.
- More awareness and sensitization is being conducted with male teachers so they are confident in talking about menstrual hygiene management in the classroom with their students, and are able to understand the challenges faced by female students who may be menstruating.
- Provision of sanitary pads in schools is being explored so girls do not have to be sent home and miss their classes.

12.5 All surveys carried out to update health and sanitation facilities in schools are also available and updated on the Open VEMIS database of MoET. This allows the MoET senior management to make informed decisions to provide assistance to schools with specific needs.

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

- ☑ Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape
 - ☑ Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. cyber violence, online stalking)
- 13.1 Revisions to the Penal Code Amendment Act No 15 of 2016 have resulted in the increase of penalties for all sexual offences. This was the result of a consultation of multi-stakeholders, including the Department of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Public Prosecutor's Office, Family Protection Unit of the Vanuatu Police Force, the Vanuatu Women's Centre and the Vanuatu Correctional Services Department. The amendment increases the sentencing for the crimes of abduction and incest.
- 13.2 Provisions for victim support in the Public Prosecutor's Office afford a greater responsibility on the part of Government to support victims rather than depend on NGOs to provide services. A specialised unit will be established in 2019.
- 13.3 The Bill for The Cybercrime Act (2015) makes pornography, child pornography, solicitation of children and cyber stalking punishable crimes

Prioritized actions in the last five years to address violence against women & girls

- ☑ Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation
- ☑ Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including for femicide cases)
- ☑ Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counselling, housing)
- ☑ Introduced or strengthened strategies to prevent violence against women and girls (e.g. in the education sector, in the media, community mobilization, work with men and boys)
- ☑ Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including regarding particular groups of women and girls

☑ Introduced or strengthened measures for improving the understanding of causes and consequences of violence against women among those responsible for implementing measures on ending violence against women and girls

14.1 The work of advancing women's rights remains a priority for Government and includes the ongoing implementation of the NGEF (2015-2019) and the Annual 16 Days of Activism Campaign (conducted since 2010) through strategic partnership with national and international NGOs, UN agencies and key funding support from Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti (SRBJS). Furthermore, DWA in partnership with Vanuatu Women's Centre has enabled trainings of island Council of Chiefs on sexual and gender-based violence among others.

14.2 A Comprehensive Violence against Women, Children, Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups Training Manual for Health Care Professionals and Participants Guide was developed in 2017. In addition, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has endorsed the Gender Based Violence Training Guidelines and Comprehensive Participants Guidebook for Health Workers. In partnership with Vanuatu Women's Center, the Ministry of Health (MoH) is carrying out GBV training for health workers. MoH has also established a Gender-Desk Officer role within the Ministry. Additionally, the Police training program also includes modules on responding to sexual and gender-based violence and key issues around the rights of victims and suspects. Trainings on the Convention against Torture and the UN minimum standards on places of detention have been provided by OHCHR, SPC RRRT and the ICRC.

14.3 The Government continues its efforts in addressing violence against women and girls in both the Family Protection Act (FPA) and the Penal Code Act (PCA). To strengthen the implementation of the FPA in 2017, Government has appointed Registered Counsellors (RCs) and Authorized Persons (APs). Further, ongoing awareness on sexual and gender-based violence continues through various initiatives such as the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, as well as the development of comprehensive guidelines for responding to violence against women, children and marginalized groups in Vanuatu. Training of trainers and training for health-care service providers in the provinces on gender-based violence also continues. The FPA provides protective measures and a legal framework for all women including those in rural areas. In partnership with women's NGOs, women in rural areas have access to the Vanuatu Women's Centre. The APs and RCs appointed in rural areas provide support and access to protection from domestic violence. Women with disabilities also have access to protection orders, counselling services, education, rights awareness and access to the referral system.

14.4 Further training on handling of cases of domestic violence and human rights for police officers has also been conducted. More than 50% of police officers have attended human rights training in Port Vila and Santo. These trainings by OHCHR

and SPC RRRT include training for magistrates. The Vanuatu Police Force (VPF) has a long-term commitment to developing short, mid-term and long-term strategies to address issues of domestic violence. The Family Protection Unit (FPU) is a very important part of services that the VPF provides to women experiencing violence

- 14.5 Vanuatu's courts continue to issue protection orders and penalties under the FPA.
- 14.6 Vanuatu Women's Centre Committees Against Violence Against Women (CAVAWs) program supports women in communities with little or no access to formal services by strengthening informal support networks, for instance, training members of the community to deliver basic counselling and legal aid and to facilitate referrals. A review found that CAVAWs play a vital role in increasing women's access to support services and access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Vanuatu, including provision of basic psychosocial and legal counselling.
- 14.7 The health sector is institutionalising referral protocols and priority pathways for women and children to access medical services without waiting for long periods. VWC is working with health professionals to provide training. VWC's long-term aim is for all health professionals to respond immediately, appropriately and sensitively to cases of VAWG. VWC will also advocate with the nursing school to accept regular annual sessions from VWC, and for curriculum change.
- 14.8 INGO partners are implementing various violence prevention initiatives including CARE's *'Good Relationships Free from Violence'*, World Visions *'Vanuatu Rispek'* campaign, Vanuatu Women's Centre's *'Male Advocacy Program'*, ADRA and VWC's prevention work with churches, to name a few. Community mobilisation has been a key focus of work and the Stanap Strong Akensem Vaelens Campaign is engaging with key religious, political leaders and women's rights leaders on issues related to gender based violence. Through events like film screening and candlelight marches and products such as posters, t-shirts and caps; key messages on gender equality and ending violence against women are reaching approximately 38,000 people.

Strategies used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls

- Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviours
- Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexuality education
- Perpetrator programmes

- 15.1 DWA conducts an annual awareness campaign on the Family Protection Act during the 16 Days of Activism. Activities include visits to communities to raise awareness on the Act as well as conducting training for Authorised Persons (APs) and Registered Counsellors (RCs). In 2017 for example, 1,000 posters were printed, 19,000 stickers and 400 shirts were distributed throughout the Campaign raising awareness and visibility on combating harmful cultural practices.
- 15.2 *'Good Relationships Free From Violence'* training is run as part of CARE International's *Leftemap Sista* (lifting up our women and girls) project. The project engages men and boys and women and girls between the ages of 15 and 25 to build practical skills essential for good relationships such as non-violent communication, negotiation and conflict resolution, and family planning. The training contains modules that address the broader drivers of violence against women, aiming to transform understandings of gender norms and roles and encourage equality in power relations and distribution of resources between genders. The training also reinforces links between response service providers and community actors such as Vanuatu Women's Centre and the CAVAW network, the Family Protection Unit, Vanuatu Family Health Association and Ministry of Health staff through co-delivery of modules.
- 15.3 Vanuatu Women's Centre targets primary and secondary schools, particularly for Children's Day activities to raise awareness on issues related to gender-based violence. VWC also works with provincial authorities such as the Provincial Education Officers and Zone Curriculum Advisors, as well as the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE) with the aim of having annual sessions with teacher trainees, to increase the reach of VWC's impact on eliminating violence against women.
- 15.4 Faith based organisations, including Vanuatu Christian Council (VCC) members such as the Anglican, Presbyterian and Seventh Day Adventist Churches, as well as churches that do not come under the VCC umbrella, such as the Neil Thomas Ministry (NTM), in collaboration with organisations like Vanuatu Women's Centre and CARE are beginning to institutionalise commitments to eliminating violence against women and girls.

Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology

Introduced or strengthened legislation and regulatory provisions

- 16.1 The Bill for the Cybercrime Act (2015) makes pornography, child pornography, solicitation of children and cyber stalking punishable crimes with the following penalties:
- Child pornography - is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT2, 000, 000, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years, or both. A

body corporate who commits an offence is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT10, 000, 000.

- Pornography - is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT1, 000 000, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years, or both. A body corporate who commits an offence is liable on conviction to a fine of VT3, 000, 000.
- Solicitation of children: A person who uses an electronic system to propose to a child to meet him or her with the intention to sexually exploit the child, whether or not such proposal has been followed by material acts, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT2, 000, 000, or to a term of imprisonment of 5 years, or both.
- Cyber stalking: is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT1, 000, 000, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years, or both. A body corporate who commits an offence is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding VT1, 000, 000.

Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls facilitated by media

- Enacted, strengthened and enforced legal reforms to combat discrimination and/or gender bias in the media
- Introduced binding regulation for the media, including for advertising
- Supported the media industry to develop voluntary codes of conduct
- Provided training to media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media
- Promoted the participation and leadership of women in the media
- Established or strengthened consumer protection services to receive and review complaints about media content or gender-based discrimination/bias in the media

17.1 The Australian Government funded Women in News and Sports Program is seeing for the first time two (2) Ni-Vanuatu women commentators attending the FIFA Women's World Cup in France.

17.2 There are organisations working in the media space on positive gender equality messages however, there is still work to be done on how women are portrayed in the media, in videos, on billboards and in music.

17.3 As part of International Women's Day celebrations in 2019, the Department of Women's Affairs and CARE partnered with over 40 women and girls, the Australian High Commission, Digicel, Havamu Productions and the music group - The Black Sistaz to make a music video called 'Mama Pasifika - Celebrating Women and Girls'. The music video has the purpose to raise women's voices, opportunities and recognise their achievements in media, politics, sports,

education and business. The video has been aired via Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation and showcased at multiple events around the country

- 17.4 Sista, an online media collective, regularly writes articles and shares stories on violence against women.
- 17.5 Films, media clips and videos (e.g. Signs of a Violent Relationship by CARE) are also used to share key messages on gender equality and eliminating violence against women.
- 17.6 Wan Smol Bag, a development theatre project, funded by Oxfam, the Australian Government and the Government of New Zealand, is also actively involved in challenging harmful gendered social norms that perpetuate violence against women.

Addressing violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination

YES NO

- 18.1 The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) provides its services to all, including, people living with disabilities, those in rural and urban areas and all age groups including adults, youth and children. VWC collects disaggregated data on age and disability. They are witnessing an increasing number of younger women accessing their services.
- 18.2 The Gender and Protection Cluster (GPC) has a strong focus on GBV in emergencies and the GBV Sub Cluster is led by DWA and Vanuatu Women's Centre. The GBV Sub Cluster has undertaken mapping of response services and referral pathways. The Sub Cluster has also developed and disseminated IEC materials on referral pathways and supporting survivors and raised awareness in communities (including men, women, girls, boys, pastors and chiefs) on community based protection and referral pathways.

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Participation, accountability & gender-responsive institutions

- ☑ Reformed constitution, laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at decision-making level, including electoral system reform, adoption of temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets
- ☑ Implemented capacity building, skills development and other measures
- ☑ Encouraged the participation of minority and young women, including through sensitization and mentorship programmes
- ☑ Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigning
- ☑ Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including in appointed and elected positions plans for collection

19.1 In terms of strengthening women's political participation, the Municipalities Amendment Act No. 5 (2015) established a quota system for women competing for seats in local government elections. As a result, there are six (6) women in the Port Vila Municipal Council and five (5) women in the Luganville Municipal Council of which two were appointed as Deputy Mayors. In 2016, for the first time, a female officer was promoted to the position of Inspector and there are a few senior female police officers who have been deployed internationally as part of the UN peacekeeping missions. Moreover, female police officers have 100% access to police operational duties and each year two police officers attend a gender equality training run in partnership with Fiji Women's Crisis Center. In 2019, two (2) out of seven (7) Director Generals and eight (8) out of forty-three (43) Directors of government departments are women. There have also been female political advisors within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

19.2 The Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) acknowledges the support by other partners such as the Australian Government, the New Zealand Government, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, Strem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti (SRBJS), Pacific Leadership Program, UNDP, UN Women, SPC/RRRT, CARE, ActionAid, Youth Challenge, OXFAM and Vanuatu Christian Council towards enhancing the greater participation of women in leadership.

19.3 CARE's pilot '*Young Women's Leadership Program*' is working with 20 young women to develop their leadership skills for gender equality and ending violence

against women and girls. DWA was a key partner in the pilot. The program has been extended to 2020 with a new cohort of 30 young women joining the program.

- 19.4 With support from the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund and UN Women, a 2 year project was implemented by CARE and Save the Children in collaboration with the Department of Women's Affairs. The project focussed on strengthening localisation within the Gender and Protection Cluster and supported coordination between stakeholders who work to increase women's leadership in humanitarian action in Vanuatu. The Project also provided support to women representatives in the Community Disaster Management Committees at Provincial level and shared best practices and lessons learned from Vanuatu with other countries in the region.
- 19.5 UN Women's M4C Project has provided the opportunity to support building the management and leadership skills of executives of three (3) Market Vendors' Associations in Sanma and Shefa Provinces, where the majority of members are women. Executives are now better able to mobilize resources and successfully engage in negotiations. These three (3) Associations have assumed a stronger engagement with market management and are able to advocate for improvement of the market environment and work conditions. The Associations are now formally recognized by local governments, who engage regularly with them on market development and management issues.
- 19.6 DWA has worked with ActionAid and two senior Secondary Schools (Malapoa College and Port Vila Central Secondary School) since 2018 to conduct the '*Gel Pawa Program*' for young female students aimed at allowing a safe space for young girls to raise their voices on issues that matter to them in schools.
- 19.7 The Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS) with support from the Australian Government funded SRBJS has, since 2014, provided ongoing capacity strengthening through the Women in Leadership and Mentoring Program (WiLMP), to over 100 women within the Justice Sector (Vanuatu Police Force, six agencies under MJCS and targeted non-state actors). The WiLMP currently comprises two main components which include Mentoring in Action (MiA) and "Storian tugeta. Leftemap Vois (STLV)" (Storian) lunch hour sessions.
- 19.8 The Vanuatu National Council of Women held its 15th National Conference in May 2018 and launched a women's political group - the "Leleon Vanua Party". Since its launch, the Leleon Vanua Party has been advocating in most of the six (6) provinces for greater participation of women in political leadership. The Ground (Land) and Justice Party has also actively supported the engagement and participation of women in its party processes.
- 19.9 DWA received financial and technical support from the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP), to conduct a gender and leadership training for the women

elected members from Port Vila and Luganville Municipalities. Other Programs included:

- A session on Understanding the Role of Councilors for the Port Vila elected women Councilors (and women in their support networks) was provided through support from the State Law Office in 2015
- An exchange Program for both women and men advocates through the 2016 Councilors' Exchange Program in Port Vila.
- A session on Understanding the Role of Councilors was provided with support from the State Law Office and Adaptive Leadership Training was conducted for the whole Luganville Municipal Council in Sanma Province.
- Support for elected women Councilors was provided through another workshop in 2017 on Leadership and Ethical Decision-making. This workshop was held for all women Councilors in Luganville.
- Other workshops targeted mainly women contestants in the provincial elections, in Tafea and Shefa Provinces. With support from other stakeholders such as the Vanuatu Electoral Office (VEO), DWA facilitated workshops with funding from the Pacific Leadership Program. Whilst the participants were politically endorsed, the actual turn out of women who actually contested was lower than those who were part of the contestant workshop.

19.10 The Luganville Municipality Council Elections (July 2015) in Sanma Province, adopted a new single poll system with provision of reserved seats in each ward for woman receiving the highest number of votes. The high number of female candidates compares favourably with Port Vila where the total number of female candidates for the two polls was only 61 (18 in the general seat and 43 in the reserve seat poll). The results of the election in Sanma produced a council consisting of five (5) women and eight (8) men. One (1) woman occupied the reserve seat in each of the four wards plus one additional woman who was elected by winning one of the highest votes between men and women occupied one of the two non-reserved seats. Having a woman winning a general seat was progress and demonstrated to government and communities, the importance of women's political participation. In a similar case, in Port Vila Municipal Elections (February 2018) five (5) women were elected from each of the five (5) wards and (1) woman won a non-reserved seat. Port Vila Municipal Council currently has six (6) women and 11 men. Area Councils (administrative areas that make up a province) are now also required to have a women's representative under the Decentralisation Act.

19.11 Within Vanuatu there is a formal and informal justice system. The Land Reform Act No. 33 (2013) enables women to participate in decision making processes in cultural/informal justice settings (nakamal) and the Act allows greater participation of women in customary land management. It also allows for male

and female adjudicators for land disputes at community Island Courts and Area Councils' level. However, women still face many cultural and awareness barriers in accessing these rights and owning land.

Increasing women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media

Strengthened the provision of formal and technical vocational education and training (TVET) in media and ICTs, including in areas of management and leadership

20.1 The establishment of Smart Sistas has contributed to assist with annual events supporting women and girls in ICT. The establishment of the Girls in ICT aims to create a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in the growing field of ICT, enabling both girls and technology companies to reap the benefits of greater female participation in the sector. Special annual events have included career talks from female ICT professionals, an ICT Service Provider presentation and hands on training, the selection of ten (10) girls for this year's Smart Sistas Girls ICT Camp and the introduction of the Telecommunications and Radio Broadcasting Regulator Innovative Concept competition for schools and an interactive panel discussion.

20.2 The National Child Online Protection Policy and Strategy was launched in 2018.

20.3 Under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, a national policy on use of ICT for Trade and Marketing was launched on April 24 2018 (ICT Day). This is a website for the Market Handicraft Vendors' Association to market their products online. Women resort owners are also using ICT to manage reservations. For example, in Malampa and Sanma Provinces there is a tourism call centre that supports local operators including women.

20.4 The Government's Universal Access Policy and ICT Policy, has expanded the reach of ICT (including broadband internet access) to rural and remote areas, greatly improving women's access to information. These two policies have been instrumental in paving the way for ICT development

20.5 The Editor of the Vanuatu Daily Post, one of the leading national newspapers is a woman.

20.6 DWA's initiative, '*Femme Radio Station*' (funded by Australian Aid) will be launched in July 2019 and will focus on a range of issues including the role, achievements and challenges facing women across the development to humanitarian spectrum.

20.7 '*Empawa Hour*', a radio show aired as part of the Pacific Mini Games (2017) focussed on promoting gender equality. Organised and managed by the Pacific Games Commission, it broadcasted key messaging around gender equality and eliminating violence against women and girls during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign.

Tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women

YES NO

- 21.1 In Cabinet Decision 94 of 2017, the Government endorsed through the Council of Ministers a decision to promote gender responsive planning and budgeting (GRB) in five ministries: Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Internal Affairs (Department of Local Authorities including Municipalities and Provincial Government). Further, the National Gender Equality Policy identifies reducing domestic and gender based violence; enhancing women’s economic empowerment; promoting women’s leadership and equal political participation and building a foundation for gender mainstreaming as its four strategic priorities. Moreover, a National Human Resource Plan now makes the recruitment of women in the public sector a priority.
- 21.2 Gender responsive planning and budgeting is a requirement of the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030). Over the last 2 years more government agencies have been prioritising gender equality and social inclusion and this is also a policy direction from the Council of Ministers budget priorities for 2019 – 2021. However, specific and mandatory tracking of national budget allocation to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is not undertaken due in part to lack of understanding, lack of technical guidelines and lack of political will across whole of government.
- 21.3 Currently, approximately VT29,000,000 million of the national budget is received by the Department of Women’s Affairs (DWA) for operations and human resource costs, however less than 5% of this budget is provided for programming. DWA depends entirely on donors to fund their programs.
- 21.4 In 2017, DWA and the Gender and Protection Cluster received AUD 2 million to implement projects for Tropical Cyclone Pam Recovery. However, these funds were then retrieved by the National Recovery Committee due to lack of political will from National Government.
- 21.5 However, through the National Recovery Plan for Ambae and other Islands of Displacement (approved in March 2019), DWA has worked with 13 Ministries to address gender, protection and social inclusion in their recovery programs. In approving the National Recovery Plan, the Council of Ministers also endorsed the requirement for gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) to be addressed in the recovery actions of all sectors. DWA will continue working with these sectors on their budgets for GESI integration in their recovery and resettlement programs. DWA and the GPC are also currently working with the Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination within the Prime Minister’s Office to

include requirements to address GESI within actions, indicators and budgets of project proposal templates, guidelines and appraisal processes across sectors.

Donor country tracking of the proportion of ODA invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women

22.1 Not applicable

National strategy or action plan for gender equality

YES NO

23.1 The Government has increased allocation of financial resources and staffing capacity including increased administrative funds and the appointment of 5 Desk Officers (stationed in the provinces) to DWA in the last 5 years. In 2018, the Prime Minister also opened the newly renovated and improved DWA office. Further, from 2018 the DWA Annual Business Plans have been linked to the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS) Sector Strategy 2018-2021 and the overarching NSDP 2016-2030 (since 2017). Within the DWA Plans and the MJCS Sector Strategy, Government has identified and is supporting priority areas including reducing domestic and gender-based violence, enhancing women's economic empowerment, promoting women's leadership and equal participation; and building a foundation for gender mainstreaming.

23.2 Vanuatu launched its National Gender Equality Policy (NGEP) 2015 – 2019 in November 2016 during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. Its strategic priorities include:

- Reduction of Domestic and Gender Based Violence (including development and humanitarian settings)
- Enhancement of Women's Economic Empowerment
- Promotion of Women's Political Leadership and Decision Making
- Building a Foundation in Gender Mainstreaming (including development climate change, disaster risk reduction and emergency settings).

23.3 There is no specific funding from the government to implement the NGEP.

23.4 The NGEP is aligned to the NSDP pillars as follows:

- SOC 4: Social inclusion
- SOC 6: Strong and effective institutions
- ENV 3: Climate and disaster resilience
- ECO 3: Strengthening rural communities

23.5 The NGEP is aligned to the SDGs as follows:

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- Eliminate all harmful practices
- .Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life. Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

23.6 The National Gender Equality Policy has had no monitoring and evaluation framework and no costed plan. Most gender equality programs of the DWA and implementing partners have been fully funded by donor partners, particularly by the Australian Government and New Zealand Government. The NGEP has been very useful as an advocacy tool for DWA and MJCS to lobby with different sectors for gender equality and social inclusion, to promote understanding and to generate political will to support gender equality with senior government decision-makers. It has also provided clear guidance for NGO and UN agency partners for programming on gender equality

Action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the CEDAW

YES NO

24.1 In 2018, MJCS in collaboration with SPC/RRRT conducted a workshop to look at developing an action plan for the implementation of CEDAW and developing a monitoring tool for CEDAW and CRC implementation. This action plan will be completed in 2019 and will cover CEDAW, CRC, CRPD and ICAT.

24.2 Following on from consultations commenced in 2017, UNOCHA and SPC/RRT will support a further scoping exercise, hosted by the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS) in July 2019 to look at implementation and enforcement of obligations under CEDAW (as part of the development of an independent Human Rights Body for Vanuatu)

National human rights institution

YES NO

- 25.1 In 2014, the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) was appointed by MJCS to co-ordinate and oversees the activities for implementation and reporting of the UN human rights mechanisms (including treaty bodies, the UPR and UN Special Procedures). The NHRC supported the UPR Committee in preparation for the 2nd UPR. The National Human Rights Committee made significant progress in 2017, in assisting with the finalisation of the CRC Report for Vanuatu and is currently working on completing the Initial Periodic Reports for UNCAT and ICCPR. There is still work for the NHRC to do in terms of following up with all ministries and departments to ensure that annual business plans cater for all the recommendations relevant to each ministry and department. The NHRC is located within the MJCS and in 2019; the Vanuatu Government has allocated a working budget for the first time to NHRC to assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate.
- 25.2 A scoping exercise, funded by RRRT/UNOCHA, is planned for July 2019 to follow up on establishing an independent Human Rights Body and will focus on functions and scope and look specifically at roles of implementation and enforcement.

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Peaceful and inclusive societies

Supported inclusive and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, early warning and prevention mechanisms

Other

26.1 The National Gender Equality Policy and National Disability Inclusion Policy include commitments and strategies to address in climate change, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response.

26.2 The Women's Weather Watch program ('Women Wetem Weta') was established with the support from ActionAid Australia and FemLINK Fiji. The Women's Weather Watch is an information communication system that works with a core group of women leaders across Vanuatu, ensuring they have the information they need to help them prepare their communities from an early warning stage. It is a real-time system that utilises bulk SMS to ensure there are clear messages to support women's agency in times of crises, and to better assist women in communities in Vanuatu to access information that is going to affect their health and livelihoods.

26.3 Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (established under the national emergency structure) work closely with NDMO and are supported by a range of NGO partners (including ActionAid, Act for Peace and Vanuatu Christian Council, CARE, Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision) who are all committed to the promotion of gender equality and women's equal participation in CDCCCs.

26.4 The Ambae and Affected Islands Recovery Plan (2019-2022) has a strong gender, protection and social inclusion focus across all sectors. Recovery planning is guided by the principles, priorities and protections outlined in the NSDP (2016-2030), National Gender Equality Policy (2015-2019), National Child Protection Policy (2016-2026) and the National Disability Inclusive Development Policy (2018-2025). The Council of Ministers also endorsed the commitment within the Ambae Recovery Plan that all sectors are required to address gender equity and protection provisions in their actions. Work is continuing between the Department of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DESPAC) and implementing ministries to ensure that gender, protection and social inclusion is addressed in actions, indicators and budgets throughout the implementation of the Recovery Plan.

Increasing leadership, representation and participation of women in humanitarian action

☑ Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level

☑ Integrated a gender perspective in humanitarian action and crisis response

27.1 The Gender and Protection Cluster (GPC) has worked across sectors to build capacity in mainstreaming and integrating gender equality, protection and social inclusion across sectors. The GPC has also developed information, education and communications materials on rights and gender equality, referral pathways and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); deployment packs and codes of conduct for emergency responders. In addition, the GPC has translated global Gender and Protection Cluster guiding notes on mainstreaming into different sectors. Train the Trainer workshops in Gender and Humanitarian Action (GIHA) have been conducted by UN Women for key members of the GPC. GIHA training will also be rolled out for partners in the GPC and other clusters at provincial and national level. The training focusses on localised approaches to gender equality, protection and social inclusion across the humanitarian program cycle.

27.2 A project implemented to increase the voice of women and girls in the humanitarian sector, funded by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund with support from UN Women, has increased the number of women and girls from community, local government and national CSOs who have confidence and skills to participate in emergency preparedness and response efforts. In Tafea and Sanma Provinces 32 female Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee (CDCCC) members have demonstrated increased knowledge and skills to lead humanitarian actions in their communities after attending training on gender and protection in preparedness, relief and response. A total of 57 child members (aged 12-17) of School Disaster Committees have been trained in humanitarian leadership (24 boys and 33 girls). Importantly, men and boys also participated in CDCCC, school and Provincial Disaster Committee trainings; increasing their understandings of gender and protection issues in emergencies. At national level, four CSOs were supported through the project (Vanuatu Women's Centre, Vanuatu Family Health Association, Vanuatu Society for People with Disability and Vanuatu National Council of Youth) to contribute to strengthening localisation of gender, protection and social inclusion in humanitarian action.

27.3 The Disaster Risk Management Bill is currently being revised and will include a requirement for Provincial Disaster Committees (PDCs) to have a Gender and Protection Cluster representative.

27.4 From 2016 there has been a stronger representation of women in all aspects of humanitarian preparedness and response, including consultations, assessments,

and monitoring missions and in some emergencies; women have led operations in the field. This has been due to the tireless advocacy of the GPC under DWA.

- 27.5 The Tsunami Support Plan (2019) and Cyclone Support Plan (2018) produced by NDMO include elements of gender, protection and social inclusion mainstreaming. The NDMO's National Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), finalised in 2019 also includes vulnerability categories such as people living with a disability, single female and male headed households, child headed households, elderly headed households, unaccompanied minors, pregnant and lactating women and widows. The DTM also collects SADDD (sex, age and disability disaggregated data), providing a strong baseline for planning, implementation and monitoring of response and recovery programs.

Enhancing judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls

Increased access of conflict-affected, refugee or displaced women to violence prevention and protection services

Strengthened capacity of security sector institutions on human rights and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse

- 28.1 In the case of the Ambae evacuation in 2018, over 28 church and community leaders were trained in community based disaster risk management, community based protection and peace-building by Vanuatu Christian Council and Act for Peace. Over 140 church leaders, women leaders, chiefs and youth were trained in peace-building, conflict resolution, responding to family violence and child protection through CANDO response (ADRA, World Vision and Penama Agriculture Division). Over 1,097 people were reached through awareness raising on violence prevention and response (406 women, 239 girls, 280 men, 172 boys), 156 clients were assisted with counselling and 21 clients were accompanied to the police by Vanuatu Women's Centre. In addition, 3,905 women and children were reached through increased access to information and awareness on referral pathways and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse through CARE and Save the Children activities.

- 28.2 During the response to the Ambrym Volcanic Eruption and Earthquake (2018-2019), Vanuatu Red Cross Society also raised awareness on sexual gender based violence and referral pathways to 442 households (1,758 people – 851 men, 907 women); 474 households received information on child protection (1,736 people – 832 men, 904 women) and 853 people in the community received awareness in violence reduction. Two gender inclusion, diversity, violence prevention and child protection workshops were also conducted for 29 volunteers from the Ambrym community (12 men, 17 women) involved in response

- 28.3 At the International Criminal Court representative meeting in June 2019, Vanuatu will take lead, on behalf of Pacific Island countries, through Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Ministry of Climate Change and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade to lobby in international fora for a response to climate change.
- 28.4 Through the Authorised Persons (APs) and Registered Councillors (RCs) Program, implemented by Ministry of Justice and Community Services and Department of Women's Affairs, APs and RCs have been trained in understanding the intersection between gender, culture and faith; forms of violence; prevention strategies, referral pathways and providing protection orders for those at risk of harm and survivors of GBV.
- 28.5 Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) trains new recruits to the Vanuatu Police Force and Vanuatu Mobile Force in addressing gender based violence. VWC has also trained frontline health service providers and selected males, (including police officers and pastors) to be advocates for gender equality and EVAWG in development and humanitarian settings.
- 28.6 Through the GPC a referral pathway has been developed for gender-based violence, child protection and disability services in emergency settings.

Eliminating discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child in the last five years

- Tackled disadvantages in health outcomes due to malnutrition, early childbearing (e.g. anaemia) and exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases
 - Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices
 - Promoted girls' awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life
 - Taken measures to combat negative social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girl children
- 29.1 In addressing HIV/AIDS and its impact on women and children and mother-child transmission, the Government has developed and endorsed the HIV/STI National Strategic Plan 2017- 2021. The MoH is in the process of finalizing the Delineation Policy which seeks to address facility and human resources capacities. With the support of Global Fund grants, MoH has been able to implement national TB and Malaria Programs.
- 29.2 The national vaccination program ensures that children are healthy. The Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation is partnering with Save the Children to deliver the HPV vaccine to young girls in Vanuatu in a vital step towards reducing their risk of developing cervical cancer. The remoteness of some islands makes it challenging for health workers to administer vaccines and UNICEF is

piloting an approach with Government, using drones to deliver much needed vaccines to rural and remote areas.

- 29.3 The National Child Protection Policy (NCP, 2016 – 2026) aims to create an environment where children are safe and protected from all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence; and have equitable access to services to support their reintegration and recovery when needed. As part of this policy, research on the situation of child protection in Vanuatu is being undertaken and a Child Online Protection Awareness Strategy is being implemented. Implementation of the NCP is overseen by an interagency National Child Protection Working Group. In addition, it is anticipated that a National Child Protection Bill will be finalised in June 2019.
- 29.4 It is anticipated that the Adoption Bill will be passed in November 2019 which will strengthen and formalize the processes for adoption thereby reducing the risk of child abuse and exploitation.
- 29.5 UNICEF is currently supporting the Ministry of Justice and Community Services Child Desk through funding a Child Protection Officer in Sanma Province. In 2019, UNICEF support will extend to funding 12 Child Protection Officers to be stationed in six (6) provinces for a period of three (3) years; after which these positions will be absorbed into the Government structure. These roles will focus on strategies to prevent and respond to child protection risks and concerns, of which girl children are often the most vulnerable and affected.
- 29.6 The Ministry of Education and Training has developed a Child Safeguarding Policy (2017) which establishes procedures that will be undertaken to meet commitments to child safeguarding including the management of suspected and/or reported cases of child abuse.
- 29.7 Amendments to the Penal Code Act (2016) have increased penalties for incest and rape. Vanuatu now has a maximum sentence of lifetime imprisonment for these offences.
- 29.8 As mentioned earlier there are several programs seeking to challenge harmful gender social norms and promote a life free from violence. For example, CARE has a Good Relationships Free from Violence program for girls and boys and in partnership with Wan Smol Bag has produced a film *Yu No Save Ranwe Lo Lav* on sexual and reproductive health rights for youth/adolescent girls. World Vision's 'Vanuatu Rispek' campaign focusses on healthy relationships and targets adolescent girls and boys. Wan Smol Bag runs programs through their Youth Centre and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) clinic to raise awareness on domestic violence and SRH. A project called Mama's Laef focusses on menstrual hygiene management. ADRA has a school based program focussing on child rights through the lens of family life education. Save the Children also implements a Disaster Risk Reduction in Schools program in Sanma Province.

Section 2: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

- ☑ Supported women's participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance
 - ☑ Strengthened evidence and/or raised awareness about gender-specific environmental and health hazards (e.g. consumer products, technologies, industrial pollution)
 - ☑ Increased women's access to and control over land, water, energy, and other natural resources
 - ☑ Promoted the education of women and girls in science, engineering, technology and other disciplines relating to the natural environment
 - ☑ Enhanced women's access to sustainable time- and labour-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate-smart agricultural technology
 - ☑ Taken measures to protect and preserve the knowledge and practices of women in indigenous and local communities related to traditional medicines, biodiversity and conservation techniques
- 30.1 Research on management of water systems (2016) conducted by the Department of Water and UNICEF showed that nearly 70% of water systems that were still operational after a certain period were in communities that had women as the heads or were financial managers of the community water committees. This research led to the National Water Policy (2017) requirement for representation on water committees to include a minimum of 40% women.
- 30.2 Through the Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP) projects, women have access to training providers which up-skill them to sew home artefacts out of cloth and create reusable materials such as rice bags (to replace plastic bags), toiletry bags, pencil cases for students and so forth. VSP has been sourcing sustainable pandanus and other plants that can be used for traditional weaving as part of women's economic empowerment initiatives.
- 30.3 The Lands Reform Act (2013) has allowed for both men and women to decide on customary land ownership and usage. Decision making processes on land also include the approval of the tribe including women representatives. However, there are still cultural and knowledge barriers to women being able to participate and exercise their rights in land use and ownership.
- 30.4 As discussed earlier the Smart Sistas project is encouraging more women and girls to pursue careers in the ICT industry. The University of the South Pacific's Emalus Campus has signed an MOU to encourage science programs for both women and men especially in environmental science.

- 30.5 The VREP (Vanuatu Rural Electrification Program) has sold subsidised solar lights in rural areas and women are reportedly spending more time on income generation activities and more time with children on homework.
- 30.6 The Traditional Knowledge Act passed in 2018 affords protection of intellectual property especially around women's traditional techniques and other handicrafts.
- 30.7 The Vanuatu Cultural Centre has a women's field workers network that plays an active role in safeguarding biodiversity and safeguarding.

Integrating gender perspectives into DRR, climate resilience and mitigation

- Supported women's participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation policies, programmes and projects
 - Strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of environmental degradation and disasters
 - Promoted access of women in situations of disaster to services such as relief payments, disaster insurance and compensation
 - Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)
- 31.1 From 2014, there has been an increase in the number of women participating in humanitarian response and climate change negotiations. This includes participation in the UN Framework on Climate Change Conference of the Parties delegations and decision making at the national level on gender, climate change adaptation and mitigation, loss and damage, climate finance, traditional knowledge and education and training.
- 31.2 As mentioned earlier, the amendments to the Water Resource Management Act (2016) to include a minimum of 40% women's representation in rural water committees ensures that women's voices are heard in how the community's water sources are used, where they are placed, functionality, safety and security concerns.
- 31.3 The Vanuatu National Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VNAF) – A Guide for Sustainable and Transparent Climate Resilience Investment Decisions was developed in 2017-2018 by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction in collaboration with GIZ and the Green Climate Fund. The VNAF was developed to enable the channelling of finance to people who live in places that are most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. The VNAF is designed to facilitate a more systematic collation and analysis of climate and disaster vulnerability data to effectively inform resilience decision making,

planning, project prioritisation and financial allocation at national and sub-national levels. The VNAF has a large gender equity and social inclusion focus.

31.4 ActionAid, CARE, Save the Children, Act for Peace and Vanuatu Christian Council, World Vision and Oxfam in Vanuatu work to strengthen women's leadership in disaster risk reduction, response and resilience through programs including the Australian Government funded Disaster Ready Program. This includes:

- CARE's work to strengthen women's resilience and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) in Tanna after TC Pam and Maewo after the Ambae Lombenben volcanic eruption. Using the newly released Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Handbook, CARE staff have conducted train the trainer workshops to CDCCCs in Tanna, aiming to assist communities to prepare for disasters and also to train others contributing to locally owned and led disaster preparedness and risk reduction
- ActionAid's response to TC Pam and the establishment of women's information centres in Tanna which evolved into a women's forum called Women I Tok Tugeta (Women Talk Together). This forum engages thousands of women across Tanna, Erromango, and Efate to identify their leadership, participation, protection and disaster risk reduction issues and advocate to government. This project has evolved and is being continued under the Shifting the Power Coalition which focusses on strengthening women's voice and participation in decision making at the community level in Tanna, including awareness on disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in partnership with the Vanuatu Meteorological and Geohazards Department
- ActionAid held a Women-Led Preparedness Planning Workshop in Shefa Province in 2018 involving 52 Woman I Tok Tok Tugeta (WITTT) leaders. The workshop was designed to develop inclusive and comprehensive women-led preparedness and resilience plans. The training included seasonal hazard calendars; collecting and analysing pre-existing information and women's knowledge in disaster preparedness; mapping key risks for communities; identifying the roles and responsibilities of the community and other actors; conducting a vulnerability & capacity assessment; developing a communication plan; and building understanding how the national disaster mechanism works.
- Vanuatu Christian Council is mapping all church evacuation centres in Malampa, Shefa, Sanma and Penama provinces, including a gender equality and social inclusion risk assessment. This is part of preparedness and resilience programming linking in with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) operations.
- A variety of gender, protection and social inclusion trainings have been implemented and resources have been developed including baseline tools developed by Save the Children to gather views on gender equality, disability inclusion and child protection within disaster preparedness. It has been

noted by many community chiefs that this was the first time women and children's views were included in discussions.

- 31.5 As mentioned earlier the draft Ministry of Education and Training Schools Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building Handbook, funded by UNICEF includes gender responsive planning.
- 31.6 As mentioned earlier, UN Women's Markets 4 Change Project has incorporated disaster risk reduction elements into its programming in Shefa and Sanma provinces.

Section 3: National institutions and processes

National machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women

32.1 The national machinery for women in Vanuatu is called the Department of Women's Affairs and it is located under the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS). There are also two specialised desks in MJCS – the National Child Desk and the National Disability Desk. Other Departments under the MJCS are the Department of Correctional Services and statutory bodies of Customary Land Management Office, Lands Ombudsman's Office, the Law Reform Commission Office, the National Cultural Centre and the Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs.

National machinery and SDG implementation

YES NO

33.1 The Department of Women's Affairs has a mandate to promote equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities amongst men and women and to eliminate all forms of discrimination on violence against women and girls. Vanuatu's localised version of the SDGs, the National Sustainable Development Plan focuses on the following;

- SOC 4: Social inclusion
 - Gender responsive planning and budgeting
 - Eliminating all forms of violence against women
- SOC 5: Strong and effective institutions
 - Strengthening national machinery for women and national and sub-national
- ENV 3: Climate and disaster resilience
 - Ensuring women and vulnerable groups during emergencies and their resilience during recovery
- ECO 3: Strengthening rural communities
 - Remote rural women's economic empowerment

Formal mechanisms for different stakeholders to participate Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action SDGs

34 YES NO

Beijing Declaration and Pfa	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil society organizations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women’s rights organizations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academia and think tanks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations Parliaments/parliamentary committees Private sector United Nations system Other actors, please specify.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil society organizations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women’s rights organizations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academia and think tanks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations Parliaments/parliamentary committees Private sector United Nations system Other actors, please specify.....

34b *Mechanisms to ensure women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and their concerns are reflected in these processes*

YES NO

- 34.1 The National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030) is the Vanuatu Government’s version of the SDGs and reflects its commitment to achieving these. Within the Prime Minister’s Office there is a monitoring and evaluation unit that tracks progress towards international and domestic commitments. Progress towards achieving the targets in the NSDP is also reviewed annually, through the work with the community (and reporting) that each Ministry and its NGO partners undertake at the Provincial and National level.
- 34.2 The Gender and Protection Cluster’s mandate is to effectively help communities prepare and respond to disasters through the provision of GBV, child protection and disability inclusion services and to ensure the protection needs of women and other vulnerable groups are identified and referred across sectors. To ensure the voices of women and girls from marginalised groups are including in planning and decision-making processes, there are mechanisms to facilitate diverse representation in assessments, consultations, project planning, implementation and monitoring actions of the GPC. The GPC is led by DWA, with Co- Leads CARE and Save the Children and technical assistance from UN Women. It consists of over 20 government and NGO partners who work closely with marginalised groups and communities and can also raise their concerns in relevant forums. There are also provincial level disaster committees which include representatives of the GPC.
- 34.3 Other decision-making forums that represent the interests of marginalised groups include disabled people’s organisations, committees against violence against women, community disaster and climate change committees and church networks at the village level. Other fora include the National Child Protection Working Group and National Disability Network (under MJCS), Communication with Communities Working Group (under NDMO) and Vanuatu Climate Action Network.

34.4 IoM also undertakes intentions surveys such as those conducted during the Ambae evacuation, resettlement and recovery phases to understand the needs of displaced communities, for planning purposes.

34c *Stakeholders contributing to the preparation of the present national report:*

34.5 All stakeholder partners in the GPC and other gender working groups and networks were invited to the Beijing+ 25 consultations in Sanma and Tafea Provinces, including representatives of communities, government and NGO partners. Government, NGO and CSO partners were invited to the national consultation and validation workshops in Port Vila. All partners were able to report on their programs achievements, challenges and set-backs and also discussed priorities for the next 5 years.

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation

YES NO

35.1 The Society Pillar (SOC) of the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030) specifically seeks to ensure Vanuatu maintains a vibrant cultural identity underpinning a peaceful, just and inclusive society that is supported by responsive and capable institutions, delivering quality services to all citizens.

35.2 SOC 2 seeks an inclusive, equitable and quality education system with life-long learning for all ensuring that every child, regardless of gender, location, educational needs or circumstances has access to the education system.

35.3 SOC 3 aims for a healthy population that enjoys a high quality of physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being ensuring that the population of Vanuatu has equitable access to affordable, quality health care through the fair distribution of facilities that are suitably resourced and equipped.

35.4 SOC 4 aims for an inclusive society which upholds human dignity and where the rights of all Ni-Vanuatu including women, youth, the elderly and vulnerable groups are supported, protected and promoted in our legislation and institutions. This entails:

- SOC 4.1 Implement gender responsive planning and budgeting processes
- SOC 4.2 Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women, children and vulnerable groups
- SOC 4.3 Empower and support people living with disabilities
- SOC 4.4 Define the roles, responsibilities and relationships between the state, churches, traditional leaders and communities in safeguarding human rights and protecting traditional values and Christian principles
- SOC 4.5 Ensure all people, including people living with disabilities, have access to government services, buildings and public spaces

- SOC 4.6 Provide opportunities, support and protection services for youth and children as valued members of society
 - SOC 4.7 Encourage participation in physical activities and develop a safe and inclusive sports system that serves as a vehicle for community cohesion, education, health, leadership and fair play
 - SOC 6 (Strong and effective institutions) - A dynamic public sector with good governance principles and strong institutions delivering the support and services expected by all citizens of Vanuatu.
 - ENV 3 A strong and resilient nation in the face of climate change and disaster risks posed by natural and man-made hazards
 - ECO 3 (Strengthening rural communities) - A strong rural economy that creates opportunities, enables the development of rural communities and increasingly contributes to national prosperity.
- 35.5 The National Gender Equality Policy (2015-2019), a refined version of the National Plan of Action (2006 – 2011) has 4 strategic priorities which are also reflective in the NSDP:
- Reduction of domestic and GBV
 - Enhancement of women’s economic empowerment
 - Promotion of women’s leadership and equal decision making
 - Building a foundation for gender mainstreaming which focuses on strengthening the capacity of DWA as the leading machinery in mainstreaming gender across sectors at national and sub national levels (including development, climate change, disaster risk reduction and emergency settings). It also focuses on developing guidance in gender responsive budgeting and planning.

Section 4: Data and statistics

Top three areas where most progress has been made over the past five years

- ☑ Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- ☑ Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics
- ☑ Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

36.1 The research on the management of water systems conducted by the Department of Water and UNICEF (2016) showed that female headed water committees were functional compared to the ones headed by men. The research report was used to support evidence based decision making to advocate to the Council of Ministers to approve the requirement for Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting in 5 sectors within the Government.

36.2 Assessment data has also supported the PDNA (Post Disaster Needs Assessment) team to plan for recovery following TC Pam and the Ambae Volcanic disaster.

36.3 Many partners have aligned the Social NSDP indicators to their planning. For example, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership working with productive sectors provides data on women in businesses to DWA. Other NGO partners are providing project reports with sex disaggregated data on gender equality programs. During the Ambae operations, Gender and Protection Cluster partners also reported on their activities and numbers of beneficiaries reached through 4Ws.

Top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years

- ☑ Design of laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics
- ☑ Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- ☑ Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g. time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)

37.1 The Vanuatu National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (2016-2020) acknowledges that whilst some government departments report on gender data such as the National Police Force (NPF), Family Protection Unit (FPU), Ministry

of Health and Ministry of Education; there is a gap in mainstreaming the collection of sex, age and disability disaggregated data across ministries. A priority of the next five years is to work with VNSO to develop a framework for data collection which captures gender and social inclusion data to report against the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030) indicators.

- 37.2 The NSDP includes a requirement for gender responsive planning and budgeting. For this to be effectively realised across all government ministries and NGO partners there is a need for sex, age and disability disaggregated baselines, financial allocations for gender equity and social inclusion and monitoring of data to contribute to evidence based planning and implementation of programs.
- 37.3 The first national prevalence study of gender based violence was conducted by the Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) and Vanuatu Women’s Centre in 2009. The first national survey on Women’s Lives and Family Relationships was conducted by the Vanuatu National Statistics Office and Vanuatu Women’s Centre in 2011. Gender based violence was also included as a category in the 2013 Demographic and Health Survey conducted by VNSO, MoH and Secretariat of the Pacific Community. There are plans to undertake studies to establish current prevalence of GBV and other barriers to gender equality and women’s empowerment in the next five years, to support advocacy and the implementation of the NSDP, Gender Equality Policy and other sectoral policies.

National set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs

YES NO

- 38.1 Over 70 indicators but 12 with specific focus on gender in the Society Pillar. These are:
- SOC 4.1.1: Proportion of government departments with gender responsive policies, legislation and programs
 - SOC 4.1.2: Number of decisions in which women participate
 - SOC 4.1.3: Indicators of women’s empowerment
 - SOC 4.2.1: Subjective well-being indicator
 - SOC 4.2.2: Number of reported cases of violence against women, children, and vulnerable people
 - SOC 4.2.3: Percentage of reported cases of violence against women, children, and vulnerable people addressed
 - SOC 4.3.1: Proportion of population reporting some degree of disability
 - SOC 4.3.2: Percentage of public buildings and banking, employment and recreational facilities allowing access for people with disabilities

- SOC 4.3.3: Percentage of all political, community and government leadership positions have people with disability represented
- SOC 4.4.1: Proportion of the activities of the National Human Rights Commission Committee (NHRC) implemented
- SOC 4.4.2: Proportion of Human Rights related Conventions ratified
- SOC 4.4.3: Proportion of laws reviewed on basis of discriminatory and gender biased principles (and proportion of new laws drafted with consideration of discriminatory and gender biased principles)

Commencement of data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs

YES NO

- 39.1 The Statistics Amendment Act (Number 6 of 2013) requires the Statistics Advisory Committee to strengthen and provide advice on data collection. The functions of the Committee include looking at the type of data and statistics that inform the tracking of the NSDP, including the gender and social inclusion indicators.
- 39.2 The NSDP Indicator Progress Report for 2018 has been published, including reporting on the progress of the above 12 indicators.
- 39.3 Vanuatu’s reporting on the SDGs is included in the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) progressive tracking on SDG implementation within the region. In 2019, Vanuatu also undertook a Voluntary National Review (coordinated by PIFS) of the implementation of its commitments to the SDGs, with focus areas including SDG 5.

Disaggregation provided

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geographic location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marital status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race/ethnicity
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