

# **INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

**COUNTRY REPORT-- VANUATU**

**BY: Toswel Tom Alen**

**Vanuatu Society for Disabled People**

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## 1. General information

The republic of Vanuatu is a Y-shape group of some 80 Islands spread over a distance of 1,100 square kilometres in the south Pacific with population of more than 200, 000 People (2009 censuses estimate)

The Country became an Independent state from French and Britain on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1980 and has a Parliamentary system of Government. Port Vila is the Capital of Vanuatu with an estimate population of 38,000 People. The indigenous People speak over 100 local languages. The official medium of communication is French and English. The national language is Bislama.

There are different ethnic groups living in Vanuatu including Pacific Islanders, including Australia & New Zealand, Chinese, and other Asians, Europeans, American and other ethnic groups.

### Disability related Information and issues

No national definition of disability as yet. Adopt the international definition.

The 2009 national population census puts the number of People with disabilities at around 2000 People. It is estimated that there are over 4, 000 People with disabilities in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) currently has a total of 1,410 registered clients. The common type of disabilities found is hearing, Physical, Visual Impairment and Intellectual.

Vanuatu Society for Disabled People carried out a disability survey in 2005 in the south of Vanuatu, the Province of Tafea. Below is a table showing some of the findings from the Tafea disability Survey.

**Table: 1: Population by Island in Tafea Province**

ISLAND	POPULATION
Tanna	25,840
Anietyum	821
Futuna	402
Erromango	1,560
Aniwa	424
Total	29,047

**Table 2 bellow lists** the types of disabilities and the number of disabilities people reported. To clarify, one person may have reported more than one disability hence if one person reported being both physical disabled and blind then the total number of disability is two not one. The total number of disabilities reported during survey was 559.

**Table: 2: Disability population by types of disabilities and age.**

Type of Disability	0-5	6-14	15-20	21-30	31-39	40-49	50+	Total	% of Total
Autism	0	4	3	1	0	0	0	8	1.4
Blind/low vision	2	19	9	10	5	14	42	101	18
Cerebral palsy	1	3	2	0	2	0	1	9	1.6
Deaf/hearing impaired	6	38	31	28	10	6	19	138	25
Epilepsy	0	9	17	8	1	5	1	41	7.3
Intellectual	1	29	19	9	9	4	3	74	13
Physical	11	35	19	25	19	24	40	173	31
Psychiatric	0	1	1	4	3	2	4	15	2.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>559</b>	
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>19.8</b>		<b>100</b>

Physical disability were the highest reported with 173 (31%) followed by Deaf/Hearing impairment with 138 (25%) and Blind/Low vision 101 (18%).

Autism and Cerebral palsy were the least reported with 8 cases (1.4%) reported for Autism and 9 cases (1.6%) reported for Cerebral palsy. Intellectual reported cases were 74 (13%) and Epilepsy were 41 (7.3%) This may be because the local community is not aware or familiar with these types of disabilities. Also these categories are very specific compared the others.

### Policy/Laws

No specific Laws on disability as yet. However, Vanuatu now has a national disability policy in place **as of 2009** and has also recently established a national Disability council to addressed disability issues at a national level with members from both Government and the two disability Organization, Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) and Disability Promotion and Advocacy (DPA).

Person with Disabilities are care for and support by their respective parents and families. There is no direct financial assistance given to people with disabilities, except with the exception of few individual who are privilege to be sponsored through education or through equipment support.

Vanuatu Government does not provide direct financial assistance to people with disabilities nor the local disability Organization. Both Vanuatu Society for Disable People (VSDP) and Disability Promotion and Advocacy (DPA) relay on donor funds for their programme.

As for Education, there are no special schools for people with disabilities. People with disabilities are included in the schools attended by other normal children. Progress has been made in the Education system to encourage People with disabilities to go to schools; however majority of them have difficulty in learning due to lacks of teachers' skills in teaching children with special needs or people with disabilities.

### **Description of the Organization**

The name of my Organization is call, Vanuatu Society for Disabled People. It is a Charitable local Non-Governmental Organization. Vanuatu Society for Disabled People was established in 1986 to provide service to People with Disabilities by means of a centre base programme. In 1991 it changed to a community base programme, thus provides service in the Village and communities where people with disabilities lives. It clients, includes those with hearing, visual, Intellectual, and Physical Impairment.

### **The growth of VSDP**

VSDP,s goal is to provide service to all People with disabilities throughout Vanuatu. This is a challenge due to limited staff and funding. However, yearly increase in the numbers of clients seen by fieldworkers since the programme began shows that VSDP continues to successfully strive for this goals.

### **The aims of VSDP are to:**

- 1- Facilitate the fullest possible integration of and participation by people with disabilities in all aspect of their lives.
- 2- Assist with the prevention and early intervention of disability through Education and public awareness campaigns.
- 3- Facilitate cooperation and collaboration with Government and non-Government Organization to ensure that those with disabilities have full access to all rights guaranteed to all citizen by the constitution of Vanuatu.

### **The Service VSDP provides are:**

- ❖ Training to care givers about how to work with people with different types of disabilities.
- ❖ Making special adaptive equipment.
- ❖ Providing assistance to people with disabilities to help them lead a more full Independent life.
- ❖ Conduct community information session about the needs of those with disabilities and how to work with them.
- ❖ Promoting the rights of people with disabilities through Awareness, Video, posters and etc.
- ❖ Provide assistance to children who want to go to school.

**Staffing:**

The organization currently has a total of Ten(10) staff of which six (6) are on contract and four (3) full time workers. five (5) were people with disabilities of whom four are male and one (1) female. (See table below)

POSITION	NUMBERS
Executive Director	1
Accounts officer	1
Fieldworker	2
Daily workers on contract in catering service	4
Regular Volunteer	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

**Finance:**

The organisation as of 2012 to date received its funds from the following sources;

- Proceed of contract with Air Vanuatu Catering service
- Bred Bank – support toward early intervention programme for children
- Small grant Donations from business houses
- In-kind donations from other partners and friends both local and overseas.

In the past assistance were received from the following;

- Christian Blind mission (CBM) 1991 – 2011 ( Core funds 50 per cent staff salary, administration costs and transport)
- UNESCO & AusAID 205-2007 ( Health & Disability Screening in Schools)
- EU – Disability Survey in Tafea & In-service Training for Field workers
- Local and overseas partners & Friends

The following are some of VSDP major Strength and Weakness:

**Strength:**

- Dedicated and committed staff members.
- Dedicated and committed Executive Director.
- Active chairman & Executive Committee
- Ability to develop project proposals for donor consideration.
- Active Volunteer group.
- Has own building ( only lease Land to Vanuatu Government

**Weakness**

- Lack of core funding for the Organization.
- Lack of National Government financial support.
- Weak Programme support especially after end of project.

**My Activities:**

I am a Field worker for the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP)

**My responsibilities are as follow,**

- Provide rehabilitation service and other assistance for people with disabilities especially children who are disabled.
- Training parents, care giver and communities about how to work with people with disabilities.
- Contact awareness workshops and session for communities about disability issues and how to work with disabled people.
- Promoting basic human rights and special right for people with disabilities using Media such as workshop, distribution of leaflets, Video shows etc.
- Planning and implementing different programmes within my Province with the support and advice of the VSDP management.

I enjoy my work as a fieldworker and I find it interesting working and developing skills of people with disabilities in my Country.

**Other Activities:**

I am a Chief Representative of people from my Island, who are living in port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu. I participate and involve in traditional activities and custom ceremonies including settle ling family disputes. I am also a president of the Sunday school class inside the Church of Jesus Christ Of Later day saint. LDS or Mormon Church.

## Conclusion:

I wish to take this Opportunity to thank my Government for nominating me to this course, the Government of Japan for allowing myself to enter his Country and thank JICA especially Vanuatu Office for processing and arranging my participation to this training course.

## Reference:

- Tafea Disability Identification
- Report 2005

Report, 2005

- VSDP database