

Annual Report 2019

Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum



Letter to our stakeholders

Reaching out our shared values



Picture: Students at Santo East School, Santo listen to a seminar on online safety

2019 marks a history for Vanuatu IGF, as we collaborate to establish this initiative with support from the Government of Vanuatu, Telecommunications Radiocommunications and Broadcasting Regulator (TRBR).

Our monthly seminars are very popular with high school students, tertiary students and people from the community at large who want to understand what internet governance is all about.

Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum (Vanuatu IGF) presents this brief report on the work we have been doing in the past 6 months. The report presents the work we have been engaged in, including updates on our operations and way forward.

IGF initiatives are open to all relevant stakeholders interested in contributing to our work to see that internet governance outlines what people in Vanuatu need to do to see that internet remains open, transparent and accountable. It is the responsibility of the multistakeholder organizing teams to ensure that all interested stakeholders, both individuals and organizations, are invited to participate in this initiative.

It is important that the IGF Initiative's work is conducted in a transparent manner. This means that wider relevant communities, beyond the secretariat are informed about our work.

Thank you for supporting our work this year 2019.

Jackson Mlake
Director

Sharing our mission

Vanuatu IGF was formally established on March 2019 following a Council of Ministers (COM) Decision 89 of 2018, with an establishment budget of 8 million vatu. Our work is to raise awareness and build the capacity for youth to join the Internet governance discussions. Based on the mandate of IGF to bring people together from various stakeholder groups as equals. We provide an open platform for the community to express and interchange their ideas and own thoughts on internet governance freely.

**Build local
internet
governance
capacity**



**Encourage
youth to
participate**



**Be
informed**



**Cultivate ideas
to drive social
change**



**Empower
communities
to talk about
internet**

Our work

The establishment of our office is timely to support the internet related development work that the government and industry is doing. Our work this year is focused on establishing and maintaining a dialogue between people in the community and Vanuatu IGF as an entity.

5 Islands

Aore, Efate, Malekula, Tanna, Santo

45
schools

3,000 + students

16
seminars

100 participants

6
communities

400 + villagers

2 staff

2 volunteers

What we want to achieve

Our focus for 2019 and throughout the lifetime of this project is to change the mindset of all internet users in Vanuatu to embrace internet (and technologies) as a transforming tool to improve and sustain our lives into the future. Already through our mass media campaigns, we note a slight change in behavior of users, which is a positive sign that all our collaborative work is paying off.

The IGF initiatives need to respect the criteria of being multistakeholder in its organization. The multistakeholder approach refers to collaboration between all stakeholder groups on an equal footing (private sector, civil society, government and technical community), around development and implementation of an array of Internet-related principles, norms, rules, decision making procedures, and policies and programs.

Additionally, the multistakeholder component is also very important both in our outreach to people living around Vanuatu and also in regards to the national initiative meeting. In principle, we would like to see stakeholders tell us what they think is their need this way we involve stakeholder diversity, as this will add to meet targeted needs which is inclusive of different views.

Our outreach has an impact on people we visit, and the general feedback from schools and communities is that they would like to know more about our work, and how they can help to see that the internet remains a tool that improves the livelihood of people throughout Vanuatu. We also note that reckless online behavior has dropped dramatically since the SMS campaign from the Government, outreach by CERT Vanuatu and Vanuatu IGF. We are still working in isolation from our partners, and there needs to be collaboration between all stakeholders who have an interest in internet development. On the outset we would like to play a key role in ensuring that our community messages are aligned and we cover the whole of country approach by exhausting all these partnership avenues. We can achieve this through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all our key stakeholders so we can achieve more with little expertise that we have.

Vanuatu is a small constituency and requires working in collaboration with all stakeholders to cover the whole country in our community outreach and we strongly believe that this is the solution to maximizing our resources to make a big impact. Our close working relationship with CERT Vanuatu and Vanuatu Police Force also plays a key role in each stakeholder acknowledging this partnership so we get people to fully understand what the government wants to achieve through these programs.

Why we go out to the community

Vanuatu as a country has gone through dramatic changes both in political and economic stability over the past 10 years and we are grateful to our leaders at political level, church level, community level and in our villages. This continues to happen overtime and we as a community focused entity must do our part to go out and be this driver of social change that we want to see in Vanuatu.

When we listen respectfully to others who have different opinions and life experiences than our own, we take the first step in listening; we accept that there are different perspectives and points of view on most internet governance issues of concern. If we truly want to be a participant in real change, we must have conversations that push and pull, that asks us to give and take. And if we are willing to do that, we can find those points of agreement and come together on them. And this is why we reach out to the 75% of our population who live in rural areas.

We have been out into schools and villages and we can now see for ourselves that we accept that change is constant. It is the extent to which we care about the direction of social change that we can try to shape it and help to create the kind of "change we wish to see in Vanuatu



Picture: Vanuatu IGF works with our schools to talk about internet safety, students at Ecole Primarie de Itaku, South Tanna

Impacts of our work

We are at an early stage to measure the impact of our work in the community, however, the short term changes that we expect to see from the scope of our work in the last 5 months since Vanuatu IGF was properly established are evident. When you go to popular social media Facebook page such as Yumi Toktok Stret which has over 100,000+ followers, one will note that the type of aggressive, abusive and defamatory commenting on Facebook posts regarding basically anything online has changed.

General observation is people are now more aware of how to properly conduct themselves online, similar to a real world environment which is based on mutual respect and our strong cultural identity. We note however, that there is a high volume of profiles who go by fake identities online as an alternative to speaking out against the government and other people. Overall peoples attitudes have changes because they are aware of their rights to express themselves based on governance regimes that goes right down to our "kastom" and how we generally interact with people in our community.

We also note that as a result people have resort to creating private or "secret" Facebook groups online to discuss certain matters and in some instances involved in illicit activities which we have notified authorities. This does not mean that people are hiding from law enforcement, but it means people explore other avenues whereby they can freely express themselves with like minded people without much hassle from the government.

The government has also engaged in mass media awareness and outreach via SMS which also has a positive effect on people. People feel that they are well looked after and that the government actually has mechanisms in place to deal with issues relating to cyber crime. The draft Bill for Cybercrime is also finalized and is listed in the parliament sitting for March 2020 and we are hopeful that once this bill is debated and approved in parliament, that will be lay the foundations of how we align our programs to support implement the new act going forward.

We also look forward to fostering partnerships with new partners so that we can collaborate more on how we can work as a team to better serve the people of Vanuatu.

National IGF 2019

On May 17th 2019, we convened our first ever National IGF at the National Convention Center, Port Vila. We celebrated the event with the theme "Embracing digital literacy for an inclusive internet development in Vanuatu."

Support for this event was through the Pacific ICT Days, and the IGFSA based in Geneva. A brief program outline below shows our panelists and topics discussed.

8:30 am	Registration
9 am – 10 am	Youth IGF Opening Prayer Introduction to Internet Governance, Vanuatu IGF
10 am - 11 am	Opening Plenary Paul Wilson, Director, APNIC Jeffrey Garae, Vanuatu IGF Save Vocea, ICANN UN IGF, Video Message Gerard Metsan, Chief Information Officer, OGCI
11 am – 12 pm	Session 1: Digital literacy: In an increasingly digitised world, people need digital and literacy skills to work, live, learn and communicate productively. Without these skills, people face marginalisation not only in the physical world but in digital realms as well. Hanson Waki, UAP Project Coordinator, TRBR David Lumbukly, CEO, Vanuatu Qualifications Authority Dr Jeffrey Garae, Advisor, CERT Vanuatu Fred Samuel, Director, Pacific Group
12 pm - 1pm	Open Microphone Session
1pm - 2pm	Session 2: Inclusive development: Getting people physically connected to the internet is just one piece of the puzzle — progress will not advance on development or the other benefits envisioned via internet inclusion without a digitally literate user base. Rodney Philemon, Chair, SMART Sistas Jennifer Kalpokas – Doan, Senior Program Manager, DFAT Sandra Hart, Pacific Cash & Livelihoods Lead, Oxfam Leah Lowonbu, Vanuatu Youth IGF
2 pm – 3 pm	Closing Plenary FireEye Vanuatu IGF Secretariat

Outcome: National IGF 2019

This is the outcome document from this National IGF of 2019 celebrating the theme "Embracing digital literacy for an inclusive internet development in Vanuatu."

Host: Vanuatu IGF Secretariat

Sponsors: Government of Vanuatu and IGFSa

Participants: 70 (46 Female, 24 Male)

Panelists: 13

Countries: Australia, Fiji, Switzerland, Vanuatu, USA

Session 1: In this session we note from government supported programs such as the Universal Access Policy program to connect schools to broadband internet and school tablet program that these programs have enlightened student learning and in areas far away from the main provincial centres that student academic results have improved dramatically.

At the national level, the government through the Ministry of Education and Training has introduced ICT curricula in schools to see that students understand technology and through this curricula there is also an increase in students undertaking technology related courses at tertiary institutions. The private sector also echoes that these programs means more people now procure electronic devices and we must work collaboratively to see that our users are safe online.

We note from the open the open microphone sessions that internet governance is a fairly new concept in Vanuatu and we must do our part to educate people about it so they are more aware and participate in our discussions.

Session 2: Inclusive development is key to ensure that people are literate and are able to use the technology. We note from this panel, that we must emphasize the need for Government funded programs to include an ICT component to it. This way the program is sustainable and technology is utilized. We have seen programs in the past that did not include ICT component in it. Internet has become part of our lives in Vanuatu, and we must continue this dialogue to help men, women, children and vulnerable groups to adopt internet and technology as part of our lives.

Resolutions:

1. To identify key stakeholders (local, regional and international) who will support this initiative for the next 5 years;
2. Establish a proper data collection mechanism whereby users are able to freely report internet governance issues;
3. To strengthen the Vanuatu IGF and the relevance of the multistakeholder approach to maintain an open, free and human rights-centered Internet without barriers;
4. To strengthen links between the Vanuatu IGF and the national internet development dialogue, as we are often referenced at the local and regional level and it is important that we work to maintain these partnership into the future; and
5. To continue to build local capacities for people throughout Vanuatu so they understand the internet governance dialogue at the national and international level.

Future plans

Vanuatu IGF intends to focus on our monthly seminars and outreach programs to most communities around Vanuatu in the next 3 years. In 2020, we will be hosting Mini Internet Governance Forums on Santo, Malekula and Tanna leading up to the National IGF in Port Vila towards the end of the year.

We will continue the #TingtingBifoYuPost campaign in the next 12 months leading up to the new Cyber crime Legislation being passed in parliament. We are soliciting support from all our partners to recruit a few more staff onto our team so we can concentrate on specific issues like online privacy, social media, data analysis, and internet development in Vanuatu. We are working on establishing memorandum of understanding with all partners to a closer working relationship with them to roll out our programs into the future.

We also will be installing a proper incident reporting system as part of our data collection strategy to see that we fully understand the types of issues that internet consumers in Vanuatu face. The future is exciting and we anticipate that as we continue our outreach to our communities that we will see less harmful online behavior and cultivate online safety culture into people we reach out to.

As an internet governance entity, we must have a strong online presence, especially on Facebook where 90% of internet users in Vanuatu go online, to reach out to the community and provide support to keep the internet safer so more and more people can use the information they source from the internet to improve their lives and most importantly contribute to the socioeconomic development of Vanuatu.



Picture: Internet continues to play an important role in educating our children. Enikis Primary School, North Tanna

Vanuatu Internet Governance Company Limited

Audited Balance Sheet
As at 31 December 2019
(Expressed in Vatu)

	Note	2019
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	3	25,524
Related party receivable	4	10,000
Grant receivable	5	3,778,068
		<u>3,813,592</u>
Total Assets		<u>3,813,592</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Grants in advance	5	3,778,068
Total Liabilities		<u>3,778,068</u>
Net Assets		<u>35,524</u>
EQUITY		
Issued capital	6	10,000
Retained Earnings		25,524
		<u>35,524</u>



Director
Port Vila, 14/8/2020.

The Audited Balance Sheet is to be read in conjunction with the notes to and forming part of the financial statements as set out on pages 10 to 11.

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