

# Vanuatu IGF 2020/2021 Annual Work



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## **Introduction**

This document outlines the intentions of the Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum (Vanuatu IGF) for the year 2020 to 2021. The last 12 months since the establishment of the organization, we set out to see what the internet governance scenario is like, and this document outlines what we will do to address them. As we continue to embrace a holistic approach to internet development through the multistakeholder working approach, we have to develop mechanisms that fit our local context here in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu as a country is a close knit community, whereby communal living is part of who we are. We are proud of our diverse and rich culture with over 120 local languages spoken by 280,000 people! Respectfully, we have been using the multistakeholder approach in our decision making at all levels of the community, from within our families, our villages, our island, our province and at the national level. It surely is working well for us and we believe, that this same principal will work with our internet governance endeavors into the future.

In 2019, we visited the islands of Efate, Malekula, Santo and Tanna as part of our outreach to talk about what the internet is all about and our responsibility as consumers of information. In this work we reached out to 50 schools and over 3,000 students more than 30,000 people in the community. We get ourselves into classrooms, nakamals (village meeting places), radio, television, social media, churches, community gatherings, university lecture room and offices, because the internet is about every single person in Vanuatu!

## **Who we are?**

The Vanuatu IGF is a community platform that brings all internet stakeholders to discuss and exchange ideas about internet development in Vanuatu. Our work is to support government, regulator, internet service providers, technical community, and users of the internet to see that the internet remains open, transparent, and continues to be a medium that empowers every single person in Vanuatu to make good decisions in their daily lives.

We run internet governance seminars every week to people who have an interest in technology, because we see the value in local capacity building as key to our work. The internet phenomenon is fairly new to Vanuatu. Historically, just after the liberalization of the telecommunications market in 2007, we note rapid growth of the overall telecommunications market which in 2019 contributed to about X% of the national GDP. We have leap frogged developed countries in internet development, in that we jumped from good old “dial up” modems to 3G+ internet speed in just under 10 years which for a country like Vanuatu is remarkable.

Part of our work is to encourage students to study technology as part of their tertiary education plans, whether it be from a legal, business, economics, agriculture, climate change, engineering, human rights, etc... perspective. The future of Vanuatu is reliant on technology, and with

emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Crypto currency, and others, it is important that Vanuatu has local capacity to embrace emerging technologies.

### **Where we are going?**

In 2020/2021, we are very optimistic that we will engage more people in our work and people will be more aware of their responsibility both online and offline. Internet is about everybody, not just those who have access to telecommunications services. We intend to organize 4 Internet Governance Forums at Efate, Malekula, Santo and Tanna with the intention of educating people to embrace the internet as a tool to transform their lives.

We will continue to run our weekly internet governance seminars over 12 months to equip participants who will support our work to reach out to schools, villages, churches, offices, gardens or wherever they are. This is multistakeholder approach through a bottom up approach. We believe when we reach out to people, they feel part of internet governance discussions, and are open to discuss and share their views with us.

Our Online Abuse reporting form launched in 2019 is well utilized, and we expect more online abuse reports to come through as more users learn about the form. 98% of the reports we received relate to online defamation, identify theft, cyber bullying, and illicit content. Our #TingtingBifoYuPost campaign will run for the next 12 months until December 2020!

### **How do we achieve our goals?**

Vanuatu IGF is part of consortium from government, regulator, private sector, youth, women, faith-based organizations, law enforcement and more. We acknowledge each stakeholder for their support to our operations in the last 12 months. We would not have gotten where we are now without their valuable support, and we will value that support to continue to serve our people into the future.

Our internet governance development approach will build on existing successful mechanisms, trust from the community, and our Vanuatu way of doing things. And this way is to go out and speak to everyone in person about internet governance, contextualizing the terminology in simple analogies that people relate to and understand what we are talking about. One analogy that we use is that the internet is like the Port Vila market, where farmers sell all sorts of produce and vegetables. However, when one goes to shop at the market, they may only buy certain produce based their need for that particular day etc. Similarly, the internet is like a market where you go to buy only things you need and not everything at once.

Many partners, one Vanuatu IGF will be our multistakeholder slogan for the year 2020! Collaboration and learning is ongoing and we see ourselves at both sides of the process.

## Our plans for 2020/2021

A successful engagement with the community must come from the hearts and minds of the people of Vanuatu! For meaningful discussions to take place, we must go out and connect with people wherever they are. That physical connection between Vanuatu IGF and the people adds value to our work, because people feel that we value their views, we value their ideas and the change that we anticipate will happen.

To transpire this connection, we intend to organize 3 mini Internet Governance Forums on Malekula, Santo and Tanna in the months of April, May and July 2020. The National IGF will occur in September in time for Vanuatu IGF to submit outcomes of this 4 events to the UN IGF which usually occurs around November. The islands we intend to visit in 2020 are Ambrym, Epi and Pentecost which are big constituents for internet governance discussions. In 2021 we will visit Maewo, and Tafea Outer Islands.

The fortnightly seminars will continue and we hope to run 24 seminars to 80 new participants to our already exciting programs from 2019. Our outreach program #TingtingBifoYuPost will also run throughout the year, so people know their rights online. The debate of the new Cybercrime Bill of 2021 at the sitting of parliament will boast our efforts in implementing this workplan.

## Expected Outcomes of this work plan

The implementation of this work plan is the responsibility of the following entities:

1. Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum (Vanuatu IGF);
2. The Multistakeholder Advisory Group (Vanuatu IGF MAG); and
3. Other stakeholders

Priority		Outcome	Deadline
Facilitate multistakeholder discussions and exchange ideas and opinions	1	Increase stakeholder discussions on internet governance matters in Vanuatu	Ongoing
A better understanding of internet governance in all communities throughout Vanuatu	2	Increased awareness about internet governance and	2021
Build local capacity in understanding internet governance	3	Increased knowledge about internet governance	Ongoing

Foster multistakeholder collaboration on internet governance discussions in Vanuatu	4	Community driven multistakeholder discussions on internet development in Vanuatu	Ongoing
Active participation at regional and international discussions to bring Vanuatu perspectives to the world	5	International and regional dialogue on internet governance issues in Vanuatu	Ongoing
Explore and utilize funding opportunities to undertake internet governance activities in Vanuatu	6	Sustainability of the program	2021
Data Collection	7	Community driven multistakeholder discussions on internet development in Vanuatu through collection of data of internet issues	Ongoing

Our work in 2020 2021 will cover:

1. Engagement with Internet Service Providers (ISPS) –
2. Engagement with Government departments
3. Engagement with Development Partners
4. Engagement with communities expecting to reach out to 100,000 people in 2020.

### Tentative Implementation timeframes

Activity	Priority	Responsible	Timeline
Formalize Multistakeholder Advisory Group members	1	Secretariat	March 2021
Community engagement through mini Internet Governance Forums	2	Secretariat	Lenakel April 2020 Lakatoro May 2020 Luganville May 2020 Port Vila September 2020
Awareness and outreach 8 Islands each year	2	Secretariat	Nguna & Pele February 2020 Emau, Lelepa & Moso March 2020 Epi March 2020 Ambrym June 2020 Pentecost July 2020 Paama Feb 2021 Maewo Mar 2021 Aniwa Apr 2021 Futuna May 2021 Aneityum June 2021
Capacity Building for identified participants	3	Secretariat	Fortnightly
Capacity building for Parliamentarians	3	Secretariat, MAG	May 2020/2021
Outreach to schools (target 200 new schools)	4	Secretariat	Ongoing
Active participation at regional meetings within Pacific Islands only	5	Secretariat, MAG	
Active participation at Global IGF	5	Secretariat, MAG	November 2020/2021
Establish and utilize partnership with relevant stakeholders to support our work	6	Secretariat, MAG	Ongoing
Explore funding opportunities for our outreach programs	6	Secretariat, MAG	Ongoing

Data collection of internet governance issues from communities and online reporting repository	1	Secretariat	Ongoing
Increase capacity within secretariat to recruit 2 full time staff	7	Secretariat, MAG	2021

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