

VANUATU MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Reviewed Gender Equity in Education Policy (GEEP)

August 2018

Government of Vanuatu

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Abbreviations

CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
CEDAW	Convention on the Eliminations of all forms of Discrimination
against Wome	en
GDO	Gender Desk Officer
GDSI	Gender Disability Social Inclusion
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EO	Equal Opportunity
EEO	Equal Educational Opportunity
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
NEC	National Education Commission
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PA	Personal Assistance
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PGO	Provincial Guidance Officer
PSIC	Provincial School Improvement Coordinators
PSET	Post-Secondary Education and Training
SEO	Senior Education Officer
SO	Scholarships Officer
SGO	School Guidance Officer
SIO	School Improvement Officer
ТА	Technical Assistant
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
VSP	Vanuatu Skills Partnership
VIT	Vanuatu Institute of Technology
VITE	Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education

Definitions

Gender

Gender refers to the socially and culturally constructed difference and relations between men and women that are learned widely among societies and change over time.

Sex

Sex refers exclusively to biological differences between men and women.

Gender equality

Gender equality between men and women involves the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid sex roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equality. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equity

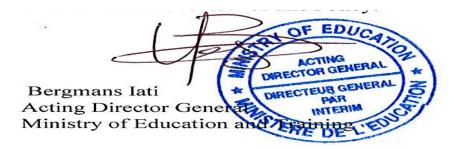
Gender equity means fairness of treatment for boys and girls, men and women, according to their respective needs.

Acknowledgement

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- Santo School Principals
- Port Vila Secondary School Principals

We also extend our gratitude to all other stakeholders who have involved in one way or another with the review of this Policy.



Forward

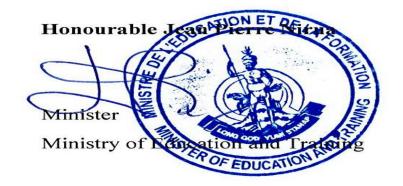
Internationally, attention is focused on ensuring that boys and girls, men and women benefit equally from their participation and involvement in education. Education is recognized as playing a key role in a sustainable, social and economic development. It is a human right and an essential tool for achieving equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits everyone.

The Ministry of Education and Training is committed to promoting and implementing gender equity and this policy is designed to assist us to actively meet that commitment. I am delighted that the Ministry of Education and Training has produced the first government sector Gender Equity Policy in Vanuatu which has had some impact in the education sector.

A GEEP was implemented in 2005 and it was in place for ten years and has now being reviewed.

This reviewed policy continues to provide us with the principles and the actions that will help guide our work. It focuses on gender equity in the formal education sector, from pre-school to tertiary and the TVET sector. It involves changes in the way we think about education and how education is delivered and organized.

Everyone who works in the Vanuatu Education system has the responsibility to promote gender equity and assist with the implementation of this policy. For this policy to be successfully implemented we must all work together, only then will gender equity in education be realized.



2. Vision

A safe, secure and effective education system where girls and boys, women and men of all ages and abilities live and work together in harmony.

3. Goal.

To provide equal opportunities (EO) and rights for everyone in Education and Training to serve the nation and the world as skilled human resources. An education system that ensures equality for all.

The policy covers the formal education sector including pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this Gender Equity in Education Policy is to ensure that girls and boys, women and men of Vanuatu equally benefit from their participation and involvement at all levels of Education and Training, from ECCE to Post School Education and Training.

Education improves the quality of life. It promotes health, expands access to paid employment, increases productivity and facilitates social and political participation. It is fair and equitable that both men and women should experience these benefits. The education of girls and women is an important cultural, economic and social investment.

Investment in formal, non-formal education and training for girls and women with all capabilities for social and economic return has proved to be one of the best means of achieving suitable development and economic growth.

5. Introduction and Background

5.1 Introduction

Gender inequality leads to differences in the access women, men, girls and boys have to participate in education as students, educators, administrators and decision makers. Discrimination is an aspect of gender inequality and involves treating males and females unfairly and differently.

In 2002¹, a Gender Analysis of the Education Sector highlighted that only one third of the enrolments in technical and vocational were female. Females made up 14% of the secondary teaching force and 13% of the secondary school principals. One third of scholarship applicants were received from female and one third of those employed in the Ministry of Education were female. The report also showed that all directors of the education sector were male. Males and females tend to study gender stereotypical subjects, for example, males were likely to study science subjects and female's art subjects.

Based on the findings in the 2002 analysis report, the Gender Equity in the Education Policy (GEEP) 2005- 2015 was developed. The Policy outlines the thirteen objectives that covers areas such as, gender equity systems in the Education sector, enrolment and attendance rate in schools, safe learning environment, curriculum and learning materials, scholarship and career

¹ Gender Analysis of the Education Sector, 2002 – Executive summary pages 7 - 13

guidance, and female representations at the senior management at all levels of the education sector.

The challenges in implementing the policy were, there was no proper coordination between the Ministry and stakeholders in implementing key activities under the 13 objectives, human resource and capacity in the Ministry is a constrain and availability of fund to roll out the policy to all schools.

However, despite the challenges mentioned there have been some gains in reducing the gender disparities in accessing formal education. For example, in the primary school sector males and females are equally represented.

In 2015, a table matrix on the GEEP objectives showed that while there are some progress to some of the activities, there is a need to revise and improve this policy. A working committee comprises of representative from RRRT, VESP Inclusive Officer, an independent person and Gender focal point at the Ministry started working on a way forward in reviewing this document.

In 2016, with the support from VESP Inclusive desk, three consultation workshops were held with stakeholders getting their views and feedback on the policy. The Ministry also shared the draft reviews with other technical individuals² and gender networks.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Education Act (2014) and other MoET Policies such as the Child Safeguarding Policy, Inclusive Policy and Education in Emergency Policy.

5.2 Background

5.2.1 International and Regional Context

The Government of Vanuatu has ratified two important and influential international conventions, The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and has also endorsed the Pacific Islands Basic Education Action Plan. The ratification of these conventions requires the Government of Vanuatu to take steps to ensure gender equity in education.

5.2.2 National Law and Policy

The Government of Vanuatu has indicated its commitment to gender equity through provisions detailed in the Constitution and the National Gender Equity Policy which supports Women's empowerment, promoting leadership, reducing violence and gender mainstreaming.

For Education, The Education Act No. 9 of 2014, Part 1, 8(1) states:

"A child must not be

- (a) Refused admission to any school; or
- (b) Treated less favourably, on account of his or her gender, religion, nationality, race, language or disability."

² See list of names acknowledged by the DG MOET in the acknowledgement section of this policy.

Eliminating gender inequalities in education is an important goal of the Ministry of Education and Training. This commitment is detailed in the Ministry's Interim Sector Strategy (VETSS 2017 - 2018).

This policy is designed to assist the Ministry of Education meet these commitments.

6. Values and Principles

The Vanuatu education system encourages, supports and promotes gender equity in education. Gender equity in education at all levels is essential to a positive learning experience where both males and females are given the same opportunities to reach their full potential. The following are the values and principles guiding this policy:

- Accessible, equitable and inclusive education is a human right for everyone;
- Providing high quality education for all students (male and female), is the professional responsibility of all those working in education;
- Being male or female does not determine our capacity to learn or to work, both males and females are equally capable;
- Being male or female should not determine which subjects are studied or which career path to be followed;
- Equality of opportunity may at times mean that either males or females are treated differently for a period of time;
- Action needs to be taken to improve education for females, participation and profile of women in the education system;
- Culture practices/ attitudes based on gender must not limit the educational opportunities of anyone;
- Education must prepare males and females for life in both the modern world and the traditional/cultural world;
- The Teaching and learning environment must always be safe, free from any forms of harassment, bullying and violence.

7. Culture and Gender equity

There are many different cultures in Vanuatu that sustain and enrich the lives of its people. These cultures have evolved over many centuries. Cultural practices vary from Province to Province and within islands.

Culture does not stand still, over time it changes. This is the case in Vanuatu, for example over the last 150 years Christianity has become central in the lives of many Ni -Vanuatu. While it is important to preserve those aspects of culture that helps sustain and enrich people's lives, it is also important to change those aspects that limit people's opportunities based on their gender.

Promoting gender equality does not mean disrespecting culture; rather it is about evaluating their unique needs and constraints and acknowledging that specific steps must be taken if differences are to be addressed. The result needs to ensure the contribution of men/women are equally valued and both have the same chance at success.

It is acknowledged that many families struggle to find the money to pay school fees and sometimes it is difficult to pay all their children's school fees to attend school. At times, a boy is chosen to continue his education because traditionally on marriage, a girl will leave her

family. In this case, the child's sex rather than their ability determines their educational future. This practice disadvantages girls yet we know that when girls are educated the return to the family in terms of improved health benefits the whole family. Education cost, discrimination, attitudes and expectations still hamper gender equality in Vanuatu's education system.

8. Disability and Gender equity

Boys and girls with disabilities are less likely to receive an education. Girls with disabilities are part of the vulnerable group and seldom receive an education; they are less visible than boys with disabilities. All aspects of this policy include equal access to education for boys and girls with disabilities.

9. Responsibility

The Division of Education Services who is in charge of all six Provincial Education Offices, gender coordination desk and all schools is responsible to coordination the overall implementation of this policy.

10. Gender officer

A Gender Officer will be recruited within the Education Service Division at the Ministry of Education and Training to oversee the implementation and monitoring of this policy. There will be gender focal points in the provincial education offices to oversee the implementation of this policy in their province. In addition, all schools should have gender focal points to take up the responsibility of implementing the relevant aspects of this policy in their respective schools. The Director for the Education Services and the Principal Human Resource Officer to ensure that the gender officer along with the gender focal points will need to receive management support including time, resources and recognition.

11. Gender Equity in Education Policy Implementation Strategy³

11.1. Build a gender, evidence-based understanding of education in Vanuatu.

Tasks:

- The Division of Education Services to liaise with the Human Resource Unit at the Ministry to advertise the position of the Gender Desk Coordinator⁴
- Appoint gender officers (focal Points) in provinces (Provincial office and schools)
- Increase awareness, Training and capacity building in EO for all gender Focal Points.
- Seek donor funding to implement the Gender Equity in Education Policy
- Seek donor funding for a TA with expertise in gender analysis to conduct a gender analysis in the education sector and provide capacity building to education staff on gender analysis.⁵

³ Further detail of GEEP implementation strategies is shown in annexes 1 and 2

⁴ In the future this could link to GDSI

⁵ Last gender analysis to the education sector was done in 2002.

11.2. Ensure that schools and materials promote equitable learning and performance, and address issues of security, particularly for girls and women.

Tasks:

- MoET to include in the revised regulation order (Education Act no. 9 of 2014) to instruct schools to stop the expulsion of pregnant girls and encourage them to continue at school while pregnant and to return after giving birth
- Develop and implement awareness programmes to promote avenues, facilities, services and resources for pregnant girls, those who have given birth to continue, and those who are dropped out of school with education through ODL, and TVET in schools.
- Carry out a research on the benefits of establishing a single sex secondary Schools
- MoET to ensure that Child Safeguarding Policy is implement in schools
- Increase awareness, Training and capacity building in Child Safeguarding policy in all schools.
- MOET to ensure that all schools promote Zero tolerance to bullying in schools
- School Building or infrastructure (WASH facilities, classroom access etc.) should gather for both girls and boys needs and other children with special needs to support learning environment.
- Mainstream gender into all educational planning, and program implementation.
- Awareness to parents and stakeholders about gender equity in curriculum

11.3. Foster girls' and women's participation in higher education, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), VSP (Vanuatu Skills Partnership) and links to post-education employment.

Tasks:

- The Gender Desk to coordinate with the Training and Scholarship Coordination Unit to deliver more awareness to communities especially women and girls on scholarship criteria, eligibility, fields of studies and where to seek support with their scholarship applications
- Strengthen implementation of programs in schools to promote better participation of girls in non-traditional subjects' areas such as science, mathematics and technical subjects
- The Gender Desk to coordinate with the Higher Tertiary and Vocational Education in delivering more awareness to schools and communities, encouraging girls to enrol in courses offers at the PSET level
- Develop and implement an awareness programme to encourage employers to employ males and females on Merit in non-traditional areas
- Provide/Establish and strengthen pathways for students from formal to non-formal systems through VSP
- Develop a career guidance handbook and awareness materials that encourages both women/girls, and men/boys to study and work in non-stereotypical gender areas

11.4. Ensure the full participation of girls and women across all levels of a balanced, gender-equitable education system in Vanuatu.

Tasks:

- Develop an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Education policy in areas of administration, management and leadership
- Link to the Human Resource Development policy, MoET to identify and professionally train women to be more confident and capable to perform in senior positions
- Review and amend existing selection criteria for Principal's positions for gender equity
- Recognise and upskill women with relevant experience and qualifications to apply for positions in the Ministry of Education and Training
- Maintain a gender friendly and cooperative environment at the Central, Provincial and school level
- Develop and implement an awareness programme to encourage females at secondary schools to apply for secondary teacher education, particularly in Science subjects

12. Monitoring and Evaluating Progress

Monitoring and evaluating progress towards gender equality in education will be carried out every three years by the MoET gender Officer. The data gathered in the 2002 gender analysis of the education sector will be used as base line data against which progress will be measured. The first review of progress will be undertaken in mid-2019.

13. Timeline and priorities

This Gender Equity in Education policy covers a period of three years from 2017-2020. Some changes can be implemented immediately; they include practices or actions that do not require the allocation resources or professional development.

For example, girls who become pregnant while at school will no longer be expelled but allowed and encouraged to remain at school to continue their education and allowed to return after the child delivery.

Other changes will be phased in three years (2017-2020) or more years. These changes require significant attitudinal change, allocation and professional development. Using a national consultation process, these changes have been prioritized (see Action Plan). For example, to increase the number of girls taking non-traditional and technical subjects a national awareness-raising programme will raise awareness amongst teachers, students, parents and communities.

14. Financial considerations

The Ministry of Education and Training has limited financial and human Resources. Therefore, in 2018 - 2020, funding will be sought from the national government and development partners to assist with the implementation of all aspects of this policy.

Annex 1: Gender Equity in Education Policy Log Frame 2018-2020

Goal	Verification	Means of verification	Risks
Provide an equal opportunities (EO) for everyone in education regardless of their gender	Males and females participate equally in all aspects of learning and employment in education.	Progress monitored every three years using MoET data	 Lack of policy and awareness to implement the policy Change is not monitored and reported on and accurate data not gathered Both males and females not included in policy and programme development of EO by educational personnel and the wider community Undertake the required and necessary tasks Lack of specialised skills and expertise to implement EO EO not recognized and addressed

Objectives	Verification	Means of Verification	Risks
1.Build a gendered, evidence- based understanding of education in Vanuatu	 Gender Equity in Education Policy Gender Officer recruited Donor funding received TA Gender Analysis recruited Monitoring data systems developed 	 MoET Business Plan MoET Annual Report Gender Equity in Education Policy document MoET Open VEMIS data Donor reports Monitoring data systems operating 	 Delay in recruiting a Gender Officer Lack of Funding Lack of education personnel skills in gender disaggregated data Principals lack expertise in gender areas
2.Ensure that schools and materials promote equitable learning and performance, and address issues of security, particularly for girls and women	 Regulation Order amended to gather for pregnant girls in schools. Schools discipline policies amended to include pregnant girls and allow her to continue after giving birth Research done on single sex school Increase in retention rate 	 School's discipline policies MoET Open VEMIS data Inspector's and Gender Officer's reports MoET Annual Report Research report on single sex school 	 Lack of support and understand from educational personnel and communities Accurate Open VEMIS data not gathered and reported on Lack of research on drop/push out Lack of support and understanding from educational personnel

	 School buildings or infrastructures Boarding facilities provided for girls and children with special needs Training of principals and inspectors completed in child safe guarding policy Gender is mainstreamed into all educational planning and program implementation 		• Teacher's lack expertise in gender implementation of gender inclusive curriculum
3.Foster girls' and women's participation in higher education, STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths), VSP (Vanuatu Skills Partnership) and links to post- education employment	 More women/girls, men/boys and those in disadvantage areas received scholarship awards Non-traditional subjects made available and offered to females in secondary schools Pathways provided for students' data from formal to non – formal systems through VSP School Guidance Teachers in each secondary school Career guidance handbook developed Career guidance training for preservice secondary teachers 	 Principal's Reports Scholarships Office reports MoET data MoET Annual Report VSP Reports Career guidance handbook published Gender officer reports 	 Lack of understanding of scholarships Lack of accurate information and data on scholarships Lack of qualified teachers in non- traditional subject areas (Science etc.) Lack of support and understanding from educational personnel And communities Accurate data not gathered and reported Pathways not available School Guidance Teachers not appointed Career guidance handbook not developed
4.Ensure the full participation of girls and women across all levels of a balanced, gender-equitable education system in Vanuatu	• Development of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Education policy	 EEO in Education Policy developed MoET Open VEMIS data Teaching Service Act 94 of 2014 	 EEO Policy not developed Accurate data not gathered and reported

Annex 2: Gender Equity in Education Policy Action Plan 2018-2020

Tasks	Verification	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe		
Objective 1. Build a gendered, evidence-based understanding of education in Vanuatu						
 The Division of Education Services to liaise with the Human Resource Unit at the Ministry to advertise the position of the Gender Desk Coordinator⁶ Appoint gender officers (focal Points) in provinces (Provincial office and schools) Increase awareness, Training and capacity building in EO for all gender Focal Points. Seek donor funding to implement the Gender Equity in Education Policy Seek donor funding for a TA with expertise in gender analysis to conduct a gender analysis in the education sector and provide capacity building 	 Gender Equity in Education Policy Gender Officer recruited Donor funding received TA Gender Analysis recruited Monitoring data systems developed 	 MoET Business Plan MoET Annual Report Gender Equity in Education Policy document MoET Open VEMIS data Donor reports Monitoring data systems operating 	 Director General Gender Desk Officers Director of Policy and Planning, MoET MoET Statisticians 	2017 - 2018		

⁶ In the future this could link to GDSI

to education staff on gender analysis.7			
 Objective 2. Ensure that schoo particularly for girls and wome MOET to include in the revised regulation order (Education Act no. 9 of 2014) to instruct schools to stop the expulsion of pregnant girls and encourage them to continue at school while pregnant and to return after giving birth Develop and implement awareness programmes to promote avenues, facilities, services and resources for pregnant girls, those who have given birth to continue, and those who are dropped out of school with education through ODL, and TVET in schools. Carry out a research on the benefits of establishing a single sex secondary Schools MoET to ensure that Child Safeguarding Policy is implement in schools. Increase awareness, Training and capacity building in Child Safeguarding policy in all schools. 	 itable learning and perform School's discipline policies MoET Open VEMIS data Inspector's and Gender Officer's reports MoET Annual Report Research report on single sex school 	 ance, and address issues of a MoET, Principals School Councils Gender Desk Officers All Teachers 	security,

⁷ Last gender analysis to the education sector was done in 2002.

 MOET to ensure that all schools promote Zero tolerance to bullying in schools School Building or infrastructure (WASH facilities, classroom access 				
 etc.) should gather for both girls and boys needs and other children with special needs to support learning environment. Mainstream gender into all educational planning, and program implementation. 				
 Awareness to parents and stakeholders about gender equity in curriculum 				
Objective 3. Foster girls' and w (Vanuatu Skills for Economic (e, technology, engineering an	d maths), VSEG
• Gender Desk to coordinate with the Training and Scholarship Coordination Unit to deliver more awareness to communities especially women and girls on scholarship criteria, eligibility, fields of studies and where to seek support with their scholarship applications	 53% of scholarships awarded to females⁸ 50% increase in the number of females taking math, science and technical subjects Increase in the number of males and females employed in non-traditional areas of work 	 Principal's Reports Scholarships Office reports MoET data MoET Annual Report VSP Reports Career guidance handbook published Gender officer reports 	 SO, NEC School Guidance Teachers SO MoET School Guidance Teachers Provincial Guidance Officers VSP 	2017 - 2020
• Strengthen implementation of programs in schools to promote better participation of girls in non-traditional subjects' areas	VSP Programme implementedPathways available		Gender Desk Officers	

⁸ 53% female new awardees, 2015 published on Annual Statistics Digest, Ministry of Education, 2015 page 27, Table 17

 such as science, mathematics and technical subjects The Gender Desk to coordinate with the Higher Tertiary and Vocational Education in delivering more awareness to schools and communities, encouraging girls to enrol in courses offers at the PSET level Develop and implement an awareness programme to encourage employers to employ males and females on Merit in non-traditional areas Provide/Establish and strengthen pathways for students from formal to non- formal systems through VSP Develop a career guidance handbook and awareness materials that encourages both women/girls, and men/boys to study and work in non- stereotypical gender areas 	 Career guidance handbook developed All secondary pre-service teachers trained on how to use the Career handbook 			
Objective 4. Ensure the full pa	rticipation of girls and wome	n across all levels of a balan	ced, gender-equitable educati	on system in
Vanuatu	Γ	Γ	1	
• Develop an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Education policy in areas of administration, management and leadership	 EEO in Education Policy developed 40% of primary principals and 20 % of secondary principals are women 	 EEO in Education Policy developed MoET Open VEMIS data Teaching Service Act 94 of 2014 HRD Policy 	 MoET TSC Personnel Officer MoET Director General; Minister of Education State Law Office 	2017 - 2020

 Link to the Human Resource Development policy, MoET to identify and professionally train women to be more confident and capable to perform in senior positions Review and amend existing selection criteria for Principal's positions for gender equity Recognise and upskill women with relevant experience and qualifications to apply for positions in the Ministry of Education and Training Maintain a gender – friendly and cooperative environment at the Central, Provincial and school level Develop and implement an awareness programme to encourage females at secondary schools to apply for secondary teacher education, particularly in Science subjects 			School Guidance Teachers	
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