

GOVERNMENT
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND TRAINING**

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PRESS RELEASE

Tauawia Early Childhood Resource and Research Centre Opens

On Tuesday February 14th at Manua Primary School on North Efate launched a first ever Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) Resource and Research Centre for the four and five-year-old children of the area.

The colorful centre full of books and engaging learning resources created curiosity amongst a crowd of over a 100 people and brought a smile of delight on the lead APTC Trainer for the building project as he saw the final result.

The centre came about through the unique partnership and cooperation of a wonderful group of people with vision for the future of Vanuatu after Cyclone PAM struck. Shortly after initial discussions began, a generous offer came from the DFAT funded Australia Pacific Technical College Country Manager, Nick Crosling. A new group of 16 Carpentry (Certificate III) students and their skilled professional Trainer, Trevor Ingram, offered to build the facility and all the play-ground structures as the practical and live-work qualification component of the Certificate III in Carpentry. This began a wonderful hard working and enjoyable relationship with local community for APTC.

This new facility is not just a kindergarten but a place for finding out things, developing resources, having training for Early Childhood Teachers and a facility that will welcome research programmers, perhaps to document the process of learning young in your mother tongue for future bilingual success and long life learning interest.

This Milestone Initiative originated after Cyclone Pam shattered almost 80% of the kindergartens and children became scattered in tents, shelters and various homes and verandas, all trying to find a place to unite and learn together in a loving and caring supportive environment. It has been a struggle for early childhood since then, and slowly with determination and foresight, kindergartens are now returning, through the generosity of donors, and those who know young minds need that extra care.

This Early Childhood Resource and Research Centre is also the beginning of a fresh and exciting relationship with Victoria University in New Zealand. Many Vanuatu students have had the opportunity to attend Victoria University through various sponsored programmes over the years and we are proud and enthusiastic to continue this solid link through Early Childhood and look forward to opportunities that may follow.

During her official remarks, Assistant Vice Chancellor (Pasifika), Victoria University of Wellington Associate Professor Hon. Luamanvao Winnie Laban, said Victoria University in their own way fundraised over \$28,000NZ which is equivalent to 2.4 million vatu. She sincerely thanked the community and all donor partners for helping and supporting this initiative in one way or another. "This great achievement is the result of this dream that brought together this great partnership milestone. This is our love to the children of Vanuatu" she stated.

Associate Professor Laban specially acknowledged Ni Vanuatu Dr. Pala Molisa lecturer Victoria University, Business School for his dream and initiative to assist Vanuatu after cyclone PAM which result in a massive fundraise to help Vanuatu in 2015.

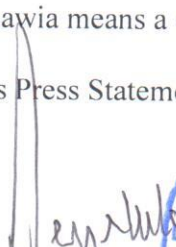
Dr. Pala Molisa told the eagerly listening children, "listen carefully, you are the most important people here, you are all unique and full of talents and abilities, your education now will help you become all the things you want to be". He also added "when women are lifted up, the community is lifted up, when the community is lifted up the country is lifted up", something his mother, Grace Molisa, advocated when he was a young child.

During his official remarks, Minister for Education and Training, Jean Pierre Nirua acknowledged the driving resourcefulness by Dr. Pala Molisa building up this networking relationship to establish this first ever ECCE Resource and Research Centre in Vanuatu.

I acknowledge & congratulate this unique partnership of good people; Victoria University, APTC, VSA, NZAID, DFAT, VESP, MoET Education Services and ECCE, Manua Principal, Area Council, Community, Chiefs, children and their teachers & parents, for bringing us a step closer to what Vanuatu Education wants to achieve. "All the support and effort you put together to ensure this project is completed shows the good working relationship that has been established" stated Nirua.

Tauawia means a coming together of good people.

This Press Statement is approved by:


Jesse Dick Joe
Acting Director General
Ministry of Education and Training

