

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

AND

THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

**SUPPORTING EDUCATION WITH ICT TOOLS AND SERVICES,
INCLUDING INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

Date of Memorandum of Understanding: 19th December, 2012

PARTIES

The MINISTRY of EDUCATION, MoE
(The Ministry)

AND

The OFFICE of the GOVERNMENT CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, OGCIO
(The Office)

BACKGROUND

- A. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) wishes to implement its newly developed Policy on Information Management in the Education Sector. The Ministry's immediate priority is to further develop and maintain efficient centralised sector support systems of information management.

The Ministry is committed to the effective use of information and communications technologies (ICT) in the expansion and upgrade of its "internal" information management systems – to gather and disseminate information about MoE operations and administration, to facilitate better decision-making.

- B. The Government of the Republic of Vanuatu (GoV) is committed to *Transforming Government Service Delivery* through the Integrated Government Initiative (the Plan), 2011-2013. This Plan seeks to enhance Government's management processes for the use of web-based internet applications and other information management technologies and systems.
- C. The Office will implement the Plan through policies within which a strategic framework, institutional structures and programs for the development and management of ICT architecture and services within the Vanuatu Government are defined.
- D. The Ministry and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (the Office) recognize a further potential of ICT to enhance the Education Sector and its contribution to the socio-economic development of Vanuatu. This includes improving the management of the Education Sector, utilizing ICT to enhance the education process and improve its efficiency, as well as developing Vanuatu's human capacity to meet the demands of the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society.
- E. The Ministry and the Office recognize a potential of further enhancing contribution of schools and other educational institutions, in particular in rural areas, to the development of surrounding communities and their capabilities to participate in the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society through a transformation of such schools and other educational institutions into Community Learning, Information and Communication Centres.

- F. The Ministry is committed to dramatically increasing its “external” use of ICT: in the classrooms and in the teaching of students; in encouraging students and teachers to use ICT for research, school projects, independent learning, and reaching out to schools elsewhere in Vanuatu and the World; in developing understanding of ICT as a subject in itself, among teachers, students and administrators; and in developing schools as centres for on-going community education and access to ICT.
- G. The Office is coordinating and supporting a multi-stakeholder process of development of a National ICT Policy (the Policy).
- H. The Policy with regard to education will include objectives for: 1. Increasing use of ICT in improving administrative information management “internally” within the Ministry; 2. Increasing use of ICT “externally” as described in item F above; and 3. Enhancing the contribution of the Education Sector in providing access for the local communities to the benefits of the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society.
- I. The Parties recognize the leading role of the Ministry in designing and implementing policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects for the Education Sector, including use of ICT to support development of the Sector and increase its efficiency.
- J. The Parties recognize that a successful policy development and implementation requires effective engagement of a wide range of relevant stakeholders as well as the public.
- K. This Memorandum of Understanding (the MoU) seeks to establish a basis for clear understanding, sound communication and close collaboration between the Parties.
- L. The Parties wish to record in this MoU the arrangement of the various undertakings and understandings in relation to the cooperation aimed to:
 - i) Enhance the development of the Education Sector and increase its efficiency through the use of ICT (both “internally” and “externally”); and
 - ii) Maximize the contribution of the Education Sector to ensuring that Vanuatu is able to access benefits of the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society.

THE PARTIES' UNDERSTANDINGS

1. Purpose of this MoU

Through this MoU the Parties wish to establish a basis for their close cooperation in relation to:

- i) Enhancing the development of the Education Sector and increasing its efficiency through the use of ICT (both "internally" and "externally"); and
- ii) Maximizing contribution of the Education Sector to ensuring that Vanuatu is able to access benefits of the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society.

The purpose of the Ministry's Policy on Information Management and Implementation thereof, which constitutes part of the cooperation under this MoU, is as set out in the First Schedule to this MoU.

2. Term

This MoU records the Parties' understanding that it shall commence on the date of execution of the Memorandum by the Parties and end by mutual agreement.

3. Financial Arrangements

The MoU does not entail any financial commitments from any of the Parties. The Parties shall, however, endeavour to cooperate in securing appropriate financing for policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects covered in this MoU.

Each Party will each bear the administration and management costs of the efforts to fulfil their obligations under this MoU.

Specific Financial Arrangements associated with the implementation of the Ministry Policy on Information Management are set out in the Second Schedule to this MoU.

4. Undertakings by the Ministry

The Ministry undertakes as follows:

- 4.01 to appoint a motivated full-time officer, who would serve as a "champion" liaison and point person inside the Ministry for ICT-related policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects. This officer shall have a keen interest in ICT application and shall be given the direction and authority to pursue the topic;
- 4.02 to support this officer with an access to necessary expertise and knowledge in increasing ICT usage in the Education Sector;
- 4.03 to provide a comprehensive statement of its Policy on Information Management in the Education Sector to establish the context for implementation;
- 4.04 to provide a statement of its "internal" information needs and its "external" ICT status; and to develop a plan and seek funding for improving its both "internal" and "external" ICT status;

- 4.05 to provide a statement of current situational analysis for its “internal” and “external” ICT situation;
- 4.06 to provide a statement of its preferred approach to information management and design of management tools;
- 4.07 to provide data capture, collation, analysis and reporting requirements to facilitate the upgrade and expansion of its current data bases;
- 4.08 to lead the upgrade and expansion program;
- 4.09 to involve the Office in developing and subsequent implementation of its Policy on Information Literacy as an Educational Outcome;
- 4.10 to actively participate in the development and implementation of a National ICT Policy and other related policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects;
- 4.11 within the context of the development and implementation of a National ICT Policy, to lead the design and implementation of policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects related to the utilization of ICT to support development of the Education Sector and increase its efficiency;
- 4.12 to provide the Office with the required information, including statistics, on the Education Sector and/or facilitate collection of such information;
- 4.13 to inform the Office of existing and planned policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects that have a relation to the ICT sector and/or use of ICT tools or services;
- 4.14 to ensure that its corporate plan and budget support implementation of this MoU;
- 4.15 to support initiatives aiming to utilize facilities of schools and other educational institutions, in particular in rural areas, in support of the development of surrounding communities and enhancement of their capabilities to participate in the knowledge-based ICT-driven economy and society;
- 4.16 to coordinate its ICT-related investment plans with the Office;
- 4.17 to undertake a careful analysis and audit of the quality of the data collected and processed by the current “internal” information system, to determine its accuracy, relevance and timeliness;
- 4.18 to accurately measure, annually via survey, the ICT “external” status of the schools;
- 4.19 to benchmark that “external” status against other Pacific Island nations and other countries around the World; and
- 4.20 to meet with the Office fortnightly to undertake a rapid program of: 1. Measurement of the use of ICT; 2. Inspection of schools with various levels of ICT use; 3. Identification of “lessons learned” from existing ICT successes and failures; 4. Identification of low-unit-cost approaches to increasing ICT usage; 5. Developing an initial program of school-based ICT centres; 6. Seeking substantial funding in grants and low interest loans; and 7. working with

the donors to develop an ambitious but tailored and realistic plan for improving “external” and “internal” ICT usage.

5. Undertakings by the Office

The Office undertakes as follows:

- 5.01 to provide information to the Ministry on the development and implementation of the National ICT Policy and other related policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects at they relate to the Education Sector;
- 5.02 to support active participation of the Ministry in the development and implementation of a National ICT Policy and other related policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects;
- 5.03 to support coordination with other ministries, public authorities and other stakeholders in relation to the development and implementation of ICT-related policies, strategies, initiatives, programmes and projects;
- 5.04 to provide guidance and suggestions on the strategy for improving “internal” and “external” usage of ICTs in education;
- 5.05 to meet fortnightly with the Ministry to achieve the goals set forth in 4.20 above;
- 5.06 to review terms of reference (TORs) and contracts for experts and firms active in ICT to be hired by the Ministry, and on occasion to draft such TORs and contracts; and to provide on occasion at least one panel member for the selection of outside experts and firms;
- 5.07 to facilitate the engagement of expertise to provide the necessary ICT-related services to develop the designs, programs and training in their use; and
- 5.08 to support a program of hardware and software purchase to support the information management systems and the to-be-developed Ministry Policy on Information Literacy as an Educational Outcome.

6. Acknowledgements

Both Parties acknowledge:

- 6.01 that this MoU records the Parties’ understanding of the undertakings and will not give rise to any contractual relationship, but the Parties will work in good faith;
- 6.02 that for the purposes of clause 7.05 below, a “significant matter” includes any event beyond the reasonable control of a Party that results in non-performance of the understandings and undertakings by that party under the MoU; and
- 6.03 that if any dispute arises as to the arrangement recorded in this MoU it will be amicably resolved by the respective authorised representatives of the Parties.

7. Mutual Undertakings

Both Parties undertake as follows:

- 7.01 to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that matters under their respective control work to achieve the expectations set out in this MoU;
- 7.02 to appoint designated officers to coordinate the activities involved in the implementation of the described policies;
- 7.03 to hold periodic (at least once per quarter) meetings between high-level representatives of the parties (normally, Director General for the Ministry; and Government Chief Information Officer for the Office) to discuss strategic matters related to implementation of this MoU;
- 7.04 where appropriate, to engage relevant stakeholders as well as the public in implementation of this MoU; and
- 7.05 to take all reasonable steps through discussions to amend or vary the MoU and its implementation arrangements in the case of significant matters.

8. Variation

The Parties may vary this MoU in writing by agreement between the Parties. Such variation shall be read together with and form part of this MoU.

9. Entire Understandings

This MoU and the Schedules attached to it including any variations to the MoU in accordance with clause 8 constitute the entire understandings and undertakings of the Parties.

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WAS SIGNED

ON THE 19th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2012

Signed for and on behalf of

The Ministry of Education

by:

(Name)

(Designation)

Signed for and on behalf of

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

by:

(Name)

(Designation)

FIRST SCHEDULE

Policy on Information Management in the Education Sector and its Implementation

This is a brief summary of the full Policy Statement and Approach.

The Ministry, through its Policy Statement, provides a framework for information management within the sector that is consistent with and supportive of national policies. The Policy focuses on information management within the sector. Policies of curriculum content and the use of ICT to enhance pedagogy will be developed as part of the Ministry's **Curriculum Development Program** and will be set out in a Policy of Information Literacy as an Educational Outcome. However, work on both "internal" and "external" use of ICTs in education will not wait on this Policy of Information Literacy, and will commence immediately upon signature of this MOU, as described in the MOU.

Under this Information Management "internal" Policy, the Ministry of Education will govern all aspects of information in the education sector to:

- **develop and maintain efficient centralised sector support systems of information management; and**
- **provide advice and guidance about information management to stakeholders at the central, provincial and institution levels.**

Educational data and information are critical to an information-based decision-making culture. A national policy framework will provide a consistent and understandable ICT 'game plan' for information management in the sector.

The aim of the Policy is to guide the development of a system that provides the sector with timely, accurate information to carry out its functions efficiently.

The Policy is an overall guiding policy document for the strengthening of the current system and to coordinate all information management activities within the sector. The Policy supports the Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy 2007-2016 (VESS) and its implementation plan, the Vanuatu Education Road Map (VERM), principles, policies and standards of operation, review and evaluation criteria, the range of operations, role and functions of existing and planned databases and coordination protocols.

Two implementation goals are identified for the Policy:

GOAL 1

A strengthened information system is developed that is responsive in a decentralised system for data and information management, forecasting, policy analysis, planning and operational decision making and management at all levels.

GOAL 2

To have in place strengthened sector information management systems to support all operational functions at all levels through the upgrade of the current VEMIS, and other Ministry databases as well as the development of a comprehensive teacher workforce management database (TSC).

A phased implementation to achieve these two goals will take up to five years. The achievement of these two goals and their associated objectives will effectively position the MoE as the sector information manager capable of authentic:

- collection, collation and dissemination of information and statistics relating to all stages of education in Vanuatu;
- undertaking of focused research and sample surveys on education;

- reporting of educational information to stakeholders, including development partners and international organisations;
- management of education documentation archives; and
- ongoing information literacy and management training for the sector.

The MoE is designated as the central repository of education statistics, information and documentation in Vanuatu with the following key functions:

- Collection, compilation and dissemination of information and statistics relating all levels within the education sector.
- Conducting sample surveys on education aspects to support internal and external research.
- Disseminating educational information to stakeholders, including international organizations.
- Managing a country-wide Documentation Centre for Education.

The Ministry will maintain internal management Data and Information sets to support the following functions:

- Human Resources management
- Financial management
- Asset management
- Project management
- Document and Information management
- Financial and Resource Forecasting
- Use of ICT in the schools

Although the Ministry is a centralised agency, through its legal mandate, will work closely with the provincial authorities, schools, institutions and agencies in the maintenance of linked Data and Information sets for:

- All schools, years 1-13
- Registration of all early childhood centres
- Registration of all schools and institutions
- GIS School Mapping
- Teacher management, including registration, status, deployment, and payroll
- Scholarship management
- Secondary school examinations
- Curriculum development and resources, including use of ICT in the schools

Education sector planning documents have identified desired outcomes and many suitable indicators and targets to monitor progress have been determined. Suitable indicators set out to answer the questions for whom, where, how much, and by when? Collecting and analysing data is the key function of monitoring and evaluation and core to the Information System. Measuring performance requires baseline information. Establishing baselines requires a planned predetermined collection of essential data and reporting to support the sector wide monitoring and evaluation framework. Primary data is collected by the Ministry and other agencies within the sector. For wider comparative purposes data collected by external organisations (secondary data) is used for example for international comparisons.

The development of performance indicators proceeds to link to the information management systems through answers to the following questions:

- What are the sources of data?
- What are the data collection methods?
- Who will collect the data?
- How often will the data be collected?
- What is the difficulty and cost of collecting the data?

- Who will report the data?
- Who will analyse the data?
- Who will use the data?

The Ministry will develop procedures and guidelines for the key areas of:

- Data Collection
- Data Entry, Processing and Storage
- Data Analysis and Outputs
- Data Dissemination
- Data Use
- Publications and Reports

The information system will give the Ministry accurate and reliable information to:

- use indicators to evaluate the performance of Ministry activities;
- use indicators to evaluate the performance of educational institutions/students;
- more effectively plan, budget, manage and monitor education projects and services within provinces and in institutions;
- improve operations and the monitoring of service delivery and outputs;
- manage resources according to school and community needs and outcomes;
- increase flexibility in decision-making at the provincial and institution levels; and
- apply lessons from practice to improve policy decisions.

Specifically the information system will:

- determine essential education data needs at the institutional level and education statistical information needs at the provincial and central levels;
- cover the basic data collection, collation and report generation in institutions and the aggregation of the same data at provincial and Ministry levels;
- assist institution head teachers, and ministry staff to effectively monitor education performance, forecast and make decisions; and
- provide information for a financial analytical framework based on per student-based costs.

Implementation

The expected outputs of the upgrade and expansion include:

- the provision of a hardware and software platform for the MoE, provinces and schools through i-Government to operate an education information system;
- identification, design, program testing and distribution of an education information system functioning at the central, provincial and primary and secondary schools levels;
- key stakeholders able to effectively use the tools of the set of NVEMIS modules for performance monitoring, resource allocation and accountability reporting; and
- the development of a per-student based cost analytical framework for the primary and secondary school education sector.

This approach will provide increased capacity of school management at all levels through capacity-building training and development programs based on specific needs assessments. The current SBM developments and training programs provide a strong launch-pad for specific training at the school level in information management through the introduction of common information recording and reporting practices.

Consistent with the Vanuatu Minimum Quality Standards for Primary Schools (November 2011), a series of educational and financial viability categories of performance are identified to promote effective decision-making. Educational viability indicators are those that relate to the delivery of the curriculum and the quality of learning. Financial viability indicators are those that relate to the financial management of the school.

Indicators of educational viability are divided into five categories:

- Macro Environment
- Access and Student Welfare
- Governance/Management
- School/Community Relationships
- Quality of Learning

Indicators of financial viability are divided into the following two categories:

- Operations
- Financial Ratios

During the upgrade and expansion program preparation and implementation, the current data and information elements and a series of current baseline indicators, that are a subset of the above wider framework, will continue to be collected and used.

The information system upgrade and expansion program is organized into three sub-components:

- the procurement of hardware to support national, MoE, TSC, provincial and school systems;
- the development and piloting of the modules of the NVEMIS software in at least two provinces;
- the associated development and piloting of management and performance evaluation training in the use of information systems for the local stakeholders (head teachers and principals), MoE, TSC and PEO officials and a roll-out of both the software and training to all schools over the next five years and in harmony with other training planned for the same stakeholders under other initiatives such as SBM and school based assessment (SBA).

The development of the information management software in a series of eight modules will allow for a 'step by step' development approach. It is suggested that the functions to be computerized in the NVEMIS modules are:

- basic student, personnel, and inventory databases;
- standard financial transaction recording, accounting and financial reporting;
- aggregation of student, personnel, inventory, and financial data from schools at the zone, provincial and central levels;
- reporting on a series of predetermined educational and financial performance indicators;
- and
- development of a per student cost formula model and analytical framework for the Ministry of Education

End of First Schedule

SECOND SCHEDULE

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Ministry will develop a costings schedule for the implementation of the policy. Implementation will be contingent on the Ministry securing sufficient Budget and Development funding.

The Ministry will work with the Office to identify and secure suitable funding sources.

There is no contractual relationship in fact or implied by this MoU. The joint and collaborative approach to the implementation of the Ministry's Policy assumes that each Party will each bear the administration and management costs of the efforts to fulfil their obligations under this MoU.

End of Second Schedule