

Through NZAID, all New Zealanders are making a difference in the lives of some of the poorest people in the Pacific, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

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NZAID making a difference in Vanuatu

NEW ZEALAND'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

NZAID snapshot

- NZAID is the Government's international aid and development agency
- In 2008/09 NZAID will spend \$471.3 million on overseas development assistance
- Over half of NZAID's expenditure is spent in the Pacific
- NZAID's total bilateral assistance to Vanuatu in 2008/09 is \$17 million.

The facts

- Estimated population of 220,000
- The country is made up of over 80 islands
- 80 percent of the population are subsistence farmers and live in rural areas
- Economic growth is failing to keep up with rapid population growth
- There have been some positive economic signs in beef, kava and cocoa production
- Tourism, construction and offshore financial services are important sources of revenue.

The issues

- 20 percent of the population are without access to health care services
- 74 percent of primary aged children are enrolled in school, the second lowest rate in the Pacific and only 63 percent reach Grade 5
- Urban drift is becoming a problem as is high youth unemployment and rising crime
- There is broad recognition of the need to strengthen good governance.

New Zealand's assistance

NZAID works to support areas that Vanuatu has prioritised and to work through the country's own systems and institutions.

The areas for targeted assistance are:

- Education
- Governance, including law and justice
- Economic development, including assisting rural people to generate income.



Vanuatu school children at a primary school on Tanna

Education

Improving access to, and the quality of, basic education is a priority for NZAID in Vanuatu.

NZAID's strategic approach is to work in closer partnership with the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and with other donors.

NZAID, AusAID and the Ministry have agreed to an arrangement to build the institutional capacity of the Ministry and enable it to better deliver education services. The three parties aim to enter a full Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) to supporting the education system within the next two years.

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New Zealand's International
Aid & Development Agency

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The Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) means that rather than aid agencies delivering their own individual projects, they aim to work together to support a single national education plan. NZAID is significantly increasing its support to the sector to assist Vanuatu to achieve its goal of a quality education for all.

Good Governance

NZAID recognises that effective governance is essential for reducing poverty and creating sustainable development. This recognition underpins the strategic plan and all activities in Vanuatu.

Instability and weak governance makes it harder for a country to tackle poverty and vulnerability. Strengthened governance is critical for sustaining as well as accelerating Vanuatu's development. NZAID also recognises the need for increased participation by civil society in policy formulation and decision-making.

Enhancing law and justice

NZAID has a well established and long-term commitment to help the Vanuatu Government improve law and order through the new Vanuatu Corrections Service.

A newly formed Department of Corrections is responsible for the prison operations and establishing a new probation service. It has five NZAID-funded in-country advisers drawn from the New Zealand Department of Corrections to work alongside staff as part of an institutional strengthening programme. Critical support to the Judiciary is also provided through the placement of a New Zealand Judge who sits on the Vanuatu Supreme Court, and to the customary land disputes resolution process.

Delivery of Social Services

Improving service delivery to the provinces has been prioritised by the Government of Vanuatu, and NZAID is providing a long term Technical Assistant to the Department of Local Authorities to support their decentralisation plan.

The aim is to improve the lives of the 80 percent of the population who live in rural areas without reliable access to quality social services.

NZAID also supports community provision of social development by funding:

- Wan Smol Bag, a local Non-Governmental Organisation that works with chiefs, rural

communities, youth, women's organisations, teachers and the police to raise awareness of the workings of government and people's rights

- The Sanma Counselling Centre, which plays an effective role in addressing domestic violence against women and families in the three northern provinces of Vanuatu.



Actors at Wan Smol Bag Theatre present a play on political rights

Economic development

NZAID has focused on economic development as the third pillar of its country strategy, next to Education and Good Governance. The agency's objective here is to increase economic growth and strengthen livelihoods, particularly in rural areas. Both NZAID and the Vanuatu Government agree that economic development should be led by the private sector.

NZAID is committed to improving donor coordination in the productive sector, which is one of the most difficult areas to harmonise in due to its complexity.

Currently NZAID supports the following activities for economic development:

- The agricultural census
- Agricultural extension review
- Review and strategic planning of the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as support for some core VCCI activities
- Farm Support Association - agricultural extension services and training
- Capacity-building of the Ministry of Trade in policy, strategy and negotiation
- Inter-Island Shipping study and strategy for improved reliability of service to outer areas
- Department of Livestock and Quarantine – support to core services
- Department of Forestry – nursery development assistance
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – improved facilitation of production and marketing.