TRR
Telecommunications &
Radiocommunications
Regulator

**The Government
of The Republic
of Vanuatu**

LONG GOD YUMI STANAP

Universal Access Policy (UAP) Implementation Update

Alma Wensi
TRR, UAP Project Manager

Presented to the National ICT Development Committee, Meeting No.4/2014, Melanesian Hotel

Background

- UAP approved by COM November 2013

- Aims at improvement of telecommunications services to 'unserved' and 'under-served' parts of Vanuatu

- Key objective is to achieve 98% of population coverage by 1st January 2018 for voice, narrowband and broadband services; at 21mbps/12mbps download & upload speeds.

- Policy directs a 'Play' (agree with operators on an approach to achieve UAP objectives) or 'Pay' (collect a levy) approach.

- TRR can levy a fee up to 4% on all 'Payer' operators if they do not wish to 'Play'. (4% of their net revenue)

- Development of other UA initiatives to drive demand, assist & contribute to achievement of 98% population coverage.
- TRR is the implementing agency as determined by the UAP

'Play' or 'Pay'

- Policy is innovative, powerful & visionary. Has already gained traction, commitment & support. Initially has some critics and minor setbacks – now we are through those – to balance the significant progress made to date.

- Players and Payers have been identified. 3 Players, 5 Payers.

- A 4% levy was set, All Payers were invoiced & all payments have been made into the UAP Fund for the levy period of 2014-2015. No levy has been applied since 2009 to promote sustainable competition and support rollout.
- Licensees audit & review; Licensees with no actual provision of service were cautioned; Revocation of 6 licenses. Now remaining 8 licensees.

- Digicel, TVL & Telsat have committed as Players and fully support UAP. Players will rollout services to unserved areas at their own cost, to meet their obligations under their licenses and the Telecommunications Act.
- Many millions of Vatu will be committed to achieve willing rollout by Players – an indication of industry collaborative working together to achieve UAP.

Play or Pay – cont..

- TRR conducted industry-wide broadband speeds consultations, on the 6th of May and 14th of August, as a result of industry implementation concerns of the 21mbps/12mbps speeds specified in the UAP.
- TRR issued its determination on UAP Broadband speeds on the 12th of November 2014 after consultation with industry.
- Speeds Determination provides for a minimum speed of <u>2mbps/1mbps</u> download and upload speed, noting that the technology(ies) implemented at the time of rollout or through subsequent upgrading, are capable of meeting the broadband speeds specified in the UAP.

- Voice & SMS population coverage is currently estimated to be around 92%
- Estimated additional 6% to achieve 98% target
- Major unserved areas identified using TRR's Global Information System(GIS) database – and has been the key UAP metric & implementation reference tool
- TRR has provided 2 in-confidence reports to the Minister – as per UAP
- A public report was developed for stakeholders awareness

Other UAP Initiatives

- A tripartite agreement signed 15th of January between OGCIO, GfG and TRR on an undertaking of pilot programs to be implemented under the UAP Fund
- Up to 70 Million Vatu from UAP Fund allocated to ICT programs to schools and communities
- Three ICT programs were developed. (CLICC, TFS & ICS)
- 85% of this allocation is to schools – to address priority 1 of the National ICT policy – ICT in education

Photo credit: Michael Hawkins

CLICC program

- Computer Lab & Internet Community Center (CLICC)
- **Funding**: 50 Million Vatu
- **Objective**: To obtain an effective, usable internet services and ICT for schools and the community.
- **Expected Outcome**: Increase use of ICTs by students, teachers, school admins to support education process; including businesses and residents in enhancing day-to-day social and business activities
- Schools must apply to be selected for the program
- 15 Schools selected

Photo credit: Tim Martins

TFS program

- Tablets for Students (TFS)
- **Funding**: 10 Million Vatu
- **Objective**: Provide school students with electronic tablets to be used as a tool to support educational process
- **Expected Outcome**: Increase use of ICTs by students, teachers, school admins to support education process;
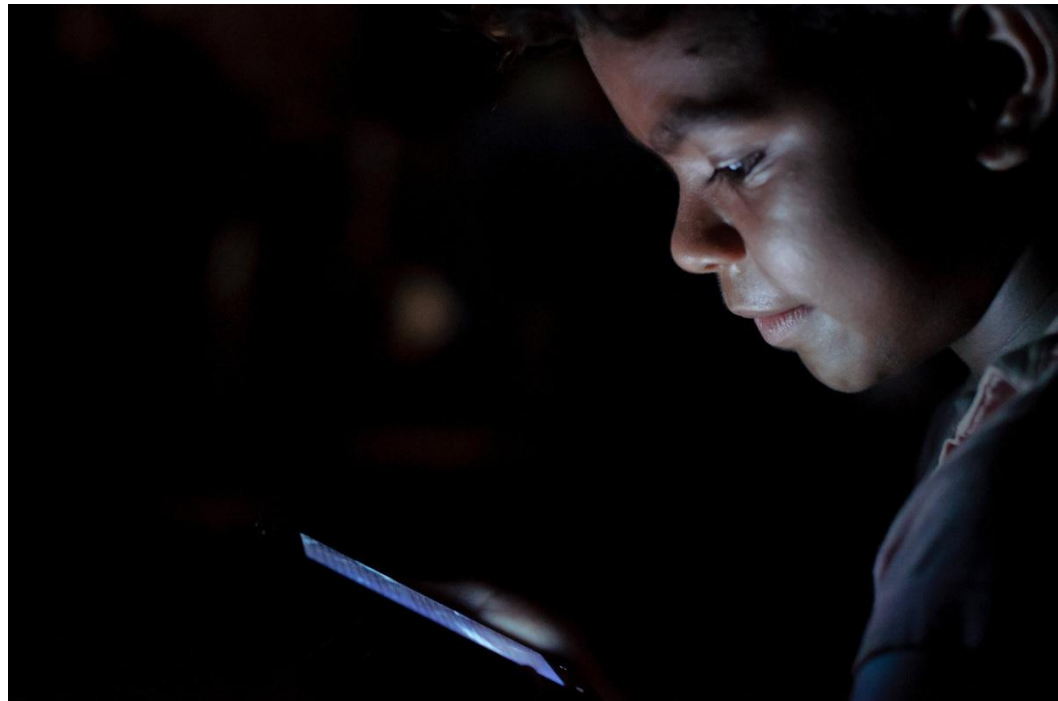- Schools must apply to be selected for the program
- 7 Schools selected

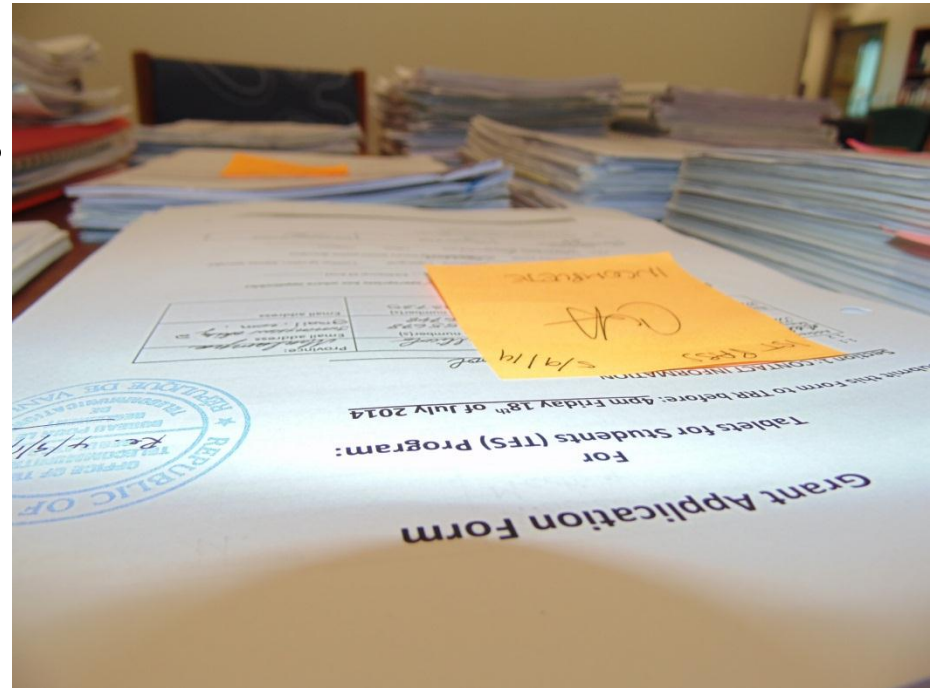Photo credit: Graham Crumb – imagicity.com

ICS program

- Internet Café Support (ICS)
- **Funding**: 10 Million Vatu
- **Objective**: Establish public internet access points, making access to internet available to residents of Vanuatu.
- **Expected Outcome**: Increase use of ICTs by residents and businesses in enhancing their day-to-day social and business activities
- Businesses must apply to be selected for the program
- 3 Businesses were selected

Applications Outcome

- 322 Applications received in total
- Applications exceeded expectations
- **Indication of the scale of incipient demand for internet, ICTs and automation in education and in the community at large.**

Selection Process

- Selections represented a range of locations, language, risk level and suitability to provide essential lessons for all stakeholders.
- Followed an independent and strict three staged transparent process
- Stage 1 tested for completeness without considering quality of response
- Stage 2 applied basic criteria to verify that the application qualified for consideration
- Stage 3 considered:
    - Quality and detail of application, demonstrated commitment, capacity and understanding of candidate
    - Potential impact for staff, students and community members
    - Logistical challenges presented by the installation of a CLICC facility and capacity to deliver level of support and assistance necessary to ensure success of project
    - Risk of failure relative to the potential to learn valuable lessons concerning deployment of ICT resources in remote & rural Vanuatu
- Independent reviewer assesses and provides recommendations to GRC
- Grant Review Committee (OGCIO, GfG, MoE & TRR) approves the shortlisted and selected schools

Selection Outcome

CLICC

- Arep Bilingual School
- Matevullu College
- Sulua School
- St Patrick's College
- Torgil Rural Training Center
- Ambaebulu School
- Lambumbu Primary School
- Lamap Community Schools

Sarakata Primary School
St Anne School
Nandiutu Bilingual School
College d'Orap
College de Walarano
Eles Center School
Tafea College

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TFS

- Arep Bilingual School
- Matevullu College
- Venei Mataipevu
- Merei Center School
- Ambaebulu School

Epi High School
Lycee LAB

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ICS

- Ituani Infomaesen Senta
- Nali Enterprise
- Tukunoamauri

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What happens next?

- Letters issued to all applicants
- Preliminary site surveys conducted
- Confirm and Finalize school requirements and schools to be supported through funding under each program
    - Power
    - Connectivity to internet
    - Room spacing, storage, training, etc

- Procurement of goods and services
- Installation and distribution of goods and services to successful recipients
- Training of Teacher Champions
- Public awareness and orientation programs on ICT & internet usage

- Development of the programs M&E with addressing priorities of NICTP

- Target completion of CLICC, TFS and ICS by end of 2015
- TRR will actively monitor and work with recipients

Next steps - cont..

- Finalize Players commitment by assessing coverage contributions towards the 98% objective and engage in contractual arrangements

- Engagement of a coverage audit expert to verify current coverage and conduct future assessment leading to UAP 98% objective. TRR has engaged an expert for this role.

- Engagement of a Quality of Services (QoS) expert to define and specify the QoS guidelines that service providers must meet for various telecommunications services. TRR has engaged an expert for this role.

- Develop a confidential Report to the Minister by 6th of December on the UAP implementation progress to date

What does it all come to?

- Other UAP initiatives (CLICC, TFS, ICS) promotes universal access to ICT infrastructure and devices – and having ICT recognized as an enabler to social and economical development
- The UAP drives and creates access opportunities to 98% of Vanuatu population – in line with achieving the priorities of the National ICT Policy, particularly Priorities 1 & 2.
- There are indications of growing interests in ICT, the applications outcome show this – potential growth in demand once the programs are out in our communities. ICT and use of internet may follow the same footprints on growth of use of mobile devices in 2008 after Digicel's entry into the telecommunications market.

Issues

- It must be recognized that awardees will experience significant initial operational and capital support but will require ongoing support
- Future capital support opportunities from the UAP will be given to other potential schools and communities that meet application criteria
- Power challenges remain in connecting rural schools

- Access and development to wide-range of local digital content

- There is recognition by schools on importance of ICT in education and the community – following outcome of 322 applications. There is a need to connect up <u>all</u> schools.

Recommendation

- VanGov with relevant supporting partners to consider how further support can be provided to recipients of CLICC, TFS and ICS to ensure sustainability and success of the programs
- Consider efficient, sustainable and cost effective renewable sources of energy with support from relevant stakeholders as Dept. of Energy to address concerns of power. (Ref. strategy 1.2 of NICT policy)
- Identify more relevant stakeholders and gather more content through strategy 1.3 of NICT policy with input for use in CLICC & TFS programs
- A separate project maybe developed for the educational content development for use throughout Vanuatu schools
- All stakeholders & Govt must recognize the growing interest and demand for ICT, despite it is new to Vanuatu, to contribute to success of first round of recipients and encourage similar programs in the future

Tankio Tumas