

# VESP View

## VANUATU EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

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Issue 4: Open VEMIS – The Vanuatu Education Planning Toolbox



**Vanuatu's Ministry of Education and Training is delivering transparent and practical information to better plan for Vanuatu's education future.**

### Open data – why is it important?

Vanuatu's Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) provides education facilities to nearly 80,000 children, from early childhood to the end of secondary school, and employs nearly 3,000 primary and secondary teachers.

With more than 500 schools and over 400 early childhood care and education centres, accurate allocation of funding and resources is vital to ensure that the education system is managed well in order to provide the best educational outcomes for the children of Vanuatu. The Ministry cannot do this without access to reliable and up to date information about schools, teachers and students. For the past three years, the Ministry, with support through VESP, has followed a steady path to improve its systems for collecting, analysing and using education data.

### Data during disaster recovery

The importance of high quality, easily accessible data is vital particularly during disaster risk mitigation and recovery. After Cyclone Pam in 2015, ensuring school students were safe and well required access to lost paper-based resources, delaying the response and headcount of safe students.



In contrast, during the recent evacuation of Ambae due to the potential eruption of Manaro Voui volcano, officials had immediate access to the latest student information, providing a rapid and seamless headcount check ensuring students were safe and accounted for.

### Delivering data where it's needed – Open VEMIS

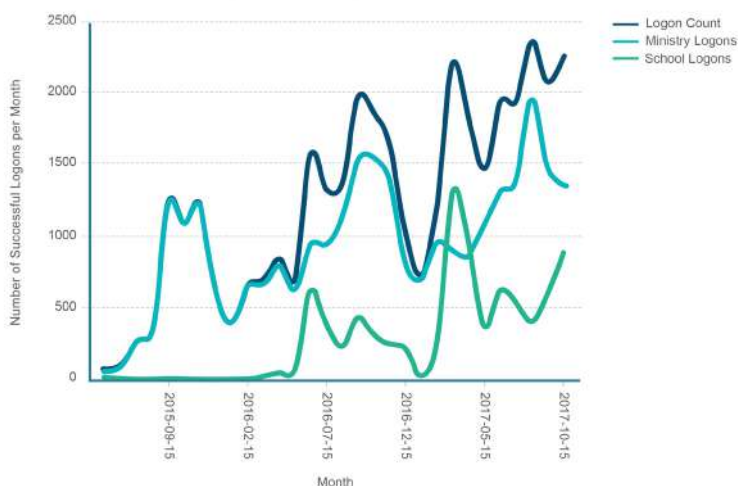
When VESP began in 2013, Ministry data was held in numerous spread sheets and the Vanuatu Education Management Information System ("old" VEMIS). This led to inaccurate data from both the Ministry and schools themselves, with numerous spread sheets systems offering conflicting data. After consultation with stakeholders, a decentralised data collection with centralised online platform approach was proposed, the result of which is the new Open VEMIS.

Open VEMIS is suitable for all browsers, platforms and IT systems. It replaces the original system that used individual spread sheets and paper-based reporting systems. Paper data collection is still available for those schools without internet connections, and the web-based version can be used on all types of computers and tablets. Open VEMIS is supported by the Ministry IT Unit and is provided to schools and Ministry units free of charge.

Open VEMIS provides a single source of data for all Ministry information needs, with schools and units taking responsibility for their own specific data which is then collated and shared between all users. The data is based on individual student records, rather than census data, and the multiple 'pressure points', ensure the overall data quality is improved.

This single centralised system provides national reporting on student attendance, school finances, student health, teacher performance, as well as mandatory reporting to various Vanuatu government and external agencies. It also provides student records from early childhood care and education, to primary school, secondary school and in the near future, tertiary education.

Open VEMIS Logon Activity



This graph shows the number of times that school and Ministry staff have successfully logged on each month. One line indicates the number of Ministry staff, another line indicates the number of schools and the third lines is the total successful logons per month.



## How Open VEMIS is used

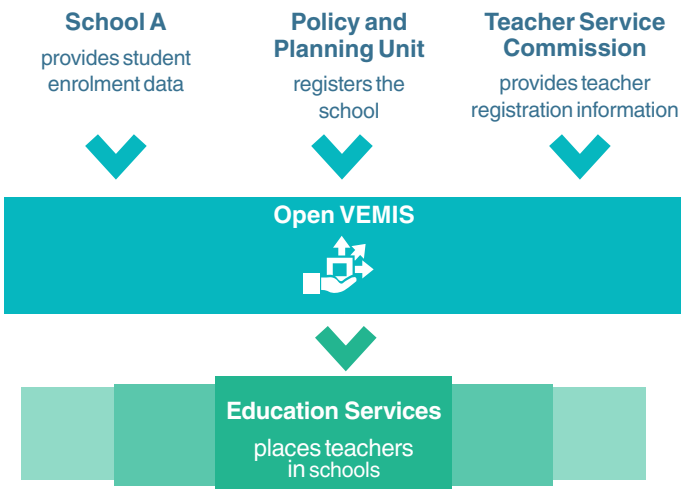
Student records are used to calculate and disburse school grants, providing a transparent and accountable mechanism to use Ministry resources appropriately.

Open VEMIS provides users with a single source of data, but with different areas responsible for specific information. For example, an individual school will upload student data to Open VEMIS where it is accessed by the Ministry Infrastructure Unit, which will use this information to provide the necessary infrastructure as determined by the student population density.

Open VEMIS is also integrated with Civil Registry, Ministry of Finance and Bank of Vanuatu data, while the Ministry of Health is interested in using the student health data in the future.

## Why Open VEMIS works

The Ministry is developing Open VEMIS first and foremost to meet the needs of its primary users – the Ministry of Education and Training, schools, students and the people of Vanuatu. The system uses cost effective tools and techniques already in place with growing additional functionality receiving increased input from users to further ensure data quality. The more the system is “home grown” and seen as providing tangible benefits to people’s day to day jobs, the more likely it is that the users will maintain a strong commitment to providing accurate and quality data. The benefits will also flow to external stakeholders such as development partners and regional agencies who will have increased confidence in the quality of the information being provided for their decision-making purposes.



## Other key benefits include:

Open VEMIS supports a **paper version** for those schools that do not have internet access.

There is **controlled overlap** with the previous VEMIS system.

The system is based on **individual student records**, rather than annual census figures.

Open VEMIS is **fully decentralised**, working at school and provincial office level.

It will provide data to the wider community, including the general public, to **improve transparency and accountability**.

It is **cost effective**, with no additional hardware or software required by schools.

The design of Open VEMIS focuses on the **delivery of well-functioning data services** to assist Ministry decision making, not the wishes of donors or technology providers.

The **integration of data quality** procedures, such as bank statements, Civil Registry and Ministry of Finance data, allows continual data reconciliation and internal cross checks.

## Next steps

Some new features in progress or soon to be developed include:

- Ongoing training for teachers and Ministry staff
- A French language version
- Student disability assessments
- Viewing of teacher payslips
- Teacher attendance and teacher performance management
- Dedicated teacher login
- Enhancements to school mapping
- Detailed recording of teacher qualifications
- Using direct link with Civil Registry data to improve accuracy of teacher/student details
- Fully integrated exam assessment module.
- More teacher and ministry training including online materials
- Adhoc reporting tools for select Ministry staff
- A Public Access module
- Upgraded servers
- Improved grant calculation and disbursement processes
- Integrated staff resource allocation calculations

As the original VEMIS is phased out over the next few years, Open VEMIS will become a crucial tool for Vanuatu to achieve its long term strategic goals of improving education quality, providing more equitable access to education and ensuring a well-managed education system.

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