



## **Year 5 Curriculum Materials Production and Distribution**

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GOVERNEMENT  
DE LA REPUBLIQUE  
DE VANUATU  
MINISTRE DE  
L'EDUCATION ET DE LA  
FORMATION



GOVERNMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF VANUATU  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING



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## **Annexes**

Annex 1 – Declaration Statement from the Curriculum Development Unit

Annex 2 – The Vanuatu textbook outsourcing story

## Acronyms

CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
GEDSI	Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion
GoV	Government of Vanuatu
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
PEO	Principal Education Officer
QA	Quality Assurance
SEO	Secondary Education Officer
TA	Technical Adviser
TG	Teacher Guide
VEMIS	Vanuatu Education Management Information System
VESP	Vanuatu Education Support Program

# 1 Executive Summary

VESP is a long-term investment funded by the Australian Government. The program is implemented in partnership with the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) through the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The program provides support for improving education outcomes through a focus on school community partnerships (access), teaching and learning including school leadership (quality) and overall management (institutional and provincial support).

A key aspect of the program involves supporting the MoET to implement a curriculum reform agenda in the primary years of schooling. This includes supporting development of a range of curriculum materials to assist and guide teacher to implement the new National Primary School Syllabus.

For 2019, a significant volume of curriculum materials was provided for Year 5 classes. Some of the materials were locally produced while others were purchased and adapted through a publishing company. Table 1 below illustrates the materials provided in 2019. The table indicates if the materials were a local production or procured through a publishing company.

**Table 1: Number of publications printed and publication method**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Allocation Goal</b>	<b>French Versions Printed</b>	<b>English Versions Printed</b>	<b>Total Printed</b>	<b>Production Method</b>
<b>Novels x3 per student – Year 5</b>	3 novels per student	15,660	26,100	41,760	Outsourced
<b>Year 5 Science Textbook</b>	1 textbook per student	5,400	9,000	63,000	Outsourced
<b>Year 5 Mathematics Textbook</b>	1 textbook per student	5,400	9,000	63,000	Outsourced
<b>Year 5 Social Science Textbook</b>	1 textbook per student	5,400	9,000	63,000	Hybrid – Outsourced but locally written with contract writers
<b>Year 5 Teacher Guides (x6 in English: x6 in French)</b>	6 Teacher Guides (TGs) per teacher (435 teachers)	1,080	1,800	2,880	Local Publication
<b>Total No. of Books</b>		<b>32,940</b>	<b>54,900</b>	<b>87,840</b>	

This report confirms that all Year 5 curriculum materials listed in Table 1 above were produced and distributed to provincial sites ready for dispatchment to schools before 30 January 2020. A copy of a signed letter by the Principal Education Officer (PEO) of the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) confirming that all materials were received and dispatch to all provinces for distribution to government and government supported schools is attached as Annex 1.

## 2 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to describe the extent to which agreed deliverable 1 for the Vanuatu Education Support Program (VESP) has been achieved. The agreed deliverable is **Year 5 Curriculum Materials (TGs) Production and Distribution** and the progress marker is *Year 5 materials developed with VESP support are dispatched to government and government assisted primary schools in 6 provinces.*

Deliverable 1 aligns to Output 2.2 of the VESP Results Framework – *Teachers provided with resources to implement the curriculum.* Achievement of this deliverable demonstrates the extent to which the program is on track to achieve this output.

A significant volume of materials was provided by the MoET with support from VESP for all Year 5 classes and teachers in 2019 – see Table 1. These included TGs and complementary textbooks for Mathematics, Science and Social Science and novels to align with the Language and Communication TG. The Mathematics and Science textbooks and three novels were procured through a service delivery agreement with Read Pacific, a private publishing company. CDU worked with the publishing company to identify suitable materials for Vanuatu that could be adapted to French. Direct purchasing of French materials was considered prohibitively expensive.

In this report, we describe and discuss the processes involved in the development and distribution of curriculum materials. The conclusion describes the lessons learned and presents recommendations for future TG development.

This report focuses mainly on the development of Year 5 teachers guides. This is because development and distribution of the TGs was predominately an in-house, local enterprise supported through VESP. It is also because it is felt that this activity most develops the capability of the MoET to manage all aspect of the book chain and publication process. These are valuable skills that assist for developing local materials and for negotiating with companies when outsourcing materials production.

The publication of TGs was wholly a local enterprise undertaken by CDU with support from VESP. The supply of the Science and Mathematics textbooks was however outsourced to Read Pacific through an open market procurement process. TGs provide a scope and sequence for implementing the syllabus and ideas for teaching and learning and assessment. Along with an associated professional learning program funding through VESP, the TGs are considered essential for supporting the ongoing rollout of the new curriculum.

For 2019, VESP provided technical and financial support to the MoET to develop six TGs in English and six TGs in French aligned to the Vanuatu National Primary Syllabus for Year 5. The learning areas that TGs are developed for include Art and Craft, Physical and Health Education, Science, Social Science, Language and Communication and Mathematics. VESP also support the MoET distribute TGs to all schools with Year 6 classes.

The report also pays attention to the development of a Year 5 Social Science textbooks as this was a collaborative exercise between the MoET, a private publishing company and VESP. A hybrid approach to publication was adopted for development of the Year 5 French and English versions of a

Social Science textbook. Authorship and editing were managed by CDU with support from VESP. Writing and editing contracts between individual and CDU were outsourced to local providers to do this work. Writers and editors were expected to collaborate to ensure alignment to the syllabus and TGs. CDU also managed all aspects associated with content editing to ensure use of culturally sensitive graphics and text. Social Science was selected by the MoET as a textbook to maintain a high degree of local involvement with because of the strong local focus of the learning outcomes, particularly related to culture.

The textbook writers worked closely with staff appointed by CDU to write the Social Science TG. They were managed by CDU leadership with support from the VESP Technical Adviser (TA) based at CDU. A contract was issued to a publishing company to provide graphic design solutions, printing and packaging of materials ready for distribution. This textbook was to be written in English and French.

## **2.1 Context**

The Vanuatu context is important for understanding complexities and challenges associated with development and distribution of curriculum materials. About 307,000 people live in the archipelago nation, consisting of about 83 relatively small islands, spread out over approximately 1,300 kilometres between the most northern and southern islands. The largest towns are the capital Port Vila with a population of over 50,000 and Luganville with a population of about 16,312. The remaining 250,000 people are spread through the islands. Accessibility to many schools is often challenging involving air, sea and road travel. Quite often roads to some communities are impassable during the wet season.

Because Vanuatu has a relatively small population, it has fewer people to produce the same breadth of curriculum materials than a larger and wealthier nation. It also has fewer experienced and qualified people to produce the curriculum materials expected of them. About 91% of the approximately 1,450 teachers in primary schools either have no qualifications or only have Certificates in Education from Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education. Add to this, there are challenges associated being one of the most linguistically diverse nations on the earth when it comes to producing written materials. There are three national languages – Bislama, French and English. It is required by the MoET that the Year 5 Curriculum materials were to be provided in English and French. This places additional strain on the already limited qualified and experienced teachers to write because in essence the workload is doubled.

To illustrate the challenges, the table below summarises findings from a review undertaken by the Curriculum TA in collaboration with the MoET in regard to perceptions of the capacity of local staff to manage aspects of the book chain to curriculum materials. It highlights that there is limited capacity but acknowledges there are pockets of capable people who must be harnessed to develop others. It means the program (VESP) must work with the MoET in creative ways to maximise resources to develop materials within defined timeframes.



**Table 2: Materials Development Capacity Audit**

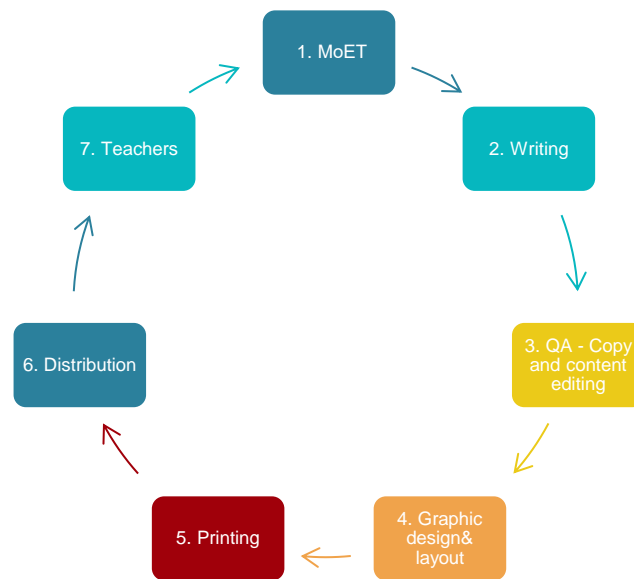
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Very high capacity</b>	<b>High capacity</b>	<b>Satisfactory capacity</b>	<b>Limited capacity</b>
Writers				✓
Illustrators				✓
Editors				✓
Layout			✓	
Print		✓		
Distribution		✓		

It is therefore important to put into context achievements by CDU. 2019 was a particularly challenging year for the work unit. The Secondary Education Officer (SEO) who had many years of experience managing the Production Unit retired at the end of the 2018. They were replaced by a current staff member who was expected to continue in the existing role but also take up duties as the SEO responsible for overseeing curriculum materials development. This person had limited experience in publication. Coupled with a doubling of their workload resulted in meant additional pressure on the entire team. Fortunately, the lead writers were able to step up and take on additional delegate responsibilities to coordinate writing, editing Quality Assurance (QA) and layout of TGs to print ready stage. Support was provided through VESP to develop CDU staff skills and manage these processes.

## 2.2 Scope

Diagram 1 below illustrates the elements of the book chain involved in curriculum materials publication. These include authorship (writing), QA (copy and content editing), graphic design and layout, printing and distribution.

Diagram 1: Elements of the book chain for materials production



This report focuses on each of the processes related to each aspect of the book chain for development and distribution of Year 5 TGs. It includes description and analysis of processes the MoET have been supported to develop to ensure publication and distribution of TGs. The report does not assess if the guides have reached schools (although the assumption is, they have) since this is outside VESP's scope of influence. It is also outside the influence of CDU to ensure materials get to schools. This is because provinces have devolved responsibility for distribution to school once materials reach their jurisdiction.

## 3 Methodology

In this section, a brief description of processes associated with development and distribution of Year 5 TGs is described. This is followed by a brief description of the processes used to develop the Year 5 Social Science textbook.

It is acknowledged that publication and supply of other Year 5 curriculum materials were provided through a private publishing company. These included supply to textbooks for Mathematics and Science and novels to complement the Language and Communication learning area. Although this involved significant engagement from CDU, the publication processes (writing, editing, QA, printing and distribution) for these materials is not covered in any detail this report. Descriptions of the volume of materials and the distribution undertaken by the MoET are, however, described.

**Picture 1: The acting SEO of CDU leading Year 5 TG development**



### 3.1 Supporting development of teacher guides

CDU is responsible for TG development. The diagram below illustrates the key stages in the TG development process. It includes roles and responsibilities for different actions. The whole process from initiating writing to printing ready for distribution was scheduled to occur between the months of February to November (10 months).

Diagram 2: Stages in the teacher guide development process



For 2019, CDU sought to manage all aspects of the TG development in-house. It was however agreed to contract writers and editors and outsource printing to reduce impact on an understaffed CDU. Table 3 below shows those aspects of TG development that were undertaken in-house or outsourced.

**Table 3: Year 6 TG development 2020**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>TGs Development</b>	<b>TG Quality Assurance</b>
Writing	In-house contract writers contracted to CDU	Task Group Lead writers Task Group Outsource editing
Illustration	Outsource	
Content editing	In-house & Outsource	
Copy editing	Outsource	
Layout	In-house	
Printing	Outsource	CDU
Distribution	In-house	CDU

Key aspects of the Year 5 teacher development processes are briefly described below.

### **3.1.1 Lead writers**

Two lead writers, one Anglophone and one Francophone were contracted to CDU to oversee all aspects of the publication process in 2019. The MoET agreed to extend their contracts for 2020 given their good performance. Lead writers coordinate the activities of writers to ensure deliverables and milestones specified in individual contracts are achieved. They also coordinate QA processes that include teachers reviewing content, pitch of the documents, alignment and validity of activities and assessments to the target learning outcomes. In addition, they work with support from the VESP Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Coordination and the Curriculum Inclusion Officer to ensure training, writing, editing and review processes adhere to good practice. Another aspect of lead writer’s role was to manage version control of the TGs.

**Picture 2: Lead writers reviewing Year 5 TGs for final print run**



### **3.1.2 Writers**

Because CDU is understaffed, it was agreed to contract experienced Anglophone and Francophone teachers to write TGs. A fair and transparent recruitment and selection process was undertaken to identify them. Contracts were issued to the writers that stipulated payment of a fee upon delivery of writing milestones. The writers had the option of working from a home base or at CDU. Writers were provided a one-week training program delivered by the lead writers in collaboration with the Curriculum TA. They were also provided locked templates for writing to an agreed format. This included a workshop on applying GEDSI principles when writing and selecting images to ensure no bias and promotion of the idea that all students can learn and have a right to learning. Writers were given with guidelines for version control and processes for backing work. They are also expected to attend task group meetings to review content of each unit of work. The task group comprises experienced teachers who review the appropriateness of the content of the TGs.

### **3.1.3 Quality assurance task group**

CDU identified experienced Francophone and Anglophone primary school-based teachers to participate as a member of a task group. Six task groups were convened and aligned to a learning area. Their role was to review the content and quality of a TG for a specified learning area. Francophone and Anglophone teachers were represented on each task group. The task groups were coordinated by the lead Writers. Where feedback was obtained, the lead writers negotiated with the writers to make adjustments to the content or text of the TGs as required.

### **3.1.4 Editors**

Editors play an important role in bring the materials to a high standard. A Francophone and Anglophone editor were recruited to provide content and copy-editing services to CDU. They were responsible for reviewing each TG and suggesting edits. Where issues were identified, editors were required to liaise through the lead writer who coordinated and managed redrafting of documents.

### **3.1.5 Graphic Design and layout**

Illustrations and layout to print ready stage were done by the CDU Production Unit. The Production Unit was provided with updated software through VESP and supported to manage version control. The Production Unit comprises of three graphic designers and two illustrators. They were supported to develop a work plan and bring all TGs to a print ready stage. This includes badging with MoET and Australian Aid logos all TGs and producing cover pages.

**Picture 3: A member of the Production Unit laying out a Year 5 teacher guide**



### **3.1.6 Printing**

CDU does not have a printing facility, so printing of the TGs was outsourced to a local printing company. CDU were supported to oversee the process of procuring the services of the printing company and for provide specifications for printing. Support was provided to assist CDU to undertake final proofing before authorising a full print run.

**Picture 4: Final printed copies of the Year 5 TGs in English**



## **3.2 Year 5 Social Science textbook development**

Based on findings from textbook development pilot in 2018 where all aspects of the book chain were outsourced, a hybrid approach was adopted for development of the 2019 Year 5 Social Science textbook. This involved the MoET taking responsibility for coordinating authorship, editing and QA of the materials but outsourcing graphic design, layout and printing to a publishing company. In this instance, the publishing company was based in New Zealand with storage facilities in Port Vila, Vanuatu. For further information on the textbook outsourcing experience in 2018, refer to Annex 2.

With financial and technical support from the VESP TA, CDU secured the services of Anglophone and Francophone writers and editors through fair and transparent recruitment processes. Working to specified targets, the writers worked in collaboration with CDU leadership, the VESP TA and the Social Science TG writers to develop the textbook. They liaised regularly with CDU leadership and engaged in review and reflection forums to refine the content of the units within the textbook. The VESP TA supported the MoET with the review processes and to ensure the content was appropriate for content and the phase of schooling. Graphics were forwarded through CDU to the publication company for development ready for layout. The writers were required to present each unit to CDU and engage in task group meetings to review the content of the textbook. The task group comprised experienced teachers. Once again, the VESP TA provided “just in time” support to assist CDU staff manage these aspects of the book chain. In particular the VESP TA played a key role in managing the relationship between the publishing company and the MoET staff when things did not go to plan or were not delivered on agreed schedules.

Once a unit was written and approved by the task group and CDU leadership it was forwarded to the publication company for layout. This involved close collaboration between the publishing company and CDU staff and sometimes writers. Once the textbook was fully laid out, it was sent back to CDU for review and comment and then final endorsement for printing.

CDU provided the publishing company with printing and packing specification before shipping to Vanuatu from New Zealand.



### **3.3 Supporting distribution of Year 5 curriculum materials**

Although there is a growing trend for education providers to contract publishers to develop and distribute materials, CDU indicated that they would like to be supported to manage the distribution themselves. CDU leadership reported that multiple interventions in the past were not as effective as they should be.

**Picture 5: Loading Year 5 materials ready for distribution to the island**



VESP supported the MoET to develop a materials distribution model. This involved collaboration with key personnel to Provincial Education Office staff to establish distribution points within each province and establish processes for funding transport costs to schools and collecting receipts from school site upon receiving the materials.

VESP also supported CDU to contract a local company to manage the freight of materials to nominated sites including all schools on Efate. While all students' materials were packaged ready for distribution, CDU agreed to take responsibility for packaging and labelling TGs ready for distribution to schools. They also agreed to manage communications between the freight company and provincial sites representatives to ensure all materials were distributed and received ready for dissemination to schools.

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**Picture 6: Materials ready for distribution**



**Picture 7: The CDU Distribution Officer freighting books on Air Vanuatu**



**Picture 8: Materials arrive for distribution to schools**



On request of CDU, a Materials Production and Distribution Officer was appointed and funded through VESP to coordinate the materials distribution process. This officer created and maintained a database of materials distributed and received at provincial sites and school sites, by liaising with the provincial office site representatives.

**Picture 9: The curriculum TA and colleagues on a field trip monitoring materials distribution. The base of Mount Yasur, Tanna**

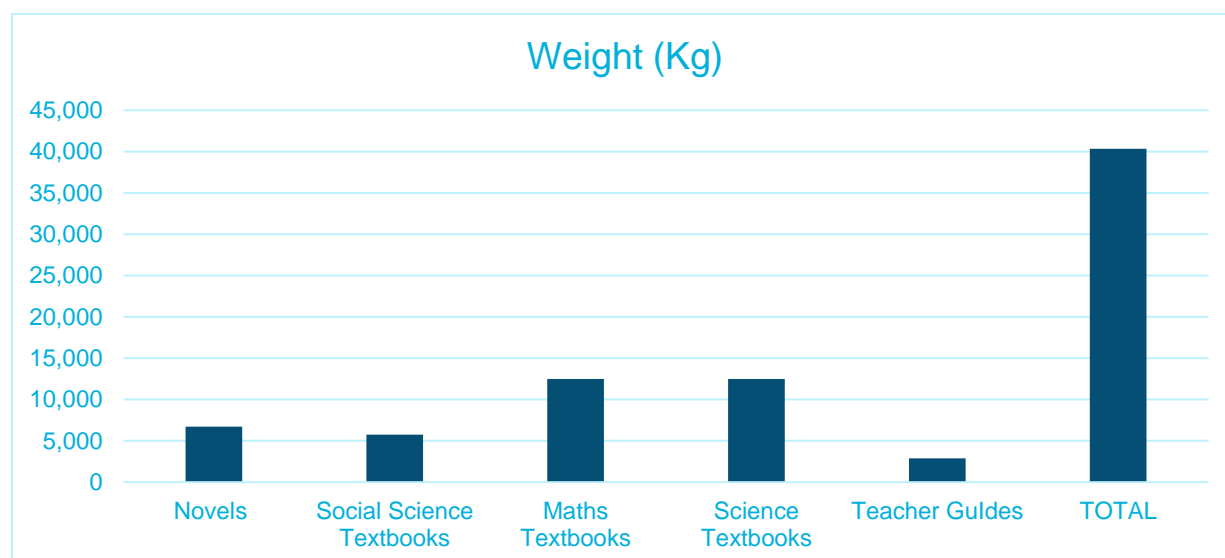


It should be pointed out that the volume of materials to be distributed by CDU over a short period of time was unprecedented. A total of 223,640 books weighting 40,320Kg were to be distributed to 435 schools across about 60 islands spread out over 1,300 Km presented a significant challenge. Many of these schools can only be accessed by boat or by dirt and mud roads. Graph 1 and Table 4 illustrate the weight and volume of the materials to be distributed.

**Table 4: Weight and volume of Year 5 materials**

<b>Year 5 materials</b>	<b>Weight (Kg)</b>	<b>Volume (L)</b>
Novels	6,720	16.32
Social Science textbooks	5,760	16.32
Mathematics textbooks	12,480	16.32
Science textbooks	12,480	16.32
TGs	2,880	16.32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,320</b>	<b>81.60</b>

Graph 1: Weight of Year 5 materials



## 4 Results

Leveraging from the technical and financial support provided through VESP, CDU oversaw development and distribution of Year 5 TGs, three textbooks and novels for Year 5 students. The specifications and volume of these materials produced are illustrated in Table 5 below. Although not part of this report, it should be pointed out that graded readers for Years 1-3 were also distributed by CDU during this period. These are highlighted in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Materials procured or developed for Government and Government assisted schools 2019

	French kits	English kits	Number of boxes per kit	Number books per box	Weight per box	Volume per kit (Cubic Meters)	Procured (P) or Developed (D)
Novels x3 per student – Year 5	180	300	1	29 x 3 = 87	14 Kg	0.034	P
Year 5 Science textbook	180	300	1	30	12 Kg	0.034	P
Graded readers (80 titles x 7 copies of each) primary schools	180	300	2	560 total books ½ each bin	14 Kg x 2	0.068	P
Year 5 Mathematics textbook	180	300	1	30	26 Kg	0.063	P
Year 5 Social Science textbook	180	300	1	30	26 Kg	0.063	D
Year 5 TGs (x6 in English and x6 in French)	180	300	1	6	6 Kg		D

Twelve Year 5 teachers guides were written to support teachers implement the National Syllabus for each of the 6 learning areas in Year 5. English and French versions were produced. A total of 1,080 French versions and 1,800 English versions of the TGs were distributed to 435 Year 5 classes in Vanuatu. Table 6 below lists the TGs developed and the number of pages for each guide.

**Table 6: TGs Produced in 2019**

Learning Area	Language and Pages	
	English	French
1. Arts and Craft	43	43
2. Physical and Health Education	123	122
3. Language and Communication	202	201
4. Mathematics	177	210
5. Science	146	153
6. Social Science	104	82

Layout and printing were completed in November 2019 and distribution to all provincial sites completed by 31 January 2020. From the provincial sites, materials were then distributed to all government and government supported primary schools.

The development of these TGs is a significant achievement for CDU. The work unit was understaffed in 2019, yet in collaboration with their technical advisor good processes were put in place to manage all stages of the production process. While things did not always go to plan, significant lessons were learned. These are described in the next section of the report. Importantly, the capability of staff in the unit continues to be developed and in 2019 they took greater responsibility for managing the development of TGs.

In addition, 14,400 Year 5 Social Science textbooks packed into 480 boxes arrived in Port Vila ready for distribution in November 2019. This represented a significant collaboration between CDU and a private company to develop a high quality and localised textbook for Year 5 students.

CDU took greater responsibility for the distribution of curriculum materials through provincial office sites to schools. The volume of materials that the work unit was required to distribute in a three-month period in 2019 was high (refer to Table 3). Several of these materials included textbooks and readers to complement the Year 5 TGs.

VESP provided CDU a Distribution Officer to support manage materials distribution logistics and contracted a freight company to distribute materials to schools. At all times however, the coordination of this support was managed by the responsible officer based at CDU.

The VESP Curriculum TA supported CDU to develop a distribution planning process in collaboration with key personal from provincial sites. This contributed significantly to strong commitment by the MoET to take responsibility and accountability for distribution of materials. This was reflected in the work ethic of key staff at CDU and follow up with officers in provinces. On a trip to Tanna, the VESP TA was able to see first-hand the distribution processes in action.

Records maintained by CDU confirm that all materials were received at distribution sites. CDU worked in collaboration with the Provincial Statistics and Distribution Officers in each province to coordinate delivery and collation of receipts from schools confirming that TGs were received. An example of the receipt confirming materials have been received is attached. Follow up by an officer at CDU is expected to occur where a receipt is not received from a school.

## **5 Lesson learned: teacher guide and Social Science textbook development**

The CDU leadership team was supported to reflect on what could be done better to improve the quality and timely development of TGs and the locally written Social Science textbook. Processes continue to improve each year and new lessons are learned. Some key lessons learned in 2019 are described below.

### **5.1 Teacher guide development**

#### **5.1.1 Using targets to incentivize writers**

In the past writers worked to a schedule but were paid fortnightly upon presentation of a timesheet. This meant little incentive to work towards schedules. It was agreed, with collaboration with CDU leadership, to link payment of writers to targets. This approach proved to be more effective to ensure that writing was completed on time. It was however challenging to manage situations when writers did not deliver on time. This is something that will need to be addressed when planning for writing in 2020.

#### **5.1.2 Appointing lead writers**

Given there are limited staff overseeing broad portfolios in CDU, it was agreed that VESP should support the appointment of lead writers. These two lead writers who worked under the direction of the National Primary Coordinator bolstered the capacity of the work unit and contributed to ensuring key personal could focus on other aspects of their portfolios as well. Support for the development of the lead writers was provided by the VESP TA to the work unit.

The appointment of the two lead writers, an Anglophone and Francophone, proved mostly effective although more work needs to be done to develop skills to plan strategically and adhere to the agreed book chain processes. There were occasions where, after writing and editing, lead writers added more content or decided to rewrite a section of the TG. In 2020, it is agreed that more time at the start of the year will be provided to training and developing the lead writers to understand and adhere to CDU agreed processes.

#### **5.1.3 Engaging of CDU leadership**

As mentioned above, CDU staff are under enormous work pressure. Sometimes when staff leave, they are not replaced or if they are replaced the replacement often not qualified in the field of education and has no education systems experience. This puts pressure on the development of TG processes and expediency of decision-making. It also contributes to less than ideal adherence to QA processes. There were examples where after review of materials and authority to proceed in the development chain, problems were identified. This contributed to an erosion of trust of the QAs that

were given. Consequently, editing and re-editing was occurring and the slowed down the publication stages.

For the future, it is recommended that the CDU work with the MoET to ensure adequate staff are appointed to achieve core responsibilities of the work unit. It is also recommended that leadership are supported to prioritise their work at the beginning of the year focused on deliverables. Teaching leadership to delegate is an important skill that also needs to be developed.

Until these matters are resolved, getting the level of buy in from CDU to take stronger leadership of the TG development process will continue. This is because of the factors mentioned above and because of staffing issues and heavy work demands on a few.

#### **5.1.4 Quality assurance processes**

For some of the reasons mentioned above, the QA processes at CDU are not as effective as they could and should be. Lack of attention to detail during the QA processes led to delays to TG layout. This was because the QA groups did not always do a thorough job reviewing the materials. In some instances, members of the graphic design team picked up errors in the layout processes and changes needed to be made. There were also instances when after TGs were laid out, lead writers or members of CDU spotted errors meaning changes needed to be made. This was frustrating for the graphic designers and lead to delays. This highlights issues executing agreed processes and strategies but also the quality of the QA. Strategies will be put in place in 2020 to address attention to detail when undertaking ongoing QA.

#### **5.1.5 Layout by the Production Unit**

The production unit at CDU is highly effective. VESP has invested significantly in their development, ensuring they have dual monitors, the latest software and “just in times” access to support. Unfortunately, the SEO, who had a wealth of experience leading this team resigned at the end of 2018 and was not substantively replaced. Instead, the National Primary Coordinator was meant to assume responsibility for this role. Doing two jobs took its toll and the Production Unit did not plan and was not as strongly coordinated as in the past.

This mean that staff was often not on task and frequently distracted by other matters. It also resulted in some members of the production team making unauthorised changes to documents. The illustrators were also very slow and hard to keep on task. Once all TGs were laid out it was noted that cover pages were not completed as required. It took one illustrator two weeks to illustrate a grass skirt onto a man for the cover of one of the TGs. This was because there was a leadership vacuum in the Production Unit and members of the team were not held accountable for the work they were expected to do.

These few negative comments should not distract from the quality work produced by the design team. The issues identified are symptoms of broader problems that need to be addressed. The high level of commitment shown by most members of the team is testimony to the growth in the capability over the years. Through VESP, the investment in upskilling their graphic design skills is evident in the quality of the TGs developed in 2019.

For 2020, it is agreed by CDU that stricter adherence to processes will improve efficiency. It has also been agreed in 2020 to outsource copy editing, graphic design solutions and printing to a publishing company. CDU will maintain control of writing and QA procedures. It is felt that this will reduce the pressures on the small publication team that also have senior secondary materials to develop.

### **5.1.6 Scheduling**

Stages in the book chain have been articulated elsewhere in this document. Working with CDU a time plan was developed but adherence to targets was often challenging. The goal to have all TGs to the printers by the end of October was not achieved. This meant that instead of distributing to schools in November 2019, they were distributed in early January 2020. This put pressure on provincial office sites to make sure all TGs got to schools for the start of the 2020 school year.

Printing was completed in mid-December and the TGs were distributed in mid-January. While this reflects a slight delay, it was nevertheless a considered decision by CDU to distribute the materials early in the new year. One rationale is related to the impact of having to distribute such a large volume of materials between October to December had on staff in provinces (see Table 2). Another reason was that schools were closed early December and there were concerns materials could be misplaced.

### **5.1.7 Distribution**

Although stronger ownership and accountability for distribution was exercised by the MoET in 2019, there are some areas where support can be provided for improvement in 2020. It was pleasing that the MoET wanted to take charge of distribution. The collaboration between CDU and key staff in provincial offices to coordinate logistics is a positive step forward. Two areas are however identified for refinement in 2020. These are briefly described below:

- a) Data from the MoET Open Vanuatu Education Management Information System (Open VEMIS) portal is used to access data about schools for materials distribution. Early in the distribution process an officer from CDU felt that the data provided from portal was incorrect and added schools to the list. This resulted in a shortage of books for ten schools that had to be urgently printed. A valuable lesson was learned and the staff member agreed in future to address the issue with the data management officers in the Policy and Planning Unit rather than take a unilateral decision. They also understand in hindsight that the ordering of supplies is based on data from Open VEMIS. It also signals that the MoET must work to enhance processes to ensure accuracy of data and confidence of users.
- b) Although good macro planning for distribution did occur, adherence to the plan was sometimes problematic. This was okay because the end result was materials got to their destination. In Vanuatu it is understood that flexibility is key because of changing weather conditions that affect distribution. Other factors also come into play such as the boat broke down or the truck did not arrive. It did however mean that VESP received a large volume of funding requests to pay for transportation from the distribution point to islands and schools that at times appeared a bit ad-hoc. For 2020, it is agreed to better support the provincial officers plan for distribution to the sites and also develop a flexible budget and develop distribution funding agreements between for each province so funds can be managed according to MoET processes.

## **3.4 Textbook development**

Although a quality product was developed, the leadership at CDU felt that managing the writing and editing of the textbook is challenging. Additional pressure was placed on the already stretch resources at CDU. Review and QA processes were sometimes delayed and not always at the level they should be. The level of collaboration and communication between CDU and the publishing agency based overseas also provided additional challenges.



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An internal review of the process resulted in the recommendation that in 2020, an external publishing organisation should manage all aspects of the publication process including writing and editing. A requirement however is that the publishing agency recruit locally based writers and editors and facilitate QA processes in Vanuatu. It was felt that this would not greatly increase the cost and would reduce the impact on CDU's workload.

## 6 Conclusion

Despite challenges, CDU produced and delivered the Year 5 TGs and oversaw the development of a locally produced Year 5 Social Science textbook on schedule. French and English versions of the TGs and the textbook were written, edited, quality assured and laid out ready for printing. The printing was outsourced to a local printing company. A total of 2,880 TGs were distributed to provincial sites for supply to 435 Year 5 teachers. In addition, 14,400 Social Science textbooks were distributed for every Year 5 student. This is a significant achievement by CDU in a 12-month period.

Making this achievement even more remarkable is the fact that CDU was led by an Acting PEO and an acting SEO, both with limited experience in the roles. Even more remarkable is the fact that CDU only has two fulltime primary staff.

A collaborative approach adopted between VESP and CDU leadership made sure resources were available to implement an agreed strategic approach to deliver the materials on time and to a high standard.

Some valuable lessons were learned and already refinements are in place as the CDU work with VESP staff to iteratively refine the processes associated with materials production.

**Picture 10: The Curriculum development team 2019**



# **Annex 1**

**Declaration Statement from the Curriculum Development Unit**

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## Annex 2

### The Vanuatu textbook outsourcing story

In 2018, VESP and the MoET mutually agreed to pilot outsourcing the development of a student textbook with the view of reviewing the suitability of the process for future iterations of textbook development. A collaborative process between the MoET and VESP was undertaken to identify a preferred service provider to develop a prototype textbook.

For the reasons described above in the preamble, outsourcing seemed like a logical solution to reduce the impact on the already stretched local education personal and produce a quality textbook for students.

It was agreed that a private publishing company would be contracted to develop a Social Science textbook for Year 4 which was to include sections written in English, French and Bislama. The content of the textbook was required to be aligned to the units in the English and French versions of the Year 4 Social studies TGs. The TG provided a scope and sequence and teaching and learning ideas for implementing the Vanuatu National Syllabus Years. Social Studies was selected because it would test the markets capacity to develop contextually appropriate materials.

It was a requirement that the content of the textbook was to:

- Reflect the unit outcomes and weekly topic ideas in the TG
- Provide depth and breadth of the content that is appropriate for the student's phase of development
- Be connected and relevant to student's real-life experiences
- Ensure the concepts are correct and precise and ideas coherent
- Provide adequate examples and illustrations that are interesting and relevant.

The textbook was to be written in in three languages reflecting the official and national languages of the country – English, French and Bislama. Sometimes text and activities were required to be in Bislama only, French, English and Bislama and English and French. The following table below provides an indication of proportion of time that were suggested for allocation of the three languages in the textbook.

**Table 7: Proportion of time that were suggested for allocation of the three languages in the textbook**

<b>Bislama only</b>	40%
<b>English, French and Bislama</b>	40%
<b>English and French</b>	20%

The term of reference for the contract specified that that the publishing company was to ensure that the level of difficulty of the language was commensurate with the language ability of the target students, with new vocabulary progressively introduced in context at appropriate times. It was also specified that the text should enable students to construct meaning through scaffolding activities lead by the teacher and sometimes on their own.

The development of the textbook was guided by the following principles:

- Content that is free from bias such as over-generalisation and stereotyping;
- Content and illustrations that do not carry any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion, culture or disability nor do they suggest exclusion;
- Content and illustrations that are culturally and contextually appropriate; and
- Language that is developmentally appropriate.

Since the project was a partnership between VESP, the MoET and the selected service provider, the following roles and responsibilities were described in the terms of reference.

The MoET was to identify a CDU based Project Coordinator who was expected to:

- Act as the point of contact between the provider and the contractor;
- Liaise as needed with MoET staff, schools and others;
- Assist the project team with planning of dates, locations, contacts etc. as needed; and
- Manage the editorial team to facilitate timely feedback for the provider.

The MoET was to establish an Editorial Team who were expected to:

- Approve the proposed textbook design and project plan;
- Monitor the develop of the book through the monthly reporting process;
- Provide timely feedback on successive drafts of material for the book;
- Review the draft at the final editing stage; and
- Approve the final “print ready” version of the book.

The identified service provider was responsible for:

- Project work plan;
- Design of the textbook;
- Writing of the textbook content including recruitment of writers, coordination of writing activities, editing and QA;
- Production of the textbook including layout and illustrations;
- Provision of draft materials to the editorial committee as specified in the project work plan;
- Delivery of print ready files in electronic format; and
- Monthly progress reports updating of activities.

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From the time the contract was signed to delivery of the final product was 7 months in total. The writing phase was from June to September which is 4 months. The table below lists key dates for the project.

**Table 8: Key dates for TG development**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Contract Awarded</b>	Mid-April 2018	VESP Secretariat
<b>Project Management Plan Developed</b>	End April 2018	Provider
<b>Textbook design provided to editorial team</b>	Mid May 2018	Provider
<b>Writers appointed and trained</b>	End May 2018	Provider
<b>Writing phase</b>	June – September 2018	Provider
<b>Full “mock-up” version to editorial committee for content approval</b>	Mid-September	Provider
<b>Print ready version of textbook endorsed</b>	Early November 2018	MoET
<b>Printing and Distribution</b>	TBC	TBC

The final product, a Social Science textbook, was delivered to the Read Pacific warehouse in Port Vila on 10 December 2018. They were then packed into plastic bins ready for delivery to selected provincial sites by a distribution and logistics contractor. Textbook distribution to schools is ongoing and follow up is occurring.

While the process delivered a final product, almost on time, met the specifications and principles as described in the contract and had minimal impact on the time and resources of the client, questions regards quality and sustainability exist.

