

OFFICIAL

Mid-Term Review

**Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice
Program**

4 March 2024



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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADG	Acting Director General
AES	Australian Evaluation Society
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AHC	Australian High Commission
AP	Authorised Persons
AUD	Australian Dollar
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CA2J	Community Access to Justice [VAPJP]
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CID	Criminal Investigations Department [VPF]
CMS	Case Management System
COMPOL	Commissioner of Police [VPF]
CRB	Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle
CSO	Civil Service Organisation
CST	Community Safety Team [VPF]
CSS	Corporate System Strengthening [VAPJP]
DG	Director General
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [GoA]
DKBS	Department of Corrections [GoV]
DWA	Department of Women's Affairs [GoV]
EOPO	End of Program Outcomes
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIMR	Final Investment Monitoring Report [DFAT]
FPU	Family Protection Unit [VPF]
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GoA	Government of Australia
GoV	Government of Vanuatu
ICAG	Institutional Capacity Assessment Grid
IMR	Investment Monitoring Report [DFAT]
IO	Intermediate Outcomes
KRQ	Key Review Question
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transexual and Intersex
LTA	Long-term Adviser
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning
MJCS	Ministry of Justice and Community Services [GoV]

Mid-Term Review

MNCC	Malvatamauri National Council of Chiefs
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs [GoV]
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NPP	New Policy Proposal
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan
OPP	Office of the Public Prosecutor
OPS	Organisational Performance Study [VPF]
PC-J	Program Coordinator- Justice [VAPJP]
PC-P	Program Coordinator-Policing [VAPJP]
PFM	Public Financial Management
PIMS	Police Information Management System [VPF]
PJSS	Policing and Justice Services Study
PMG	Program Management Group [VAPJP]
PMO	Prime Minister's Office [GoV]
PSC	Police Services Commission [GoV]
PSO	Public Solicitor's Office [GoV]
PSU	Professional Standards Unit [VPF]
PTC	Police Training College [PTC]
SLG	Senior Leadership Group
SMPR	Six-month Progress Report
STA	Short-term Adviser
TC	Tropical Cyclone
ToC	Theory of Change
VAPJP	Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program
VAPP	Vanuatu Australia Policing Program
VAWC	Violence Against Women and Children
VLRC	Vanuatu Law Reform Commission
VMF	Vanuatu Mobile Force [part of VPF]
VPDA	Vanuatu People's Disability Advocacy
VPF	Vanuatu Police Force [GoV]
VPFCPB	Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Program
VSO	Victim Support Officer
VSPD	Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities
WVC	Vanuatu Women's Centre
WAN	Women's Action Network

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The review team wishes to thank all those who contributed to this Mid-Term review. This includes the representatives and officials of the Government of Vanuatu (GoV), VAPJP program staff and community members in Santo and Port Vila who generously shared their time and insights in interviews and discussions with the review team. Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) staff in Canberra and Port Vila supported the evaluation and made informed contributions. We would particularly like to acknowledge the assistance provided by Renie Anderson and Lavinia Mahit at the Australian High Commission (AHC), who provided significant support to facilitate data collection in-country, including participating in a number of consultations. We would also like to acknowledge the significant time and work that members of the VAPJP team provided to ensure the review team received accurate, timely and comprehensive program data.

This report was developed by Dr Bu Wilson, Grace Nicholas, and Dorah Wilson, with support from Paul Lee. Patrick Chan from DFAT's Vanuatu Section and Christopher Ely from AFP's Strategy, Design and Evaluation unit were also part of the review team and provided valuable assistance with data collection and critical perspectives for the report.

Note on terminology

The MTR team has opted for the term Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) rather than Gender-Based Violence or Family Violence in recognition of growing global evidence on the intersections of VAW and VAC, including shared risk factors, common social norms, co-occurrence, and the intergenerational cycle of abuse (Fulu, E., McCook, S., and Falb, K., 2017.)

Executive Summary

This is the Executive Summary of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Phase 2 of the Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (VAPJP). Phase 2 of the VAPJP (AUD25 million over four years, December 2020 to December 2024) aims to empower Vanuatu Police Force (VPF), justice and community service agencies, and targeted non-state actors to provide fair, equitable, and quality services that meet the needs of the community.¹ VAPJP is highly relevant to the priorities of both the Government of Australia (GoA) and Government of Vanuatu (GoV). The program supports Vanuatu's police and justice services and broader security and contributes to Vanuatu's social stability through strengthening the rule of law, improving access to justice and policing services for vulnerable groups, and helping address domestic violence.

VAPJP's operating context is complex and multifaceted, covering a number of diverse actors including policing, justice and community services agencies as well as non-state actors (for example, churches and chiefly structures), civil society organisations (CSOs), and the people of Vanuatu (as end users or service recipients). Challenges over the review period have included COVID19, Tropical Cyclones Kevin, Judy and Lola, frequent changes in leadership within the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS), movement of the VPF from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) portfolio,² and a prolonged period of political instability.

VAPJP's overarching long-term objective is that 'Vanuatu Police Force, justice and community service agencies and targeted non-state actors provide fair, equitable and quality services that meet the needs of the community'. VAPJP takes a 'two-track approach' of maintaining services in the short-term and improving capacity for the long-term. This approach is delivered across three interconnected End of Program Outcomes (EOPO):

- **EOPO1:** Justice and policing agencies improve quality and reach of services to Vanuatu communities, particularly in their handling of cases involving women, children, and youth;
- **EOPO2:** Women, children and youth are increasingly accessing state policing, justice, and community services; and
- **EOPO3:** Policing and Justice agencies maintain public security and the rule of law.

VAPJP is delivered under four components, each corresponding to an Intermediate Outcome (IO): Justice (IO1), Policing (IO2), Community (IO3), and Sector Coordination (IO4).

The objectives of the MTR, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR), include accountability, documentation of lessons learned, and assessment of future opportunities. The review has a broadly strategic focus as indicated by KRQs targeting Effectiveness; Efficiency; Relevance and Sustainability; and future outlook. The MTR drew on data collected through a review of documents related to the project and context, primary data collected through an in-country mission from 8-20 October 2023, and remote interviews prior to and after travel. The team interviewed 92 people and conducted three Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Some team members conducted a two-day visit to Santo. A field visit to Epi had to be cancelled due to concerns about a recent Air Taxi accident and the lack of available aircraft.

The Team comprised Dr Bu Wilson (Team Leader), Grace Nicholas (M&E Specialist) and Dorah Wilson (Vanuatu GEDSI Specialist). DFAT officer Patrick Chan and AFP evaluator Chris Ely joined consultations and provided contextual input. Vanuatu post DFAT Officers Renie Anderson and Lavinia Mahit joined relevant consultations and provided the team with extensive support. The Deputy High Commissioner, Suzanne Akila, joined some higher-level consultations. Richard Bell and Paul Lee from Tetra Tech provided additional analytical support remotely. Bryn Jones, Tetra Tech Director Policing Law & Justice provided team quality assurance of deliverables and guidance. An MTR reference group was established to oversee and guide the MTR process, review and provide feedback on deliverables.

¹ Phase 2 maintained the goals and objectives of Phase 1 but with an additional focus on the maintenance of public security and the rule of law.

² VPF returned to the MoIA portfolio on 24 January 2024

Highlights – key achievements

- Flexible, responsive program management enables adaptation and continuity in the face of changing sectoral leadership and emergencies
- Continuity of justice and policing services through effective disaster response
- Increased capacity and leadership opportunities for justice agency staff, including women, through mentoring, the Criminal Law Conference and access to opportunities for promotion
- Increased recognition and support for women police through the Women’s Advisory Network (WAN) activities and the WAN conference
- Strong relationships between VAPJP advisers and their counterparts, and advisers and other stakeholders
- Having the first female in the position of PC (Policing) has provided important role modelling for both female and male VPF, with WAN members reporting that seeing her in that role was very empowering
- Increased capacity of key policing functions through training and mentoring, including detective work, forensics, and family protection
- Increased reach of the VPF through provision of equipment and support for deployments to provinces and posts
- Increased engagement with and support from Chiefs to facilitate expansion of the Authorised Persons program
- Design and delivery of infrastructure projects in response to requests from the VPF and justice agencies, including promoting accessibility standards and co-located Justice and Policing services in Epi
- Data recovery and systems strengthening for GoV Police Information Management System (PIMS) and Case Management System (CMS)
- Increased community outreach on policing, justice and laws related to VAWC through joint community, justice and policing rotations.
- Awareness raising within the sector and communities on the rights of people with disabilities

Higher level findings: VAPJP has some very credible achievements and has done well to keep operating in exceptionally challenging circumstances, responding to the extensive needs of the law and justice and policing sector in Vanuatu, while maintaining a high degree of flexibility. The MTR team appreciates the challenges in demonstrating progress towards EOPOs due to the combined impact of the November 2022 cyber-attack, new baselines for new and amended indicators, and a lack of a ToC. The missing ToC hampers the VAPJP team in reporting against the DFAT M&E standards, and compromises the ability to communicate, both internally and externally, what the program is trying to achieve and how. Despite the 2019 evaluation of VAPJP Phase 1 noting that a ToC would be one of two key ingredients for improved management and oversight of the program, a ToC was not included in the Design Update (as required by DFAT M&E standards). Moving forward a greater focus on qualitative outcomes and their sustainability will be key.

EOPO1: VAPJP has supported an improved reach of justice and policing services to Vanuatu communities, with some indications of improved quality. These improvements in **policing** have been facilitated by an increase in the number of VPF recruited, trained and deployed to outer islands (with a notable increase in women’s participation); deployment of police rotations and the Nasara program³ to remote areas; significant infrastructure construction and refurbishment, mobility assets (land cruisers, trucks, quad bikes, banana boats),⁴ technical advice and financial support for remote operations, and an improved focus on professional standards. These improvements in **justice** occurred through work undertaken by the justice, community and sector coordination components of VAPJP. The justice component has undertaken well-regarded continuing legal education and mentoring to strengthen the work of legal actors in the sector, and extended the reach of agencies in Port Vila and selected provincial locations. The Authorised Persons (AP) program is also an important activity and is the key contact point for communities to access essential justice services in situations of VAWC. The AP Program is increasingly respected by communities, police, chiefs and the justice sector as a whole. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to finalise the planned hand over of management of the AP program with GoV.

VAPJP is providing a significant level of infrastructure support (police posts, courthouses) as a means of strengthening reach and quality of policing *and* justice services. However, the contribution these inputs are making to improvements in service delivery and access are not yet clear. The program has identified the need for a more effective and strategic approach to infrastructure but despite best efforts this has proved challenging in part due to frequent changes in sector leadership. There are opportunities for a more purposeful Grants program, that could

³ The VPF Nasara program was initiated by VPF in Santo to carry out a monthly rotation to areas with minimal or absent police, AP or Community Safety Team (CST) presence. Activities include discussions on VAWC, alcohol and drug use, and the law; school visits and conducting investigations into any complaints made.

⁴ Mobility assets are a combination of AFP and VAPJP funded. VAPJP funded the banana boats, some quad bikes, trucks and two Landcruiser’s. AFP through the Pacific Initiatives Funding 2022 provided four Landcruiser’s and four quad bikes.

improve the reach, quality and sustainability of the program, although it would need an integrated accompaniment approach to strengthen capacity, and adequate resources within the program to provide oversight and quality assurance.

Noting the very high reliance on VAPJP to financially support the VPF to extend their reach and quality, the MTR team considered whether there was more that VAPJP could be doing to support the VPF in securing appropriate levels of budget support, but did not become aware of any additional opportunities that have not already been attempted. While separate from VAPJP, additional inputs of AFP directly to VPF complement the investments being made through the program as guided by the Program Coordinator Policing (PC-P) and align with GoV commitment to decentralisation (VAPJP, 2022a).

EOPO2: There is some evidence that awareness raising and community engagement by the Program has led to uptake of services by women, children and youth, but VAPJP could better systematise and analyse data on the outcomes of this work, including the extent to which services are being accessed. A broad range of actors both inside and outside VAPJP programming are involved in awareness raising in relation to VAWC, but it was not possible to verify the consistency of messaging and whether it demonstrates best practice in bringing about change in attitudes and practice.

EOPO3: VAPJP has provided well-regarded support to policing and justice agencies to maintain public security and the rule of law. Confidence in VPF has reportedly increased due to their greater visibility, improved handling of crisis media communications, increased engagement with communities, and improved approach to professional standards. Purposeful development of the VPF has been greatly aided by conducting the VPF Organisational Performance Study (OPS), the acceptance of all its 85 recommendations, and their incorporation in VPF's strategic plan (McLeod, 2022). An important next step for discussions about future support would be conducting a Total Cost of Policing Study, noting that the OPS reports that this is not currently known.

GEDSI: VAPJP is making important contributions towards inclusion. This is critical, to ensure that gains are not lost. A more targeted inclusion focus could allow for greater visibility and investment in outcomes to strengthen security for women, children and people with disabilities, including in remote areas. The lack of resources and small number of organisations working to provide services for people with disabilities compared to the complexity and extent of the issues faced in communities remains a major challenge. VAPJP's Disability and Inclusion Officer has a key role to play in building capabilities and support for people with disabilities in the justice system. VAPJP's GEDSI Action Plan (GAP) is a useful tool for monitoring and reporting but could be better used to promote improved awareness of VAPJP's efforts amongst the team and counterparts and encourage stronger communication between agencies and between justice and policing workstreams. Increased resourcing is required for the FPU to respond to cases of VAWC and engage with community-based services, particularly in provinces. This could include increased capacity to respond to victims, a roll out of private spaces for victims including child-friendly interview rooms beyond Port Vila, the provision of dedicated vehicles, and coordination with Department of Labour & Employment Services regarding an increase in children at risk due to parents away for seasonal work.

Increased resources and expertise are also needed to safely expand the CA2J efforts to build awareness and support to address VAWC and disability inclusion among chiefs and community members, in line with a Do No Harm approach.

MERL and Reporting: VAPJP's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system could be improved in order to better meet DFAT, AFP and VAPJP's needs, noting that these are different for each organisation. The program spends much effort and time on reporting and seeks to align with DFAT M&E standards. However, as noted above, the MERL system presents challenges for the program because there is no ToC, outcomes are not measurable, and there is insufficient focus on qualitative data. This is contributing to poor understanding of the justice program's contribution and results and constrains insights into the depth and sustainability of change, and evaluability of the program. Reports do not systematically reflect the results framework and the MTR team heard they are not shared within the team for program learning. Although reporting is overly detailed and repetitive, it does include annexes that allow for clear expenditure tracking, and proactively synthesises activity updates in accessible format for government counterparts. As there is less than a year for the program to run, consideration should be given to the utility of investing heavily in a ToC and revised MERL development at this stage, although it may be possible to develop a simplified ToC which could both improve effectiveness of the current program and contribute to the new design process.

Efficiency: The delivery and management approach of VAPJP has facilitated program progress and adaptation despite significant contextual challenges, however adjustments are needed to strengthen planning and transparency, and further enhance outcomes. Joint corporate support through the managing contractor generates considerable efficiencies, such as delivering on the increasing requests for infrastructure. Strong relationships between key program staff, their counterparts, and other stakeholders play an important role in the program. There are some key challenges and risks to be addressed at an operational level to support better outcomes. There is a need to review processes within some delivery modalities to strengthen effectiveness, transparency and sustainability within and across the policing and justice streams of work, for distinct and joint outcomes. Within VAPJP, managing the complex area of family protection and VAWC is something that necessarily involves all of the

justice, community and policing streams and attendant advisers. While there are good relationships and communications between the respective advisers, it was apparent that many across the program consider that the arrangements are not yet optimal for ensuring that all parts collaborate toward the multi-faceted approaches required for preventing and responding to violence against women and children.

Relevance: The program has pivoted to respond to the impact on the policing, law and justice sector of continued serious natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a whole of Vanuatu government cyber-attack. The program has adapted to continuing GoV instability, including in the leadership of the MJCS, although this has been challenging.

Strategic alignment: The VAPJP remains strategically aligned to Australia's interests and comparative advantage. The program is aligned to Australia's new international development policy (2023), the Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement (signed 2022 but not yet ratified) and the expected contents of the forthcoming DFAT gender strategy and DFAT disability equity and rights strategy. VAPJP continues to be aligned with Vanuatu 2030: The People's Plan, National Sustainable Development Plan 2016—2030, and the GoV National Security Strategy (2019) and National Security Strategy Review (2022).

Sustainability: With GoV facing resourcing challenges in both the policing and justice sector, determining what might constitute sustainable outcomes is a complex issue. This phase of VAPJP explicitly recognises the contribution that the Program makes towards supporting the GoV to maintain confidence of the public in stability and security. The work of the AFP advisor at the Police College is very much appreciated by VPF. However, there are four key factors that the MTR team were advised by various VPF officers that could make police training more sustainable and improve ownership. These are deploying an AFP adviser with a policing education (rather than community policing) background, a greater emphasis on utilising a Train the Trainer approach and prioritising trainings in Bislama, and where possible decentralising training.

Scope: Some of the activities supported through the Justice stream of work do not make a clear contribution to the VAPJP EOPOs and IOs, do not appear to be priorities within the scope of the program and stretch the attention of both the program and the absorption capacity of counterparts. The program is currently pursuing a number of regional and global partnerships, global conferences and ad hoc initiatives, which should be reviewed to ensure they are the most relevant and effective way of contributing to VAPJP outcomes. It is the view of the MTR Team that if the number of activities in the justice stream was decreased, focused; and greater emphasis was placed in both streams on ascertaining the quality and outcomes of initiatives, that this would benefit the program. It is understood that VAPJP also needs to remain responsive to changing circumstances. The MTR team heard that GoV is interested in the Program expanding into corrective services. The MTR team arranged meetings on three occasions with the Director, Department of Corrective Services (DKBS), but he was not available to meet with us. This may be something that can be followed up in the Design for a new phase of the program.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The justice stream of VAPJP should strengthen effectiveness by focusing on the 'core business' expressed in EOPO1 of improving the quality and reach of justice services, particularly for vulnerable women, children, youth and people with disability. This will require a concerted effort to strengthen visibility around outcomes and quality of results.

Recommendation 2. The policing stream of VAPJP does not need to significantly change its current focus, although it also requires a concerted effort to strengthen visibility around outcomes and quality of results. The policing stream should maintain its EOPO1 focus of improving the quality and reach of justice services, particularly in their handling of cases involving vulnerable women, children, youth and people with disability.

Recommendation 3. VAPJP should revisit earlier program approaches to capacity building and its measurement, modified to reflect current program circumstances. Consideration should also be given to developing a Theory of Change during the forthcoming design process that may also be of utility to the existing program.

Recommendation 4. Both the justice and policing streams of VAPJP should prioritise sustainability and exit planning for all activities, so that benefits outlast the program. With participation and input from counterparts across the program, VAPJP should develop a sustainability plan that reflects output and IO targets for the end of program, and identifies expected support required to maintain progress or protect changes already achieved.

Recommendation 5. The policing stream of VAPJP should consider four key changes to make police training more sustainable and improve ownership. These are: deploying an AFP adviser with a policing education background (rather than just a community policing background); a greater emphasis on utilising a Train the Trainer approach; prioritising trainings and curriculum development in Bislama; and where possible decentralising training which will encourage more female officers to undertake training.

Recommendation 6. VAPJP reporting should be improved and rationalised to meet DFAT and AFP strategic requirements, as well as inform adaptive programming across VAPJP.

Recommendation 7. VAPJP, DFAT and AFP should support the transition to the new PC-P, with a view to maintaining and enhancing systems and processes for collaboration and joint outcomes across the Justice and Policing sector through strong communications, and recognition of shared goals and mutual accountability. Consideration could be given to engaging a Partnership Broker to assist with establishing this relationship from the outset.

Recommendation 8. Management and advisers from the justice stream of VAPJP should work collaboratively, to build a positive workplace environment that facilitates understanding and recognition of advisers' contributions and challenges, and where possible increases connections between agencies.

Recommendation 9. DFAT and VAPJP should review budget allocations to ensure sufficient funding for community-facing activities to strengthen prevention and responsive services to violence against women and children, and people with disabilities that align with best practice and Do No Harm principles. This applies to both the FPU in the policing stream and the CA2J activities in the justice stream.

Recommendation 10. VAPJP and the managing contractor, in close collaboration with the AFP, should increase efficiency by updating logistics and procurement procedures, and improving resourcing for administrative and reporting support for AFP advisers, that currently take time of technical specialists away from delivering expert support and services. Delegations of authority can be reviewed in the new design.

Recommendation 11. As infrastructure and provision of assets will remain a significant element of VAPJP, the program should continue to promote disability inclusion in designs, and planning for adequate utilisation, management and maintenance of assets and infrastructure developed.

Recommendation 12. Given the stated strategic importance of the VAPJP program, DFAT should apply significantly more resourcing at Post to management and oversight of the Program.

Recommendation 13. Given the frequency and severity of natural disasters, VAPJP should continue to work with partner agencies on practical disaster risk reduction, and 'chain-of-justice' preparedness- including response and recovery, as well as responding to disasters in a coordinated fashion with the relevant GoV agencies.

Recommendation 14. There are a number of areas that warrant further attention at the design stage, which will overlap with the final year of the program. These include the multi-agency work being carried out on Epi to determine its strengths and challenges, and to what extent it can be used as a model in the future. It also includes coordination with other donors, the best model for achieving joined-up outcomes for prevention and response to VAWC, the best mechanism for ensuring responsiveness to natural disasters, the suitability of including Corrections in a future iteration of the program, and whether a six monthly PowerPoint, instead of written reporting would serve the interests of DFAT, AFP and VAPJP.

1 Introduction

This is the report of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Phase 2 of the Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (VAPJP). VAPJP is Australia's primary investment and support to the policing and justice sector in Vanuatu. Originally established in 2017, Phase 2 of the VAPJP is an AUD25 million program over four years which aims to empower Vanuatu Police Force (VPF), justice and community service agencies, and targeted non-state actors to provide fair, equitable, and quality services that meet the needs of the community.

The implementation period for Phase 2 is December 2020 to December 2024. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has commissioned Tetra Tech International Development (Tetra Tech) review team to conduct an MTR of the program from December 2020 to the present.

1.1 Background and overview of the Program

The Government of Australia (GoA) has provided support to the policing, justice and community sector in various iterations in Vanuatu since 2001. The investment, which supports Vanuatu's policing and justice services and broader security, is highly relevant to Australia's whole-of-government priorities in the region and the security, peace and justice pillar of the Government of Vanuatu's (GoV) National Sustainable Development Plan 2030 (NSDP). VAPJP is helping contribute to Vanuatu's social stability through strengthening the rule of law, improving access to justice and policing services for vulnerable groups, and helping address domestic violence.

In 2014, the previously separate policing and justice programs were combined and since 2017, Australia's support has continued through VAPJP. VAPJP applies a hybrid implementation modality with a Managing Contractor (MC) contracted to deliver the Program, and funding to support Australian Federal Police (AFP) Advisers to work within the program structure. In 2019, an Independent Evaluation of VAPJP recommended that DFAT continue the Program into a further four-year phase (2020-2024) as an integral part of Australia's aid investments in Vanuatu, and that the joined-up policing and justice sector support (with the hybrid modality and joint management approach between MC and the AFP on the policing side), should continue.⁵

VAPJP's operating context is complex and multifaceted, covering a number of diverse actors including policing, justice and community services agencies as well as non-state actors (for example, churches and chiefly structures), civil society organisations (CSOs), and the people of Vanuatu (as end users or service recipients). Challenges over the review period have included COVID19, Tropical Cyclones Kevin, Judy and Lola, frequent changes in leadership within the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS), movement of the VPF from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) portfolio,⁶ and a prolonged period of political instability.

VAPJP seeks to respond to development challenges facing the sector including limited access to justice, particularly for women, children, and youth in remote and peri-urban areas; high levels of violence against women and children; limited community confidence in the effectiveness of justice institutions and the police; and increasing numbers of youth coming into conflict with the law. The program is also currently supporting the architectural design of a new Port Vila Central Police Station which Australia committed to funding after the previous facility was deemed structurally unsafe in 2021.

VAPJP's overarching long-term objective is that 'Vanuatu Police Force, justice and community service agencies and targeted non-state actors provide fair, equitable and quality services that meet the needs of the community'.

VAPJP takes a 'two-track approach' of maintaining services in the short-term and improving capacity for the long-term. The program logic illustrates how this approach is delivered across three interconnected End of Program Outcomes (EOPO):

- **EOPO1:** Justice and policing agencies improve quality and reach of services to Vanuatu communities, particularly in their handling of cases involving women, children, and youth;
- **EOPO2:** Women, children and youth are increasingly accessing state policing, justice, and community services; and
- **EOPO3:** Policing and Justice agencies maintain public security and the rule of law.

VAPJP is delivered under four components, each of which corresponds to an Intermediate Outcome (IO) as described below. The Justice and Policing components are the primary focus of the Program, while the Community component supports the access to services and building demand, and the Sector Coordination component aims to build pathways and linkages between components. Intermediate Outcomes (IO) reflect the four components:

⁵ Nichols et. al 2019, Recommendations 1 and 2

⁶ While the GoV has decided that the VPF will return to the MoIA portfolio, this had not occurred at the time of writing this report.

- **IO1 (Justice):** Justice agencies provide timely and professional services in line with their mandate and legislative functions, particularly involving services for women and children;
- **IO2 (Policing):** Police maintain and improve essential services to the community, particularly related to incidents involving women and children;
- **IO3 (Community):** Communities are increasingly aware of their rights and obligations under the law; and
- **IO4 (Sector Coordination):** Institutional arrangements ensure a 'chain-of-justice' is maintained across police and justice and community sectors.

The program has a range of input modalities, including technical assistance, operational support and funding, training and professional development, community grants, infrastructure, and project delivery. Program implementation is intended to be governed through Program Management Group (PMG) meetings – a policing PMG chaired jointly by DFAT and VPF and a justice PMG co-chaired by DFAT and MJCS. Program activities are decided each year through the development of an Annual Work Plan (AWP) jointly endorsed by PMG chairs.

1.2 Mid-Term Review purpose and objectives

The MTR of the VAPJP took place after nearly three years of implementation of this second phase of the program (AUD25 million, December 2020 – December 2024), with one further year remaining. The MTR assessed whether Australia's support to Vanuatu's policing and justice sector, as part of Phase 2 of VAPJP, has been effective, efficient and relevant in order to help inform Australia's support to the policing and justice sectors beyond the end of the current program in December 2024.

The objectives of the MTR, as outlined in the ToR, were:

1. Accountability – to provide stakeholders with an assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of Australia's current contribution to the policing and justice sectors in Vanuatu;
2. To reflect, document and apply lessons from the first two⁷ years of implementation to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in the final year of implementation (2024); and
3. Assessment of future opportunities – to provide DFAT and stakeholders with analysis, options and recommendations on opportunities for a next iteration of Australian support to the policing and justice sectors in Vanuatu (2025-2029) and how this should be delivered.

Key decisions that the MTR will help inform include:

- (a) Any adjustments to program delivery to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in the final 12 months of implementation; and,
- (b) Design of the next phase of support to Vanuatu's policing and justice sector.

The primary intended audience for the MTR is senior decision makers in the GoA, namely DFAT and AFP. Ni-Vanuatu counterparts in government are also an important audience, as are relevant institutions and the public.

1.3 Key Review Questions (KRQ)

The MTR developed a credible evidence base to respond to KRQs as agreed with DFAT. The below table reflects the original KRQs mapped against OECD evaluation criteria, sub-questions, and review focus areas. An evidence matrix has been developed to identify the sources and data required to provide data-based responses to the KRQs. See Annex 3.

Table 1: Key Review Questions

Key Review Question	Sub-questions	Review focus areas
Effectiveness 1. Is VAPJP on track to achieve end-of-program outcomes?	1.1 To what extent is VAPJP achieving its EOPOs and IOs?	<p>To what extent has the justice stream of work led to individual or institutional behaviour change and contributed to the end-of-program outcomes?</p> <p>To what extent has the policing stream of work led to individual or institutional behaviour change and contributed to the end-of-program outcomes?</p> <p>To what extent have the justice and policing streams contributed to combined outcomes across the 'chain-of-justice'?</p> <p>To what extent has VPF, MJCS and justice agencies institutional capacity been strengthened?</p> <p>What sort of change resulting from VAPJP interventions has been experienced by targeted EOPO end users/beneficiaries – particularly women, but also children and youth?</p>
	1.2 To what extent is VAPJP achieving results in gender equality, disability and social inclusion?	Is the program on track to achieve its gender equality objectives?
	1.3 Is the current MERL framework fit for purpose?	How effective is the M&E system in producing quality information on progress towards EOPOs and informing program decision making?
Efficiency 2. How efficient are VAPJP's delivery modalities?	2.1 Is the delivery and management approach of VAPJP fit for purpose?	<p>How efficient is the current management modality (i.e., DFAT/managing contractor/AFP)?</p> <p>How does the scope and level of engagement of implementing partners contribute to the efficiency or otherwise of program delivery?</p> <p>Is VAPJP taking sufficient steps to support localisation and local leadership within the program?</p>
	2.2 To what extent do the governance and delivery modalities support progress towards IOs and EOPOs?	<p>To what extent are the governance mechanisms efficient in terms of facilitating delivery of EOPOs?</p> <p>Are the VAPJP delivery modalities - technical assistance, operational support and funding, training and professional development, community grants, infrastructure, and project delivery – still the most efficient way to provide support to the sector within this current phase?</p>
	2.3 Are resources allocated appropriately across program streams?	<p>How efficient is resource allocation across program streams and compared with Government of Vanuatu actual and budget sector expenditure?</p> <p>Is expenditure on track?</p>

⁷ It is noted that there will be less than a year of implementation remaining by the time this report is finalised.

Key Review Question	Sub-questions	Review focus areas
<p>Relevance</p> <p>3. How relevant, appropriate, and sustainable is the VAPJP investment?</p>	<p>3.1 How has the operating context changed, and how has VAPJP adapted to this?</p> <p>3.2 To what extent does the VAPJP design remain strategically aligned to Australian interests and comparative advantage, and Vanuatu government development priorities?</p> <p>3.3 To what extent are VAPJP outcomes sustainable?</p>	<p>How have the relevant settings in Vanuatu changed since 2019, such as security environment (e.g. increased focus on cyber-security), policy priorities (e.g. decentralisation), capacity/needs within relevant ministries and political settings? To what extent is VAPJP navigating these new settings?</p> <p>How has the Australia-Vanuatu relationship in the policing and justice sector evolved since 2019? How does this affect VAPJP framing and potential?</p> <p>Are the EOPOs still relevant?</p> <p>What evidence exists to suggest ownership of VAPJP priorities and results amongst program stakeholders, including GoV?</p> <p>Is there more that VAPJP could be doing to support the VPF in securing appropriate levels of budget support?</p> <p>How has the program’s increased focus on the interface between kastom and formal justice systems affected its relevance and sustainability?</p>
<p>Future focus</p> <p>4. What opportunities are there for Australia to contribute to the Vanuatu policing and justice sector effectively and efficiently, going forward?</p>	<p>4.1 For the remaining period of VAPJP (to end 2024), what further adaptation is required for the program to remain relevant to security and justice challenges in Vanuatu?</p>	<p>Do the EOPOs and IOs remain relevant?</p> <p>Are there opportunities to redirect program focus into new, emerging priorities?</p> <p>Is there a need for consolidation or scaling back in some areas and/or deeper engagement in others to better influence change?</p>

2 Methodology

2.1 Method and approach

The MTR drew on data collected through a review of relevant documents related to the project and context, primary data collected through an in-country mission from 8–20 October 2023, and remote interviews prior to and after travel. The perspectives of stakeholders across the justice and policing sectors, as well as community members, are the principal element of data collection. These include women, youth and people with disability, and the review used methods to ensure that the perspectives of these groups are included in the evidence and findings.

While it was agreed that the team would undertake approximately 35 consultations with key informants, prioritised based on their potential to contribute data with respect to the KRQ, it proved difficult to limit the consultations given the breadth of the program. The team ended up interviewing 92 people and conducting three Focus Group Discussions (FGD). In selecting key informants, the review team worked with DFAT, AFP and VAPJP.

The in-country mission included a two-day visit to Santo for some of the team members, to conduct FGDs and meetings with key stakeholders. A field visit to Epi had to be cancelled due to the lack of available aircraft and safety concerns arising from a recent Air Taxi incident.

In the process of developing findings, the review communicated and engaged regularly with DFAT and VAPJP through regular catch-up meetings and online communications. The review team also participated in key meetings to share draft findings and seek feedback. A draft and final MTR Plan were developed, and an Aide Memoire was presented on 20 October in Port Vila to DFAT and AFP.

The key deliverables are:

- An MTR Plan
- Aide Memoire
- First draft of the MTR Report (this document)
- Final MTR Report and presentation slides.

This MTR was carried out with a mixed methodology approach that adopted a utilisation-focused and realist lens to inform adaptations for implementation and recommendations to assist in the future design process. The realist approach facilitated an understanding of the context, relationships and conditions that influenced the process and outcomes of VAPJP, as set out in the program logic. In line with this, the team placed a heavy emphasis on qualitative data, used to enrich and validate secondary quantitative data available through program documents, as well as to generate a clear sense of the contextual factors relevant for DFAT, AFP, GoV and civil society. Evidence gathered through multiple sources enabled the review team to answer the KRQs. The data sources for this evidence included interviews and FGD (See Annex 1 Consultations), and Document Review (See Annex 2 Bibliography).

In developing data collection tools and in interactions with review participants, the review team leveraged gender-inclusive approaches and a localisation lens that reflect DFAT's development priorities. This helped facilitate respectful and effective engagement with stakeholders. The team prioritised gathering locally informed perspectives on the best ways for VAPJP to meet the needs of people in Vanuatu, limiting the size of the interviewer cohort, and where feasible conducting consultations in Bislama. The review team's local gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) adviser played an important role in this aspect of the work. This contributed to better quality evidence and provided the best approach for encouraging participants to share their views. Stakeholders interviewed included staff from DFAT, AFP, VAPJP Program Staff, GoV staff members, VPF members, members of Malvatamauri Council of Chiefs (MNCC), civil society organisations and consultants. FGDs were conducted with Authorised Persons (AP),⁸ parolees who had attended VAPJP training, and community members.

The Team Leader is a member of the Australian Evaluation Society (AES) and therefore bound by the AES guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations and their Code of Conduct.

Team composition

The Team comprised Dr Bu Wilson (Team Leader), Tetra Tech Associate Director Grace Nicholas (M&E Specialist) and Dorah Wilson (Vanuatu GEDSI Specialist). DFAT officer from Canberra (Patrick Chan) and AFP evaluator

⁸ The Family Protection Act 2008 allows for APs (who may include magistrates and justices, as well as trained chiefs, community leaders, teachers, village health workers or police) to issue temporary protection orders when a complainant is in danger and it is not practicable to apply to the court for a protection order and to have the matter heard and determined quickly (which may be particularly relevant in rural and remote communities).

(Chris Ely) joined consultations and provided contextual input. DFAT Officers from Vanuatu post (Renie Anderson and Lavinia Mahit) joined relevant consultations and supported the team with significant demanding logistics, context and some translation. The Deputy High Commissioner, Suzanne Akila, joined some higher level consultations. Tetra Tech Associate Director Richard Bell and Tetra Tech Graduate Paul Lee provided additional analytical support remotely. Bryn Jones, Tetra Tech Director Policing Law & Justice provided team quality assurance of deliverables and guidance. An MTR reference group was established as a coordination mechanism between DFAT (Post and Desk) and AFP to oversee and guide the MTR process, review and provide feedback on deliverables.

2.2 Challenges and limitations

The review was able to manage challenges to deliver a thorough analysis and review report, with the active engagement of the majority of stakeholders. Challenges and their impact are summarised in the below table.

Table 2: MTR limitations and management

Challenge / Limitation	Mitigation and adaptive strategies
Large number of stakeholders for in-country consultation	<p>VAPJP's scope and reach means a large number of stakeholders were initially identified for separate consultation (more than 100), which was beyond the resources or time available. The MTR team, DFAT, VAPJP and AFP worked collaboratively to consolidate the schedule to ensure most relevant perspectives were included. This also resulted in the MTR team splitting on occasions to ensure coverage and consultations in both Port Vila and Santo.</p> <p>The holding of group meetings was also designed to deal with the large number of stakeholders, however this proved less than ideal on occasions as some informants were clearly reluctant to speak, offer alternative views, or raise contentious issues in the presence of more senior members of the group. In some cases, when time permitted, the MTR team was able to follow up separately with individuals for further information as needed.</p>
Some stakeholders (3) were unavailable for interview.	The team was unable to meet with three key stakeholders despite concerted attempts to follow up at other times, including remotely. Where this has left gaps in the data, this has been noted in the report.
The team was unable to reach Epi	Charter flights were not available due to high demand resulting from operational challenges with Air Vanuatu, and safety concerns arising from a recent Air Taxi incident, so the review team was unable to visit Epi, which is a key site for VAPJP. Assessments related to Epi were instead made using secondary sources. It would be advisable for the design team to visit Epi if at all possible.
Sampling bias	For logistical reasons, participants in community FGDs were selected by VAPJP and brought to a central location for consultations as participants were spread across the province of Santo, including from remote locations. The potential for positivity bias was noted, but perspectives shared were also triangulated against perspectives of other stakeholders and relevant grey literature.
Data gaps	Challenges with data relevant for the MERL system are highlighted in the report, and contribute to findings.

3 Findings

3.1 Effectiveness

This section covers Effectiveness by answering **KRQ1 To what extent is VAPJP on track to achieve EOPOs?** This is addressed through attention to three sub-questions:

KRQ 1.1 To what extent is VAPJP achieving its EOPOs and IOs? (3.1.1)

KRQ 1.2 To what extent is VAPJP achieving results in gender equality, disability and social inclusion? (3.1.2)

KRQ 1.3 Is the current Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) framework fit for purpose? (3.1.3)

3.1.1 Achieving EOPOs and IOs

This subsection addresses **KRQ 1.1 To what extent is VAPJP achieving its EOPOs and IOs?** and provides higher level findings, discusses **the scope of the program, challenges in achieving and demonstrating outcomes and examines each of EOPO1-3** (See Annex 4 Design Update One page overview).

It is noted that program outcomes do not fit neatly against the three EOPOs, and there is a high degree of overlap. This is in many ways positive as it indicates the extent to which the program is attempting integration across a complex context and sector. Given that all IOs contribute to all EOPOs, and the IOs are each very broad, the MTR team made a considered decision not to cover IOs separately in this section, but rather cover everything via the EOPOs. In addition, it should be noted that this section does not attempt to comprehensively cover the many activities of the program.

Higher level findings



Finding: *The program has some very credible achievements and has done well to keep operating in exceptionally challenging circumstances. The needs of the law and justice and policing sector in Vanuatu are extensive, and intertwined, and VAPJP has sought to respond to many of these needs, while maintaining a high degree of flexibility. The policing stream appears to strike a balance between a deliberate focus and maintaining an operational responsiveness appropriate both to a police service and to principles of locally led development. However, while acknowledging the more challenging operating environment for the justice stream, it does still appear to be overextended and hampered by a lack of focus.*

Reporting challenges and constraints



Finding: *The MTR team appreciates the challenges the program has in demonstrating progress towards EOPOs due to the combined effect of data loss from the November 2022 cyber-attack, notably from the Police Information Management System (PIMS) and Court Case Management System (CMS), and new baselines for new and amended indicators.*



Finding: *The program M&E and reporting is not currently serving the needs of DFAT, AFP or VAPJP well. While VAPJP is making progress towards the broad outcomes of the program, making a meaningful determination of the extent to which VAPJP is achieving outcomes is undermined by a lack of shared understanding or measurable indicators related to quality and sustainability of activities undertaken and results achieved. This is further reflected in overly detailed and repetitive reporting, which does not effectively communicate how activities contribute to outcomes.*



Finding: *Given that there is less than a year for the program to run, consideration will need to be given to the utility of investing heavily in ToC development at this stage. However, the possibility of undertaking a simplified development of a ToC which could both improve effectiveness of the current program and contribute to the new design process could be considered.*

Scope of the program



Finding: *It is the view of the MTR Team that if the number of activities in the justice stream was decreased, focused; and greater emphasis was placed in both streams on ascertaining the quality and outcomes of initiatives, that this would benefit the program. It is understood that VAPJP also needs to remain responsive to changing circumstances.*



Finding: *Some of the activities supported through the Justice stream of work do not make a clear contribution to the VAPJP EOPOs and IOs, which provide for targeted and practical support for Vanuatu legal agencies, legal specialists and management practice, as outlined in the relevant IO: Justice agencies provide timely and professional services in line with their mandate and legislative functions, particularly involving services for women and children. The program is currently pursuing a number of regional and global partnerships, global conferences and ad hoc initiatives, which should be reviewed to ensure they are the most relevant and effective way of contributing to VAPJP outcomes.*

Scope

The 2020 VAPJP Design Update (“the Update”) was deliberate in its choice of an open and broad scope for the program, while recognising that with limited resources activities would need to be prioritised, and that the scope described in the Update related to a broad outer limit of what VAPJP *could do*, without being prescriptive about what the program *must do*. It was intended that access to justice for women, children, youth, and persons with disabilities should be prioritised, while being responsive to changing circumstances and policy priorities of both the GoV and GoA. The AWP is the primary planning tool for VAPJP (VAPJP, 2020).

The program continues to manage a dizzying number of activities through the AWP. In 2023 the AWP contained 173 activities. This was 186 in 2022, and 168 in 2021.

VAPJP has noted in the 2023 Six-month Progress Report (SMPR) that it is challenged to provide comprehensive support to the justice sector due to what it describes as its limited interaction with key agencies such as the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO)⁹ and with the Courts, and that this makes tracing and communicating direct contributions in general justice sector process improvements an ongoing challenge. Certainly, the high level of turnover of MJCS Directors-General (DG), the current lack of a substantive DG, and limited GoV funding divided across many agencies¹⁰ add to this difficulty.

Some of the activities supported through the Justice stream of work do not make a clear contribution to the VAPJP EOPOs and IOs. Examples include, but are not limited to, participating in the Working Group on Customary and Informal Justice and SDG 16+, and supporting MNCC to participate in international customary law events. The MTR team, however, appreciates that a range of targeted international partnerships including with the Victorian Bar Association, the GoA Attorney-General’s Department, and regional initiatives such as the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police plays an important role in supporting improved capacity of GoV agencies. Similarly, the importance of maintaining engagement and coordination with other relevant donor agencies and initiatives is recognised. Greater resourcing of oversight by DFAT to ensure the program does not experience ‘scope creep’ would be beneficial.

One of the things that the MTR team was asked to consider was whether VAPJP should consider engaging more with the Department of Corrective Services (DKBS). For many years support to the Department has been provided by Government of New Zealand but this is now winding down and transitioning to a twinning arrangement. The Director of Corrections is reported to have highlighted the need for VAPJP to engage more with this Department. As mentioned below, the Community Access to Justice team (CA2J) team has engaged with DKBS on a well-regarded program for parolees, some of whom have become influencers in their own communities (and consider that the program could have a preventative function, in particular with youth). With MNCC and DKBS having developed a draft MOU to formalise a system for community-based reintegration programming, and parole management, there is an obvious fit with the other work undertaken by the CA2J team at the community level. The MTR team arranged meetings on three occasions with the Director, Department of Corrective Services (DKBS), but he was not available to meet with us. This may be something that can be followed up in the Design for a new phase of the program.

Challenges in achieving and demonstrating outcomes

VAPJP and the GoV have together experienced an extraordinary range of challenges since the commencement of this Phase of the program, including the COVID19 crisis, increased frequency and severity of natural disasters (including TCs Kevin, Judy and Lola in 2023), a prolonged period of political instability, lack of leadership certainty in MJCS, unreliable air transport; and a GoV wide cyber-attack; as well as being affected by the war in Ukraine and the large number of seasonal workers out of the country. The flow on impacts have included increased costs of fuel, commodities, and building materials; shortage of labour for infrastructure; loss of data; delays in deploying advisers and associated movement; difficulty engaging with counterparts; and changing priorities. These occurrences compound existing structural challenges including the archipelagic nature of Vanuatu, that over 70% of the population live in rural and remote areas, and the absence of key personnel in critical roles in both VPF and MJCS, affecting the ability to focus on priority areas.

Unsurprisingly the program has needed to be flexible and responsive. The program has pivoted creditably to natural disasters, the barriers imposed by COVID-19 and a range of other challenges. AFP programs in a range of locations have historically expressed the need for greater flexibility than that found within what is possible in an ODA context, and in VAPJP there is some frustration with the slowness of procurement systems and the lack of autonomy.

⁹ VAPJP has, however, provided a well-regarded adviser to the PSO.

¹⁰ One senior agency official noted that each year agencies only receive a very small amount of the GoV national policy budget, and that it may be more effective to break agencies into two groups and funding be allocated in alternating years.

Given that there is less than a year for the program to run, consideration will need to be given to the utility of investing heavily in ToC development at this stage. However, the possibility of undertaking a simplified development of a ToC which could both improve effectiveness of the current program and inform the new design process could be considered. DFAT, AFP and VAPJP all acknowledge that the design of the program did not include a 'theory of change (ToC)', or a 'pathway to change', as expected in DFAT development programs at least as far back as 2017 (DFAT, 2017; DFAT, 2023c), making it difficult to assess or clearly determine progress towards EOPOs. The indicators have not been designed to measure the program's progress to achieving IOs or EOPOs, nor have they been designed with benchmark, baselines, or targets.

The loss of data from the cyber-attack has compounded the difficulty of VAPJP **demonstrating outcomes** within a very broad program and a largely anecdotal approach to quality. While the Program planned to remedy this situation in 2022 this has been delayed (VAPJP, 2023a). Consequently, the majority of reporting is quantitative, with little substantiated outcome data. Training and community awareness activities in particular suffer from being limited to the presentation of output data, together with a limited amount of pre-post data. Intended or achieved changes in attitude or behaviour are largely anecdotal. Plans for a holistic assessment of training impact in 2024, would appear to be too late to assist in demonstrating outcomes and contributing to adaptive learning for the program (VAPJP, 2023c)). The stories of change presented in the 2023 SMPR related to sector coordination do not appear to provide clear evidence of addressing gaps in the justice system; GoV officers working collaboratively across the sector towards common objectives; or of incidents being progressed through investigation to prosecution and court outcomes. The Policing and Justice Services Study (PJSS) (Putt and Dinnen, 2023) provides an important baseline against which to measure a change in the public's perception of key matters relating to the law and justice sector and can assist in evaluating the extent to which VAPJP EOPOs are met when it is repeated in 2024 but it is insufficient on its own.

While VAPJP has provided considerable support to the back capture of lost PIMS data, it is of note that reportedly the use and uptake of PIMS is inconsistent, and VPF resourcing is inadequate for it to be utilised in the manner intended. Monthly reporting has lapsed due to its perceived complexity. It is thus an open question to what extent VAPJP (and of course VPF) can rely on this data for accountability and decision making in the future.

The Update allocates 50% of funding to policing and 50% to everything else (Justice, Community, Sector Coordination). In practice about 35% is allocated to the Justice component, although the program notes that this does not take into consideration the infrastructure allocation for any particular financial or calendar year which skews the % allocation and makes community and sector coordination, where there is no infrastructure, look diminutive. There is a widely held perception among justice stakeholders that the great majority of funding is allocated to policing, with one senior GoV justice agency official telling the review team that 'policing is the main game' for VAPJP. Some stakeholders attributed people's concern about a perceived unfairness in resource allocation to it being easier for the policing stream to gain attention and demonstrate their value, with new mobility assets being particularly photogenic and newsworthy; and a higher public profile aided by a competent VPF media team, who are well supported by the AFP.¹¹ Others attributed this perceived imbalance to the fact that the AFP is contributing resources beyond those available through VAPJP, with stakeholders being unaware of the different sources of funding. More work is needed to promote justice outcomes to address these perceptions of inequity between the program streams.

In discussions with GoV counterparts it became apparent that some were more familiar with what the program had done in previous iterations, than what it was doing now, including many stakeholders perceiving that previously there was a known budget that was available for their area, whereas now it was not so apparent. The chain-of-justice approach of VAPJP is not as well understood by advisers or the sector as might be expected and there is no agreed definition or framework of a 'chain-of-justice' in the project documentation.

Despite challenges, there is evidence that the program has made considerable achievements, which are detailed further in the discussion below. A summary of highlights is presented in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1: A snapshot of VAPJP achievements

Highlights – some key achievements

- Flexible, responsive program management enables adaptation and continuity in the face of changing sectoral leadership and emergencies
- Continuity of justice and policing services through effective disaster response
- Increased capacity and leadership opportunities for justice agency staff, including women, through mentoring, the Criminal Law Conference and access to opportunities for promotion

¹¹ With the move to greater decentralisation, it will be important to keep methods of awareness raising relevant. VPF is currently focused on Facebook but given that only 26.2% of the population access the internet, and this is down to 19.7% of the rural population it could be investigated whether greater reach can be achieved through radio (Vanuatu Bureau of Statistics and the Pacific Community, 2020).

- Increased recruitment, deployment, and participation of women in the VPF makes an important contribution to all EOPOs
- Increased recognition and support for women police through the Women's Advisory Network (WAN) activities and the WAN conference
- Strong relationships between VAPJP advisers and their counterparts, and advisers and other stakeholders
- Having the first female in the position of PC (Policing) has provided important role modelling for both female and male VPF, with WAN members reporting that seeing her in that role was very empowering
- Increased capacity of key policing functions through training and mentoring, including detective work, forensics, family protection
- Increased reach of the VPF through provision of equipment and support for deployments to provinces and posts
- Increased engagement with and support from Chiefs to facilitate expansion of the Authorised Persons program
- Design and delivery of infrastructure projects in response to requests from the VPF and justice agencies, including promoting accessibility standards and co-located Justice and Policing services in Epi
- Data recovery and systems strengthening for GoV Police Information Management System (PIMS) and Case Management System (CMS)
- Increased community outreach on policing, justice and laws related to VAWC through joint community, justice and policing rotations
- Awareness raising within the sector and communities on the rights of people with disabilities
- Increased support to children and child rights across the sector

EOPO1: Justice and policing agencies improve quality and reach of services to Vanuatu communities, particularly in their handling of cases involving women, children and youth.

This section examines EOPO1 with an emphasis on **reach and quality**, and some particular focus on the handling of cases involving **women, children and youth**. It has previously been noted that little assessment of quality has been made by the program itself, which cannot be fully redressed in the process of conducting an MTR.



Finding: VAPJP has supported an improved reach of justice and policing services to Vanuatu communities through an extensive range of modalities, with some indications of improved quality. However, data has been difficult to identify due to the November 2022 cyber-attack, difficulties with the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system, and little systematic focus on quality or outcomes.



Finding: There has been an improvement in the reach and quality of policing facilitated by an increase in the number of VPF recruited, trained and deployed to outer islands (with a notable increase in women's participation); deployment of police rotations and the Nasara program¹² to remote areas; significant infrastructure construction and refurbishment, mobility assets (land cruisers, trucks, quad bikes, banana boats), technical advice and financial support for remote operations, and an improved focus on professional standards.¹³



Finding: There has been an improvement in the reach and quality of justice through work undertaken by the justice, community and sector coordination components of VAPJP. The justice component has undertaken well-regarded continuing legal education and mentoring to strengthen the work of legal actors in the sector, and extend the reach of agencies both in Port Vila and selected provincial locations.



Finding: The AP program is an important, well-regarded initiative which is prescribed through the Family Protection Act. It is the key contact point for communities to access essential access to justice services in situations of VAWC. The AP Program is increasingly respected by communities, police, chiefs and the justice sector as a whole. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to finalise the planned hand over of management of the AP program with GoV.



Finding: Noting the very high reliance on VAPJP to financially support the VPF to extend their reach and quality, the MTR team considered whether there was more that VAPJP could be doing to support the VPF in securing appropriate levels of budget support. The MTR Team did not become aware of any additional opportunities for budget support that have not already been attempted.

¹² The VPF Nasara program was initiated by VPF in Santo to carry out a monthly rotation to areas with minimal or absent police, AP or Community Safety Team (CST) presence. Activities include discussions on VAWC, alcohol and drug use, and the law, school visits and conducting investigations into any complaints made.

¹³ Mobility assets are a combination of AFP and VAPJP funded. VAPJP funded the banana boats, some quad bikes, trucks and two Landcruiser's. AFP through the Pacific Initiatives Funding 2022 provided four Landcruiser's and four quad bikes.



Finding: While separate from VAPJP, additional inputs of AFP directly to VPF complement the investments being made through the program as guided by the Program Coordinator Policing (PC-P) and align with GoV commitment to decentralisation (VAPJP, 2022a).



Finding: VAPJP is providing a significant level of infrastructure support as a means of strengthening reach and quality of policing and justice services. However, the contribution these inputs are making to improvements in service delivery and access are not yet clear, and are likely compromised by insufficient planning on the utilisation of these resources. The program has identified the need for a more effective and strategic approach to infrastructure but despite best efforts this has proved challenging, in part due to frequent changes in sector leadership.



Finding: To date the Grant facility has not achieved its potential. In a new phase there are opportunities for a more purposeful Grants program, that could improve the reach, quality and sustainability of the program although it would need to have an integrated accompaniment approach to strengthen capacity, and adequate resources within the program to provide oversight and quality assurance for the work being undertaken.

Evidence for findings

Reach and quality of policing

The reach and quality of policing has improved, facilitated by support for an increase in the number of VPF recruited, trained and deployed to outer islands (with a notable increase in women's participation); deployment of police rotations and the Nasara program to remote areas; significant infrastructure construction and refurbishment, mobility assets (land cruisers, trucks, quad bikes, banana boats), and technical advice and financial support for remote operations. Significant support is provided to address the high cost of transportation across air, land and sea modalities. Transportation forms a significant part of the VPF recurrent budget as well as the program activity budget (VAPJP, 2022a).

Notably, the policing stream of VAPJP has been successful in supporting an increase in the number of women recruited into the VPF. In the last recruitment round 36% of graduates were female, bringing the overall percentage of women in the VPF to 23% as at the end of 2022. Interestingly this is very similar to the percentage of sworn officers in the AFP (23.9%). As noted by Denney (2019) "A police service that is representative of the diverse community it serves, including as regards gender, is more approachable and trusted by that community".

As at 30 June 2023 there had been a six percent increase in police officers appointed to permanent positions across Vanuatu. There are 15 islands with a permanent police presence covering every province. Every province, except Shefa, had an increase in staff in 2022. The total number of officers as at 31 December 2022 was 624, compared to 588 in 2021. The number of police posts across the six provinces increased from 25 in 2021 to 27 in 2022. VAPJP assisted VPF to deploy to all six provincial areas on multiple occasions to investigate major crime, including domestic and sexual violence and homicide, conduct investigations of professional standards and VPF conduct, or to conduct crime awareness in targeted village locations. It is noted that the establishment of additional police posts and staffing of vacant police posts in Port Vila has reportedly improved community access, police responsiveness and feelings of community safety. While much focus of the program and the MTR has been on extending the reach of justice and policing services to outer islands, we note the view of the National Coordinator for Crime and Community Policing that a gap has been left, with the wind back of the MFAT program, that sees Port Vila insufficiently serviced in terms of community awareness raising, with a need for programs on parenting, and programs in schools. He observed that [negative] youth attitudes in Port Vila are often replicated in outer areas. As one adviser noted, the push to outer islands implies we have sorted the problem here [Port Vila], and that is not the case.

Support to improve the responsiveness to VAWC has been facilitated by training such as the Detective Training Package and joint training packages for CID and OPP (VAPJP, 2022a).

VAPJP has also supported the only forensic pathologist (female) in Vanuatu to travel and undertake post-mortems in remote parts of Vanuatu.¹⁴ By way of example during the first six months of 2023 she undertook five post-mortems outside of Port Vila in Pentecost, Ambae, Malo, Santo and Malekula (VAPJP, 2023c). One senior respondent noted that the availability of morgue facilities would make the work of both local and international forensic experts supported by VAPJP more effective by 'buying time' to carry out post-mortems.

Through a focus on improved professional standards, the quality and reach of VPFs work has improved, matched by a corresponding increase in community confidence in the police. This is evidenced by provincial expansion of the Professional Standards Unit, improved resourcing and training, a genuine attempt to address cases promptly, and good communication with the community when wrongdoing occurs. Like other operational areas the PSU

remains financially dependent on VAPJP. This improvement was particularly apparent to the MTR Team Leader who can remember an isolated and woefully under-resourced PSU with no reach beyond Port Vila from 2014. Between 62 and 69% of PJSS respondents felt that police services had improved across six nominated areas¹⁵ over the last two years, which correlates to the start of the current phase of VAPJP (Putt and Dinnen, 2023).

A five member Professional Standards Unit (PSU) in Port Vila reports directly to the Commissioner of Police (COMPOL), as does a two member PSU that has recently been established in Santo, led by the first ever female officer in charge of a PSU. It is anticipated that further assessment for expansion of PSU into Tanna will be completed in 2023. The unit investigates complaints received by both members of the public and the VPF (McLeod, 2022). VPF are being supported by VAPJP to improve the operation of the PSU, undertake investigations and awareness sessions, and expand PSU's geographical reach. PSU staffing numbers have increased in both Port Vila and Santo enabling conduct of awareness sessions to emphasise the importance of the Code of Conduct and appropriate performance to police officers, and explicit communication both internally and externally about police not being above the law and the complaints process. The program reports that implementation of the Santo PSU has provided the Northern Command with greater access to the complaint system, as well as decreasing lag times between reporting and investigation when all matters were dealt with by Port Vila. COMPOL is supportive of the PSU having the ability to operate independently and this will form part of a review of the Police Act.

Given the very high reliance on VAPJP to financially support the VPF to extend their reach and quality, one of the things the MTR was asked to consider was whether there was more that VAPJP could be doing to support the VPF in securing appropriate levels of budget support. The MTR Team did not become aware of any additional opportunities for budget support that have not already been attempted. The support VAPJP is providing, primarily within the Corporate Services Unit (CSU), is to enable VPF to understand processes for receipt and clearance of invoices and mapping of outstanding liabilities, as well as to understand future costs for accurate budget estimates. There has been support for budget submissions, new policy proposal submissions, and supplementary funding requests.¹⁶ External risks to VPF budget remain as reductions are made at ministerial level without consultation with the Commissioner of Police for unplanned activities (e.g., VUV 9m utilised to support Malekula by-election in 2023). VAPJP has no ability to influence this. Internal systems strengthening is a focus of the newly appointed Director CSU and DCP-MS, in line with OPS and VPF Strategic Planning. Their focus includes the need for improved practice within the VPF with respect to budget planning and expenditure. Request for additional recurrent budget requires ministerial confidence in the controls in place within the system, which is moving in the right direction. Some efforts have been hampered by key position vacancies which have occurred at the end of the reporting period (Finance and Planning), but which VPF are seeking to address quickly to maintain momentum on internal reforms. The MTR Team did not become aware of any additional opportunities for budget support that have not already been attempted. However, a number of respondents raised the issue that poor monthly planning within agencies often means that money is not available in time to carry out activities, with a resort to the program for support. In addition one MJCS respondent estimated that 80% of work is on request, outside of their annual work plan, when the Minister or senior management suggest funds diverted to other immediate priorities.

While separate from VAPJP, additional inputs of AFP directly to VPF complement the investments being made through the program as guided by the Program Coordinator Policing (PC-P) (VAPJP, 2022a). It also aligns with GoV commitment to decentralisation.

Reach and quality of justice

The reach and quality of justice has been improved through work undertaken by the justice, community and sector coordination components of VAPJP. The justice component has undertaken well-regarded continuing legal education and mentoring to strengthen the work of legal actors in the sector, and extend the reach of agencies both in Port Vila and selected provincial locations.

GoV counterparts in PSO, the OPP, and the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission (VLRC) were fulsome in their praise of their co-located advisers. Advisers supported these agencies on policy and legislative reform that will benefit women and children, particularly the review of the Wills Act to eliminate discriminatory impact of current inheritance and succession law on women and children, the proposed Evidence Bill that should make it easier for

¹⁵ The areas were keeping communities safe, reducing the level of crime in Vanuatu, improving community interaction with police, providing appropriate services to victims of sexual violence/abuse, providing appropriate services to victims of domestic violence/abuse, and meeting the needs of the community.

¹⁶ The 2022 Annual Report noted that "One way that the program has attempted to ease financial pressures within the VPF is through support to New Policy Proposal (NPP) submissions, however, at the last budget submission in Q3 these NPPs had been rejected by Ministry of Finance for additional funding support, which has meant requests for VAPJP to remain heavily engaged in operational support has continued, while VPF provide funding to support essential staffing and clear personnel liabilities".

VAWC victims to give evidence, and provided incidental support to the Vanuatu National Victims' Rights Charter¹⁷ where women continue to be the largest proportion of victims across all incidents. A duty lawyer service has been implemented at PSO as a result of the VAPJP-supported Business Planning Retreat and advocacy by the Adviser to the Public Solicitor's Office (VAPJP, 2023c). The Public Solicitor reports that their VAPJP adviser has greatly improved communication between PSO and police, something they have been attempting for a very long time. Advisors in the Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) and PSO have enabled improved connections between respective Port Vila head office and provincial locations and provided intensive support during Supreme Court Circuits. There is an increased engagement of Chiefs within the program.

The CA2J stream extends and contributes to an improved reach of policing and justice agencies through cross-agency support to chiefs and facilitating strengthened links between formal and traditional justice systems including through community legal awareness and training, and roll out of the AP program to Santo and Malekula.

The CA2J work will be key moving forward. Despite VAPJP driving an increase in people having contact with formal policing and justice agencies, in many areas Kastom continues to be the most accessible form of justice. This is confirmed by the findings of the PJSS which found that 70.3% of respondents said they would contact the chief first to seek help in the case of domestic violence, with only 12.9% selecting the police. The study notes this may be partly due to difficulties with accessing police, as well as reflecting that many incidents of domestic violence continue to be viewed as a household or family problem that should be dealt with locally, and not by outside/state intervention. Very few respondents or participants had direct experience of the formal justice sector; 93.8% of survey respondents had no contact with any of the listed justice services in the past 12 months (Putt and Dinnen, 2023).

The AP program is an important, well-regarded initiative which is prescribed through the Family Protection Act. It is the key contact point for communities to access essential access to justice services in situations of VAWC. The AP Program is increasingly respected by communities, police, chiefs and the justice sector as a whole. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible for the planned hand over of management of the AP program to GoV. There have been detailed high level discussions on options for the AP program to be situated with the Chief Justice rather than the Department of Women's Affairs, with payments to facilitate AP work remaining with the program. Whereas the AP program operates in Santo and Malekula, victim support services are provided in Port Vila by a Victim Support Officer (VSO) through the OPP. The VPF continues to advance investigational deployments and crime prevention awareness in support of police rotations with the AP program, often to areas that have never previously received police support.

Sector coordination

The challenges at the sector coordination level have been noted above. While there were a number of initiatives that occurred across policing and various justice agencies, there is limited evidence of the maintenance of a 'chain-of-justice'. This is in part due to a lack of data due to the ongoing challenges with data recovery for PIMS and CMS, and unavailability of CMS data from the courts at the time of the MTR in country mission.

Women, children, youth and people with disabilities

VAPJP is enhancing services for persons with disabilities in the provinces, noting that this is an area that has had very little resources or attention in Vanuatu overall. The Child and Disability desks within MJCS facilitated Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities/ Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association (VSPD / VPDA) inclusive services training sessions. The training included APs, VPF officers and MJCS desk officers with funding and technical support provided through VAPJP. However, there continues to be limited internal MJCS expansion planning and budgeting for these desks and both remain reliant on development partner funding. The Family Protection Unit (FPU) has been supported to establish a child-friendly interview room in Port Vila which provides privacy for adults and children, and is reported to result in more comprehensive statements. There is enthusiasm for the initiative to be rolled out to other provinces. VAPJP has supported well-received child interview training. A number of respondents highlighted growing child protection issues when both parents leave to join labour mobility schemes, leaving children with limited supervision and care. The Child Desk Officer emphasised the need for coordination with the Department of Labour & Employment Services, and noted VAPJP scoping of support to establishment of a suitable child desk database.

Infrastructure in support of reach and quality

VAPJP is providing a significant level of infrastructure support as a means of strengthening reach and quality of services. However, the contribution these inputs are making to improvements in service delivery and access are not yet clear, and are likely compromised by insufficient long-term sector-wide planning on the utilisation of these

¹⁷ While the Vanuatu National Victims' Rights Charter itself is funded by the Spotlight Initiative, UNDP & EU; VAPJP provided technical support through the VAPJP Adviser in the OPP and the VAPJP Community Lead (Office of the Public Prosecutor et al.2023; VAPJP, 2023c).

resources. The program has identified the need for a more effective and strategic approach to infrastructure but despite best efforts this has proved challenging, in part due to frequent changes in sector leadership.

Infrastructure planned for or supported includes police posts in Sanma, Shefa and Tafea, a PSO Staff House (Malampa), fitout for an OPP Office (Tanna), an OPP Exhibit Storage (Port Vila), VPF Forensics Laboratory (Port Vila), PIMS Office refurbishment (Port Vila), Police Training College (PTC) Conference Room refurbishment (Port Vila), Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and FPU Office refurbishment; and a planned new Central Police Station for Port Vila. In 2023 VAPJP supported the rollout of infrastructure to Epi Island (Shefa) which provides the possibility of improving the reach and coordination of police and justice services, for the people of Epi and surrounding islands. The infrastructure includes a purpose-built, cyclone resistant, police station and court house. A solar power system for the police station was provided by the United Kingdom; and Kiwanis Port Vila supported the Vanuatu Mobile Force (VMF) to build an adjacent playground. However, it is understood that the court is yet to sit in Epi, although the reasons for this were unclear. Additional infrastructure support was provided to the sector in response to TCs Judy and Kevin.

The program has to date supported decentralisation to the provincial level although there is a clear expectation from GoV agencies that this will need to go down to the Area Council level, something that has not been committed to. The intention of the VPF to establish police posts in all 72 area councils¹⁸ raises a number of issues including the need to ensure that chosen locations warrant placement of police on a permanent basis, so that expenditure on a post and deployment of valuable personnel is not wasted, and an understanding that VPF are often reluctant to be deployed to a place where they don't know anyone and there may be little to do. The VPF Organisational Performance Study (OPS) report makes a number of suggestions in relation to police posts including that the VPF ensure that the establishment of police posts is undertaken in strategic fashion, with the order in which posts are established being informed by clear criteria, and that VPF establish a schedule for the maintenance and repair of police posts (McLeod, 2022).

Choosing to establish police posts needs to be weighed up against the cost of efforts to respond from more centralised locations, and/or include the location in police rotations; and an awareness that police posts will not be able to provide the level of specialisation available in more centralised locations. The OPS report also notes that decentralisation through police posts poses an additional structural challenge as decision-making, and financial and human resources approvals are currently (in practice) concentrated at the rank of Assistant Commissioner and above, rendering the delivery of services to the people slow and unresponsive (McLeod, 2022).

VAPJP have identified the need for establishment of sector Infrastructure Working Groups for analysis and planning, assisting police and justice sectors to map existing infrastructure, supporting the police and justice sectors to revise and update the Policing and Justice Sector Infrastructure Priorities Plan 2017 – 2022 and assisting DFAT to develop a guideline for eligible infrastructure projects, including an assessment of the capacity of GoV to maintain assets, together with sustainability and climate change considerations (VAPJP, 2023c).

The role of community grants

In a new phase there are opportunities for a more purposeful community Grants program, that could improve the reach, quality and sustainability of the program, although to be successful it would likely need to have an integrated accompaniment approach to strengthen organisational capacity; as well as adequate resources within the program to provide oversight and quality assurance for the work being undertaken. The 2020 Design Update anticipated that grants would be made available to external organisations (non-government organisations - NGOs, community-based organisations -CBOs and others) to support the intended outcomes of the CA2J component and EOPOs (VAPJP, 2020). During Phase 2 grants have been made to VSPD, World Vision Vanuatu for *Men Be the Change* program, and to Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) for provision of a vehicle (VAPJP, 2023a). However, in 2023, limitations on budget have restricted Grant funding to the provision of funding support to VSPD, whose project activities in Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) are important, but do not have strong ties to VAPJP EOPOs.

The Update noted that “the range and scale of NGOs and CBOs operating in Vanuatu with experience and capability relevant to the policing and justice sectors is relatively limited” (VAPJP, 2020). For this reason, in a new phase a Grants program could beneficially integrate an accompaniment approach to strengthen capacity of partners, and provide increased resources within the program itself for oversight and quality assurance. Well-developed examples of this can be found in the DFAT-funded Nabilan Ending Violence Against Women program in Timor-Leste, and its predecessor programs Support to Essential Services for Ending Violence Against Women and Justice Sector Support Facility.

¹⁸ It is noted that the number of area councils fluctuates over time.

EOPO2: Women, children, and youth are increasingly accessing state policing, justice and community services.



Finding: *There is evidence that awareness raising and community engagement through the Program has led to uptake of services by women, children and youth. However, VAPJP could better systematise and analyse data on the extent to which services are being accessed.*



Finding: *A broad range of actors both inside and outside VAPJP programming are involved in awareness raising in relation to domestic violence. It was not possible for the MTR team to verify the consistency of messaging and whether it demonstrates best practice in bringing about change in attitudes and practice.*

The program has been dependent on PIMS to demonstrate progress towards this outcome with 674 victims of crimes related to domestic violence recorded in 2020, and 626 in 2021. Following the November 2022 cyber-attack there is some limited data available to demonstrate women and men, boys and girls are reporting incidents (including DV related/non-DV related) but provisional data indicates a low level of reporting, which may in part be attributed to the impact of COVID (VAPJP, 2023c).

Part of the program's implied rationale is that an increase in community engagement and awareness activities will lead to an increase in people accessing services, with anecdotal evidence that following workshops (e.g. Santo Chiefs' workshop June 2021) or awareness activities there is an increase in calls for services across numerous provinces, both by complainants and by Chiefs in whose areas VAPJP engagement has occurred. A Cross-Sector Legal Awareness workshop in 2022 that was led by the Child Desk officer together with a team including representatives from FPU, courts, PSO, Disability Desk, VWC, and DBKS was reportedly so effective that the VWC and the Child Desk experienced a significant number of cases being reported from the area following the workshop in a response they described as "unprecedented" compared to previous workshops, with the Child Desk officer receiving 18 cases and VWC immediately receiving six child maintenance cases, four protection orders for children, six child sexual abuse cases, four child physical abuse cases and two unlawful sexual intercourse cases – a total of 22 new cases involving children (VAPJP, 2022b). There is also anecdotal evidence that following establishment of police posts at Nambatri and Freswota in Port Vila there was an increase in community accessing police services. The MTR heard mixed evidence on whether provision of mobile assets was sufficiently translating to improved access to policing in cases of VAWC. While some policing respondents were of the view that it was just a matter of needing *more* mobility assets, some justice respondents believed that even when mobility assets were available, there was still a reluctance to respond to VAWC cases.

The PJSS found that 80.7% of respondents view domestic violence as against the law, and think that women and men victims should report its occurrence to the police (75.5% and 72.4% respectively). Awareness of temporary or family protection orders (62.7%) was quite high compared with awareness of the FPU (57.5%) and APs (18.5%). Given the small numbers of people seeking assistance from the FPU in the past year, applying for a temporary or family protection order or seeking help from an AP, the PJSS questions how well this reported knowledge and attitude is translating into practice. For this reason, the PJSS recommends further investigation of applications for and the granting of orders through justice intermediaries and the courts as well as the experiences with and efficacy of orders from the point of view of applicants (Putt and Dinnen, 2023).

In 2023 the program reports increased levels of community engagement activities and community safety assessments undertaken by police and justice agencies, including those with chiefs. Once again, there is only output data available. The GoV, who funds MNCC through MJCS, has called on VAPJP to engage more deeply with MNCC as this agency steps up its support to the justice sector through community level initiatives lead by Chiefs. In the first six months of 2023 VAPJP supported community awareness in Sanma and Shefa across 80 communities. This includes VPF operational deployments through the AP and Police Nasara Program under Northern Command, collaborations between VPF and DBKS in Port Vila and Ifira, and collaborations between VPF, DBKS and MNCC in Epi.. A total of 4289 people were reached in the first half of 2023 (1094 F; 1340 M; 1808 Youth; 47 PWD). This compares very favourably with 502 people reached in 2021 and 514 reached in 2022. World Vision completed the Police be the Change program with a total of 135 people over 18 months, 49 (F); 86 (M). VSPD fieldworkers and partners have provided support to 149 people with disabilities (61 female; 88 male), being new clients in Shefa and Tafea in the first six months of 2023 and referred 12 persons with disabilities 4(M); 8(F) to policing or justice services or assisted in complaint resolution. (VAPJP,2023c) A broad range of actors both inside and outside VAPJP programming are involved in awareness raising in relation to domestic violence. It was not possible for the MTR team to verify the consistency of messaging and whether it demonstrates best practice in bringing about change in attitudes and practice. This is worthy of increased attention in future programming.

EOPO3: Policing and Justice agencies maintain public security and the rule of law.



Finding: *VAPJP has provided well-regarded support to policing and justice agencies to maintain public security and the rule of law. Confidence in VPF has reportedly increased due to their greater visibility, improved handling of crisis media communications, increased engagement with communities, and improved approach to professional standards.*



Finding: Purposeful development of the VPF has been greatly aided by the conducting of the VPF OPS, the acceptance of all its 85 recommendations, and their incorporation in VPF's strategic plan (McLeod, 2022). An important next step for discussions about future support would be conducting a Total Cost of Policing Study, noting that the OPS reports that this is not currently known.

The 2020 Design Update explicitly recognised the contribution that the Program makes towards supporting the GoV to maintain confidence of the public in stability and security, noting also the need to maintain a balance between short term gains and building momentum for long term sustainable change. This occurred with the addition of EOPO3 (VAPJP, 2020), as recommended by the 2019 evaluation of the predecessor program (Nichols et.al, 2019).

The stability of the VPF during a period of broader political instability was noted by many respondents, as was the good relationship between COMPOL and the current AFP Commander/PC-P, and how it contributes to this outcome. The VPF have been able to learn from incidents such as occurred in Big Bay in 2020, and Teouma in 2022 with VPF increasing its standing by responding quickly and appropriately to incidents of police brutality or operating outside the law.

Purposeful development of the VPF has been greatly aided by the conducting of the VPF OPS, the acceptance of all its 85 recommendations, and their incorporation in VPF's strategic plan (McLeod, 2022). An important next step for discussions about future support would be conducting a Total Cost of Policing Study, noting that the OPS reports that this is not currently known. This would also help focus on difficult decisions about the extent that decentralisation is possible, and the most realistic and feasible mix of approaches to providing remote policing. Expanding the emphasis on the Nasara program and police rotations rather than provision of permanent police posts may be both more feasible and effective.

VAPJP support to business continuity for the justice sector amidst the many crises faced has been well received across the sector. The PJSS survey notes that their study "did not shed much light on satisfaction with justice services as so few survey respondents and focus group participants had direct experiences of the services", although it is noted that people had a generally positive impression of the justice system in the abstract (Putt and Dinnen, 2023.).

3.1.2 Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion

This subsection addresses **KRQ 1.2 To what extent is VAPJP achieving results in GEDSI** and covers gender, disability inclusion, key achievements, the GEDSI Action Plan and reporting, challenges, managing risks and a small case study on the Women's Action Network (WAN) of the VPF.



Finding: In the challenging Vanuatu context, VAPJP is making important contributions towards inclusion. This is critical, to ensure that gains are not lost. However, a more targeted focus on inclusion could allow for greater visibility and investment in outcomes to strengthen security for women, children and people with disabilities, including in remote areas.

VAPJP has a critical role to play in promoting ongoing attention to inclusion within policing and justice, and has identified target groups as women, people with disabilities, children, youth and those living in remote areas.¹⁹ The program also recognises the challenges of intersectionality. Inclusion, particularly for women and girls, has been a priority for VAPJP predecessor programs and the Australian aid program, and a 2016 study indicated a high level of dependency on Australian aid investments to be expected for years to come.²⁰ This remains the case. VAPJP offers significant value given ongoing high levels of need, low availability of resources and widely varying commitment across agencies and police stakeholders to take forward Vanuatu's policy commitments in this space.

There has been progress in advancing gender equality in the legal and police workforces in Vanuatu, as in Vanuatu overall, but this is an area that needs continued priority within VAPJP, as barriers to women's leadership and security remain significant and gains made could easily slip backwards. At community level, safety for women and children, and people with disabilities, remains a major concern, given extreme levels of violence against women and girls and the compounded impact of intersectionality for people with disabilities and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transexual and Intersex (LGBTQI+) people. While consensual same-sex activity is legal in Vanuatu, LGBTQI+ persons face legal challenges and discrimination not experienced by non- LGBTQI persons. Inclusion for people with disabilities remains critically under-resourced across Vanuatu, which is reflected in awareness and services across the Justice sector.

In this challenging context, the MTR found that VAPJP is improving gender equality, disability, and social inclusion within the VPF and justice agencies as workplaces, and in the services they offer. There are examples of both mainstreamed and targeted activities addressing the needs of women and children, and people with disabilities.

¹⁹ VAPJP GEDSI Action Plan 2022-2023, 15 Feb 2022 (draft).

²⁰ UN Women Woman and Girls Access to the Formal Justice System in Vanuatu. UN Women, 2016

The MTR findings echo the 2019 evaluation of the previous phase of VAPJP, which noted that the program had understated its positive impact on gender equality and stated: “Good progress has been made in integrating gender considerations across most program components, while more could be done in some areas.” (Nichols et.al.2019). VAPJP continues to work on strengthening the ‘chain-of-justice’ including for women, though it seemed there was no clear or consistent understanding about what this means beyond a vague sense of being joined-up across the policing and justice spaces. Support includes improved police and justice response to VAWC, the AP program, community awareness and police rotations in remote communities in Santo, and improvements in inclusive infrastructure such as child-friendly spaces, accessible placement of the FPU on the ground floor, and private police interview rooms. Police rotations and deployments have been supported across the life of the program including during the Christmas and Independence months, and in the aftermath of cyclones and natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions in Tanna and submarine volcano eruptions in Malekula. The program also continues support for female officers through the Women’s Advisory Network (WAN) and women in the justice department and agencies through ongoing professional development support for women.

Key achievements:

- Increased # female VPF recruits and trainees
- Positive communication and interactions between male and female police trainees
- Increase in women police presence in key remote locations
- Increase in #s women appointed as APs
- Active WAN in the VPF
- Increased engagement and support from Chiefs on VAWC
- Increase in women accessing professional development or leadership opportunities in VPF, and in justice agencies and department
- Improved capacities and resourcing for FPU
- Increased capacities and resourcing for Child and Disability Desks
- Improved facilities for women and children affected by VAWC
- Increased focus on disability inclusion in new infrastructure designs
- Positive role model of first female PC-P to VAPJP

Disability inclusion



Finding: VAPJP has contributed to disability inclusion, most notably in the justice stream. VAPJP’s Disability and Inclusion Officer, who brings lived experience to the role, has a key role to play in building capabilities and support for persons with disabilities in the justice system.

VAPJP supports disability inclusion by providing training to strengthen awareness and understanding around rights of people with disabilities among staff and within communities, by promoting accessibility standards in policing and justice infrastructure and providing long-term funding support for Vanuatu’s sole disability service-provider, VSDP. Reporting notes that disability access has been incorporated in planning for 13 (81%) infrastructure projects and is developing tools and audits to strengthen this further (VAPJP, 2023c). In 2022 the program recruited a part time local Disability and Inclusion officer who brings lived experience to the role and is being supported by the GEDSI TA²¹ and a partnership with the DFAT-funded Vanuatu Skills Partnership to build his capabilities to support legal agencies to undertake disability audits and improve understanding of the rights of people with disabilities in workplaces and communities. The program also collects and reports on disability data where possible. Within policing, disability inclusion has received less attention. The lack of resources and small number of organisations working in this sector compared to the complexity and extent of the issues faced in communities remains a major challenge for VAPJP. With an increasing emphasis within DFAT’s new development policy, there may be potential to build on current foundations and strengthen strategies and results in disability inclusion.

GEDSI Action Plan and reporting



Finding: The GEDSI Action Plan (GAP) is a useful tool for monitoring and reporting but could be better used to promote improved awareness of VAPJP’s efforts amongst the team and counterparts and encourage stronger communication between agencies and between justice and policing workstreams.

VAPJP’s outcomes statements provide for a special emphasis on women, children and people with disabilities. VAPJP has a GAP supported by an Annex listing GEDSI-focused activities for the year ahead. For 2023-2024, activities have, instead, been incorporated in the AWP. The program reports extensively on its achievements and challenges for GEDSI (such as Annex F of the 2022 Annual Report) and provides detailed analysis of the

²¹ GEDSI TA in place 2021-March 2022; and returned following maternity leave in late 2023. The role is accompanied by a locally led Gender Lead.

challenges that need to be addressed to strengthen capacities and responsiveness across justice and policing services.

The GAP provides a useful basis for communicating and monitoring VAPJP efforts towards GEDSI internally, however efforts are not “joined-up” within Justice, or between Justice and Policing. Consultations with disabled people’s organisations and community organisations, the FPU, Sanma Counselling Centre and VWC indicated that agencies are all working to address VAWC and engage with FPU, but these efforts do not appear to be coordinated. The MTR also noted that the Community Partnerships Forum envisaged in the Design Update had not been initiated. Greater coordination across GEDSI initiatives, including a more active engagement with community organisations in this space, would strengthen networks, information-sharing, and visibility.

Specific adviser resources are directed to support the Vanuatu Law Reform Commission (VLRC), PSO, OPP, MJCS Child and Disability desks and FPU in the VPF, contributing to VAPJP support to address challenges that predominantly affect women, children and people with disabilities interacting with the Justice sector. Community-focused activities to raise awareness, and infrastructure such as the Epi police station and courthouse are also areas of shared interest linking policing and justice. Such synergies could be better articulated in the program’s strategies, outcome statements and MERL and may provide a better way to recognise the shared value of VAPJP for both the policing and justice systems.

GEDSI Challenges

Challenges with GEDSI need to be seen in context for the achievements to be fully appreciated.

While VAPJP reporting indicates that the VLRC is focusing on strengthening laws such as the Wills Act which have an important role to play in supporting women’s rights, consultations indicated that gender equality was not a priority for the agency. The advantage of including men in gender-oriented training, to improve their appreciation of issues faced by female officers, was noted by members of the WAN as were the view that legal reforms should ensure that income-earning women, like men, are required to pay alimony in the case of divorce. MERL data shows that numbers of women trained are fewer than men in almost every training. This is not fully explained by the fact that there are more men than women in the VPF, as it also extends to community awareness and other trainings. The SMPR (2023) indicates that an average of 31% of those receiving training/mentoring support between 2021 and 2023 were women.



Finding: *The FPU does not have sufficient access to police resources to respond fully to cases of VAWC and engage with community-based services, particularly in provinces.*

The MTR heard from multiple respondents that the capacity of police officers to plan, network and support both perpetrators and victims remains a gap, and that justice services are not always responsive to the needs of survivors of VAWC. In Sanma, the MTR heard that services often do not follow up with survivors to provide details of cases, sometimes noting that vehicles are not available even where they have been provided to VPF.

In Luganville, Santo the MTR heard that the FPU does not have its own dedicated vehicle and in the provinces has no private spaces for victims (including dedicated interview spaces for children) to report or follow up their cases, which discourages women and children, on what remains culturally sensitive issues. There is no disability access to the building. Demand for FPU services is high in Santo, like most provinces. FPU in Santo reports receiving five to ten clients every working day (the office is closed on weekends), which is ill suited to the office space which does not provide adequate privacy. While neither VAPJP nor VPF provide safe houses, the ‘chain-of-justice’ is affected by the security of ‘safe houses’ which are usually hotels, with no clear criteria or standards. This has the potential to contribute to further harm if safe houses are unable to keep users safe.

The MTR found that since VAPJP, the visibility and respect for female police officers has grown outside the main centres, although there is still widespread discrimination, such as height requirements²² and regulations around pregnancy. The OPS study noted that VPF continues to actively promote the role of women in its workforce. However, it went on to note that:

women in the VPF feel that they need to work harder than men to prove themselves and that men’s attitudes towards their involvement in leadership is a major barrier to their progression. Whilst women believe that they can undertake the same roles as men in policing, as the VPF remains a male dominated organisation, men’s views on women’s suitability for policing roles continue to constrain women’s ability to participate in the full spectrum of VPF roles, often leaving them relegated to office and administrative duties (McLeod, 2022).

However, some positive shifts include the introduction of a VPF maternity policy, and a maternity uniform for female officers; with Vanuatu the first country in the Pacific to introduce maternity uniforms, which are funded by VAPJP.

²² The OPS identified this as an issue and recommended the removal of this requirement in keeping with global best practice. It is understood that it is intended to action this recommendation.

There is also an increase of women willing to drive police vehicles and responding to incidents, including having a more visible presence in communities through participation in the Nasara program (police rotations).

Some flagship areas of work have faced significant challenges making progress. Although consensus was reached on the content of a joint victim referral form in 2022, this was still not finalised at time of writing in November 2023. The AP program has been running at least since 2018 and is only now expanding beyond Santo, to Malekula. As mentioned above, attempts to handover to a government counterpart have not been successful. Although most APs are male, the program is actively seeking female APs (seven of 10 APs were male initially, expanding to 10 of 19 going forward) and training includes training in GEDSI.



Finding: *Additional resources and expertise are needed to safely expand the CA2J efforts to build awareness and support to address VAWC and disability inclusion among chiefs and community members, in line with a Do No Harm approach.*

Engagement with the MNCC has been an increasing focus of VAPJP, in response to requests from the GoV. At the National Chief's Assembly held in August 2022, chiefs rejected women's presence and voice at the forum. Although this matter was resolved to the satisfaction of MNCC and VAPJP, this highlights some of the systemic issues that reinforce persistent challenges with addressing VAWC in communities. VAPJP has recognised that innovative approaches are needed to engage with chiefs. Under the CA2J work, VAPJP has developed innovative approaches to partner with chiefs. The program developed a handbook for Chiefs to support improved prevention and responses to violence against women and children in the community. In order to strengthen engagement, the program adapted and developed recorded episodes that Chiefs can listen to on their phones. Episodes include domestic and sexual violence; crime in the community more broadly; and how the formal justice system works. These are followed up with interactive workshops which allow chiefs to debate and discuss the issues raised. The program credits this approach with generating stronger support which has in turn facilitated the expansion of the AP program to new areas. As this work expands, there is a need for additional resources for the CA2J program, as the current team is already fully extended.

Managing risks in GEDSI

With its focus on ending VAWC in communities, VAPJP's work carries a high level of risk due to social norms leading to high levels of resistance to gender equality and vulnerability of women, children and persons with a disability who may experience violence. The program is aware of these risks, and has a protocol, but visibility is not high around approaches taken to align with Do No Harm principles.

While there are a range of risks in the broader ecosystem that responds to VAWC, many of these also impact on the work that VAPJP is supporting. Some of the risks (there are more) include:

- Insecure safe houses where victims fleeing violence can be attacked;
- Lack of confidential spaces prevents victims seeking protection by reporting incidences of violence (limitations of current FPU's discussed elsewhere);
- Messaging in behaviour change activities can underscore gender differences e.g., Men should protect women (especially relevant to awareness raising supported by VAPJP).

VAPJP has responded to increasing recognition of the need to work with men to address VAWC. Recognising that this work carries some risks, it is not clear to what extent this work is informed by best practice in this area. By way of example the Warwick Principles (The Regional Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women and UN Women, 2020), which are designed by and for people in the Pacific, are:

an agreed set of Principles on best practice to engage men and boys in prevention and perpetrator programming in the Pacific to ensure that all male engagement interventions are accountable to women and girls; do no harm; grounded in a human rights-based approach; evidence-based and evidence building; inclusive and intersectional; gender transformative; and informed by local context.

Specific VAPJP working with men initiatives include World Vision's *Police be the Change Program* which ran from 2021 – May 2023, supported through VAPJP Community Grants; and the work of CA2J team's work with male parolees.

World Vision received direct source funding to assist members of the VPF and their partners to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour in terms of VAWC. While there were no specific concerns about this activity and responses from participants were very positive, the MTR found that there was no reporting line or governance connecting the program with the CA2J stream of work, and limited links to community and justice activities. The World Vision program is largely faith-based and draws on moral obligations in line with biblical teachings. The MTR team was unable to ascertain the approach and messaging the program was delivering and whether it aligned with best practice in this area. The CA2J team is not resourced to provide supervision for a grants program alongside the expanding AP program. This reflects the limited nature of the grants program, which did not include resources for supervision. There are key opportunities for VAPJP to ensure joined-up messaging in such initiatives moving forward.

Mid-Term Review

The CA2J team has also carried out work with male parolees and male and female detainees with positive feedback provided in a discussion with two parolee participants. The participants said they would recommend the training to others, with one noting that:

to stop violence, we must start training in the village, because violence did not come from the jail, we deal with the fire in the jail but the real problem is in the village- that is where we need to start our work.

They went on to note that:

Our experience in the community and with family after attending the training is a testimony that this training is effective...this training should not only be at prison house for parolees, but it should also be for every people.

Case Study: Women's Advisory Network (WAN)

The Women's Advisory Network was established around 2002 and in Port Vila it is active and dynamic, run by a highly impressive cohort of women VPF with a strong vision for change and goals to drive action. Crucially, the WAN enjoys the support of the COMPOL and meet him regularly, and the WAN is mentioned in the VPF Strategic Plan 2022-2027. WAN members interviewed value the support of the PC-P "*She's AMAZING!*", who advocates for and mentors them, and are sorry that she is leaving ("*I feel like crying*").

It is notable that the WAN members and executives carry out their WAN activities on top of their other busy roles. They were required to buy their own tickets to attend the Tanna WAN meeting in August 2023, whereas male officers who were invited to attend were provided with tickets and their expenses covered. While the AFP states this was a strategic decision, the MTR team believes it is not only unfair, but also highlights how important and challenging it is for the WAN to secure the support of male champions. The MTR heard that, unlike in Port Vila, the VPF leadership in Luganville, was less supportive of the WAN and that there were tensions between WAN members that undermined its objectives.

The WAN has seen significant improvements such as the increase of women recruited to the VPF (around 30% of the last year's intake were women, which is comparable with Australia); improved confidence and 'courage' among women; and greater professional development and leadership opportunities. Significant levels of discrimination remain, but the WAN carry out high-level advocacy, awareness raising and support that enables them to keep chipping away at the barriers, if they receive adequate resourcing and support from leadership.

The WAN report that they have also been able to improve the way the VPF interacts with women in communities, such as adopting conventions on the rights of women which prevent male officers searching female victims of crime.

3.1.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Framework

This subsection addresses **KRQ 1.3 Is the current Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) framework fit for purpose.** It covers reporting, TOC and measurable outcomes, qualitative data to drive improvement and learning, GEDSI in MERL and process.



Finding: Considerable efforts and time are dedicated to reporting, and the program seeks to align with DFAT M&E guidance. However, the MERL system is limited because there is no ToC, outcomes are not measurable, and there is insufficient qualitative data. This is contributing to poor understanding of the justice program's contribution and results and constrains insights into the depth and sustainability of change, and evaluability of the program.



Finding: VAPJP's monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL) system could better meet the needs of DFAT, AFP and internal stakeholders. Reports do not systematically reflect the results framework or input from advisers and are not utilised for program learning.



Finding: Reporting includes annexes that allow for clear expenditure tracking, and proactively synthesises activity updates in accessible format for government counterparts.

Reporting

Reports are too long, overwhelming reviewers with output level narrative and data. Reports are observed to focus on program successes and show a positivity bias (which is not uncommon in program reporting). The program seeks to align with DFAT M&E Standard 6 for reporting, but whereas the M&E standards propose that only key outputs should be described, the 2022 AR goes into a great deal of detail with 20+ pages for each of effectiveness and efficiency. The report lists Outputs against each of the three EOPOs, rather than providing an analytical statement summarising attribution to progress. There is some uncertainty within VAPJP as to the level of data required for accountability for DFAT, which contributes to this detail-oriented approach. The most recent SMPR has reduced its length, from the 2022 Annual report's 172 pages to 137 pages with annexes but is still too lengthy, and the use of 4pt type for the 15 pages of Annex D: VAPJP Annual Work Plan (AWP) Status Update is challenging. It is noted that in some other DFAT programming the six monthly report is presented as a PowerPoint with opportunities for discussion and recording of key decisions. The suitability of this mode of reporting for the future phase could be canvassed during design consultations.

Currently reports are focused on DFAT as the client and are not designed to reflect AFP's internal reporting priorities. Police advisers noted a considerable amount of time spent on reporting on each activity, with some estimating that it took up to 50% of their time. In addition, police advisers were of the view that M&E was not useful to them but was only fulfilling a requirement for DFAT. Making reporting useful for both streams as well as fulfilling a contractual requirement should be addressed in the design for the new phase.

There are some excellent elements within the reports and data. These include the infographics, dashboard and the PJSS, which provides a baseline for community awareness and perceptions. It adds an important element of longitudinal and qualitative data, based on a remote survey and in-person FGDs, which is otherwise missing. The infographics reflect VAPJP management's local knowledge and respect for local ways of working. One government leader declared: "No one in Vanuatu reads!" and commended the infographics as a better way to share information with local leaders and teams. These tools are useful ways to communicate detail and highlights that are shared in PMGs and appreciated. They could be improved by moving from presenting a snapshot of activities, to showing higher level analysis against outcomes that might inform policy and strategy.

Another area of strength is the strong data presented around progress and efficiency, including a detailed annex showing progress and expenditure against the costed workplan. This allows for clear tracking of outputs and spend.

Theory of change and measurable outcomes

VAPJP, particularly the justice stream, struggles to communicate its successes in the absence of a ToC with measurable outcomes and targets. The EOPOs and IOs established during the VAPJP Design update were deliberately broad, to allow VAPJP to evolve in line with government priorities and to be flexible and responsive to partner government requests, especially in policing. However, this has contributed to gaps including:

- A lack of direction for staff and advisers
- Difficulty linking activities to outcomes, to show the program's contribution to change
- Difficulty identifying relevant targets and indicators for IOs and EOPOs
- Lengthy reporting, as there is no clear framework to shape analysis towards outcomes; and Difficulty making strategic and management choices about which initiatives are most relevant and effective to support.

Qualitative data to drive improvement and learning

Data within the MERL framework is predominantly quantitative, with qualitative data included through the PJSS and impact stories shared in reporting. This allows the program to demonstrate reach (e.g. #s trained and # locations) and to account for equipment distributed and infrastructure projects undertaken. It also provides public diplomacy material that can be shared via DFAT social media platforms. However, it does not allow the program to monitor or demonstrate fewer tangible successes that are critical in systems and capacity strengthening in the justice system, such as shifts in attitudes, behaviour change, and practice of trainees in specific technical areas.

It is understood that the program struggled to devise suitable indicators for this kind of work when revising the MELF. To identify meaningful qualitative indicators, the program needs to start by defining quality and progress markers for specific activity areas, such as TA support for agency staff capacity development. This is particularly important where capacity is low, and hard won achievements need to be understood in context. It is likely that revisiting the more structured and purposeful approach to capacity building (and how it is to be measured) found in earlier iterations of the program (Stretem Rod Blo Jastis-SRBJ & Policing and Justice Support Program Vanuatu-PJSPV) would be helpful. Communicating change in areas such as legal advocacy or quality of case management is challenging but not impossible. These previous iterations of the program also grappled with this question and evaluations highlighted some possible evaluative approaches that include longitudinal self-assessments and interviews to ascertain observations of improved performance in court from members of the judiciary (Vaartjes, 2016).

There is much greater recognition of results in the policing stream of work, which includes a large array of equipment and infrastructure support alongside large trainee numbers. However, qualitative data would also assist in more critical reflection on the uptake of knowledge and use of assets provided, to indicate where positive shifts in attitudes and policing culture are occurring, and where change could be recognised as transformative and sustainable.

The MERL framework was initially built around data from government information systems on policing and court outcomes to strengthen capacity in the use of CMS and PIMS and avoid duplication of effort. In practice, the cyber-attack has meant that data has not been available, and in any case the broad nature of outcomes and high level of data means that it cannot demonstrate VAPJP contribution to change (attribution). The MERL Framework was redesigned in 2023-2024 to reduce reliance on evolving data systems.

Inclusion - GEDSI in MERL

Reports provide a level of gender disaggregated data, with some gaps, and reflect an awareness of and commitment to promoting inclusion. In line with known national (and indeed global) challenges around collecting disability data, the reports present limited disability data. The reports comply with DFAT M&E guidance and include well-developed GEDSI sections that provide a summary of highlights and achievements with reference to the Gender Action Plan.

Process: Reporting is largely seen as a compliance burden by police and justice staff and advisers and did not appear to be used for internal VAPJP program management or learning purposes. Both police and justice stream staff and advisers invest significant time in detailed activity reporting, but consolidated reports are not discussed with the team, which would appear to be a missed opportunity. The Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Adviser reports playing a limited role in developing the final reports, which are written mostly by the Program Coordinator Justice (PC-J) and Senior Manager. There are opportunities to improve the way that advisers are involved in reporting to address some of the communication issues within the team.

3.2 Efficiency

This section covers Efficiency through answering **KRQ 2. How efficient are VAPJP's delivery modalities?** This section covers governance and planning for a joined-up approach, management, delivery modalities, and resource allocation and expenditure.

It is addressed through considering three sub-questions





KRQ 2.1 Is the delivery and management approach of VAPJP fit for purpose?

KRQ 2.2 To what extent do the governance and delivery modalities support progress towards the IOs and EOPOs?

KRQ 2.3 Are resources allocated appropriately across program streams?



Finding: *The delivery and management approach of VAPJP has facilitated program progress and adaptation despite significant contextual challenges, however adjustments are needed to strengthen planning and transparency, and further enhance outcomes.*

-  **Finding:** The current VAPJP model linking policing and justice outcomes is unique across the Australian aid program. VAPJP governance at government level plays a largely symbolic role in promoting a level of coordination between policing and justice, with room for better collaboration within the scope of this ODA program.
-  **Finding:** Joint corporate support through the managing contractor generates considerable efficiencies, such as delivering on the increasing requests for infrastructure. However, as discussed elsewhere there are opportunities to improve processes to better meet the needs of both the justice and policing streams.
-  **Finding:** There is a need to review processes within some delivery modalities to strengthen effectiveness, transparency and sustainability within and across the policing and justice streams of work, for distinct and joint outcomes. Current modalities are technical assistance through both Short-term and Long-term Advisers (STA and LTA), training and professional development, GoV operational support, community grants, infrastructure and project delivery. These are discussed throughout the report.
-  **Finding:** Within VAPJP managing the complex area of family protection and VAWC is something that necessarily involves all of the justice, community and policing streams and attendant advisers. While there are good relationships and communications between the respective advisers, it was apparent that many across the program consider that the arrangements are not yet optimal for ensuring that all the parts collaborate toward the multi-faceted approaches required for preventing and responding to violence against women and children.

Governance and planning for a joined-up approach

The governance structure which was agreed on by key GoV sectoral leaders, provides the authority for communication and collaboration between the policing and justice streams, but stops short of requiring formal links between policing and justice beyond the government's own Sectoral Leadership Group (SLG). The Senior Management Team meet regularly with each other and DFAT, as do staff when delivering joint activities. However, there is demand and interest among technical and field staff for a greater level of engagement between the streams, particularly those working with remote communities and in the field of family protection. Although formal governance groups have not met regularly, the structure supports coordination between policing and justice programming that has been very difficult to achieve in separate GoA policing and development programming in other locations.

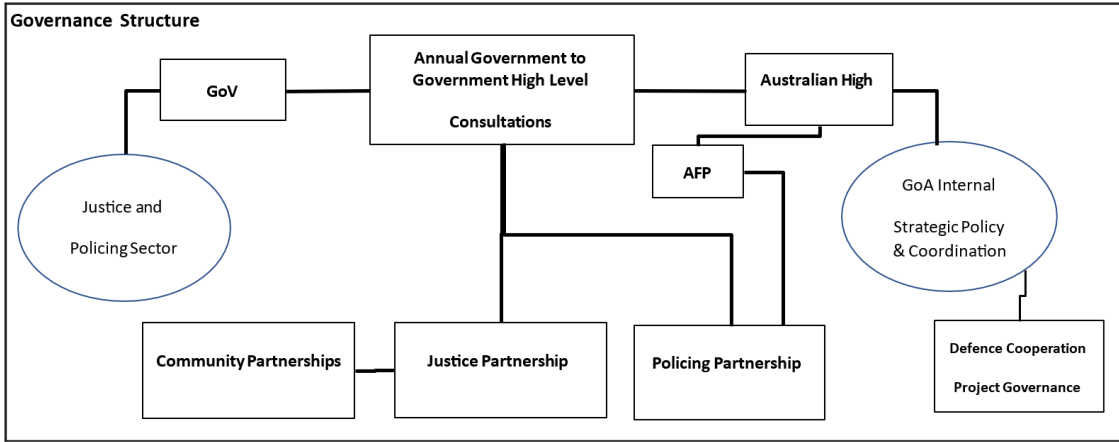
The program's formal in-country **governance mechanisms**, specifically the PMGs, have been operating intermittently, reflecting the instability within MJCS and competing priorities in the policing sector. The GoV justice SLG convened for the first time in 18 months in 2023 following TC Kevin and Judy. Key decisions are progressed in 'out of session' meetings, and there are regular meetings between the PC-J and PC-P.

Due to high turnover at the DG level of the MJCS, it has been difficult for the program to establish regular governance meetings across the Ministry and justice agencies, or broader justice sector.²³ This has presented challenges for VAPJP justice team and caused delays in the AP program. Overall, the frequent disruption has had implications for government ownership, cohesion, sustainability, and planning. The government's SLG was activated after 18 months to facilitate emergency response following TCs Judy and Kevin, otherwise coordination and planning has tended to happen as needed, with a key role for LES in maintaining momentum and continuity. VAPJP has continued to push for these meetings, for practical reasons and in line with the program's commitment to strengthen business planning and budgeting (IO 1. Output iii). In 2023, the January-June SMPR reported one Justice PMG and one SLG meeting, but no meetings of the Police PMG. In 2022, there were one policing and three justice PMGs.

In the Policing stream, with its simpler structure, the relationship between the COMPOL and PC-P has played a stronger role in progressing decisions and activities than the PMG. The current arrangement has worked based on the trust and good communication between COMPOL and the PC but will become a risk when she is replaced in the coming months. Program reporting also notes this as an area to address.

²³ MJCS comprises 14 component agencies. In addition, there are several statutory authorities in the justice sector and a range of civil society organisations which comprise the broader justice and community services sector. The Vanuatu Police Force which is conceptually part of the sector comes under PMO, although may return to Mol.

Figure 2: The Program's Governance Structure (2020 Design Update)



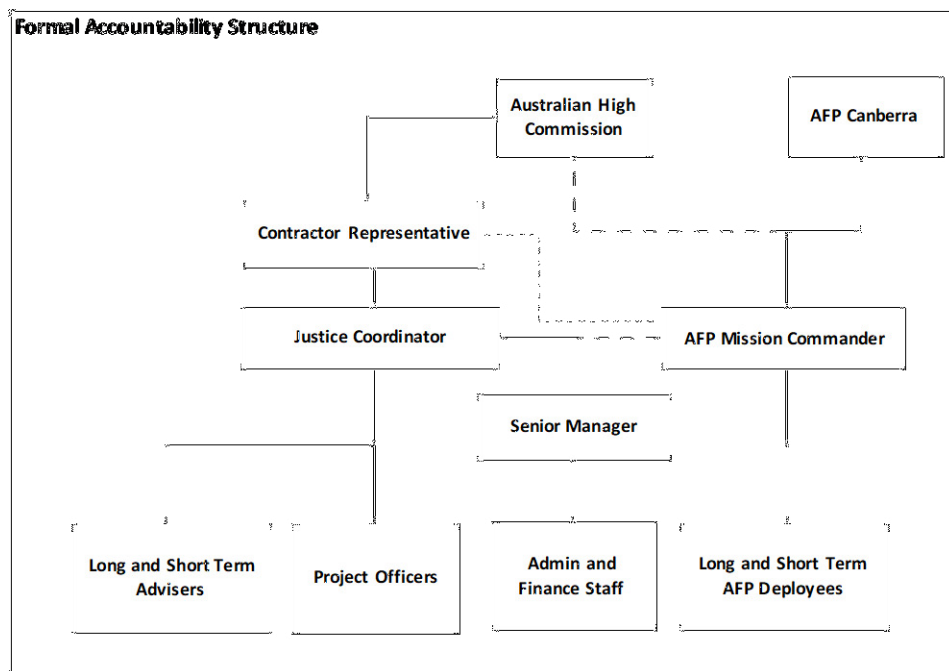
At an operational level, communication and collaboration has taken place through meetings between advisers and staff from both streams of work and some joint activities. This has allowed the program to continue functioning despite the disruptions. It also means that the program is responding to a large number of ad hoc requests, outside the annual workplan, although this is to some extent anticipated with contingency budget lines. VAPJP staff noted that last-minute ad hoc requests increase pressure on them and add to workload for VAPJP staff seeking to respond.

Despite the changes in GoV leadership and from the PMGs, VAPJP has been effective in progressing its activities by engaging with the Human Resources, Finance and MEL Working Groups to continue supporting capacity strengthening and implementation. The Design Update also recommended convening a Community Partnerships Forum to connect organisations in this space, but that has not proceeded. Frequent changes in MJCS leadership have proved a challenge for the program and a barrier to strategic approaches needed to support sustainability and impact.

At the time of the design update, the Australian High Commission (AHC) had committed 50% of a First Secretary and a full-time Senior Program Manager to oversee the program and participate in the PMGs. However, AHC has not been resourced to fill these positions as planned. Given the complexity, sensitivity, and strategic importance of VAPJP this is unfortunate.

Management

Figure 3: VAPJP management arrangements (2020 Design Update)



The use of a **managing contractor** for overall administration is highly appreciated by Policing and government counterparts. The in-country team is highly regarded, committed and experienced, working in a challenging context to maintain relationships and deliver progress across the delivery modalities in both the policing and justice streams. The **program management structure**, with a PC-J and AFP Mission Commander fulfilling the role of PC-

P are connected but independently responsible for the separate policing and justice streams of work, which allows for AFP to work directly with the VPF COMPOL. The MTR found that this provides benefits for both AFP and VAPJP.

Flexibility is a core priority for AFP, to allow it to be operationally responsive and agile. The current model provides AFP with a high proportion of funding to meet the needs of their partnership program and allows for AFP to draw on additional resources where required. At times AFP is requested by the GoV to provide support that sits outside the scope of VAPJP. AFP has been able to mobilise additional resources from its own sources to meet these needs. The AFP notes that the managing contractor is responsible for all VAPJP finances, not the AFP; and that the managing contractor in turn must meet DFAT's financial requirements. Within these arrangements AFP is of the view that the PC-P has established good controls for submission of approvals for funding support if activities are outside the AWP, as well as for expenditure for approved AWP items. If DFAT engagement is required for any additional projects, this may take extra time for submission of requests and justifications. The benefits of additional AFP funding also flow back to VAPJP and complement VAPJP activities. In the most recent report, VAPJP has adapted reporting to show additional resourcing separately. However, the MTR heard that requirements to seek program approvals internally within VAPJP for expenditure can limit responsiveness and there is a high administrative burden on AFP advisers. This has led to requests for administrative staff to support the policing side of VAPJP on logistics. Palladium is also responding to this issue by adapting logistics support.

Delivery modalities

The MTR considered whether the delivery modalities are the right options to progress program objectives, and how well they are working. Current modalities include technical assistance (STA and LTA), training and professional development, GoV operational support, community grants, infrastructure and project delivery. The review found that current modalities have allowed the program to progress across the four streams of work (justice, policing, community, sector coordination) and react and adapt in response to the significant challenges of leadership changes, Covid-19, TCs Kevin and Judy and cyber-attack. Disaster response was managed effectively through the existing modalities, in particular through infrastructure, and efforts are being made to include disaster planning within longer term strategies and plans.

Technical Assistance, and training and professional support

The MTR was asked to review was the current 'adviser-heavy' nature of the program and to consider its suitability going forward. The use of LTA and STA embedded within the VPF and justice agencies to provide mentoring, technical advice and training is considered a very positive modality by government counterparts as discussed above in Section 3.1.1. In the current phase there appears no need to change this arrangement. This can be reviewed once a direction for the program for the next phase is clarified but based on interviews with key GoV personnel, a removal of advisers is unlikely to be well-regarded.

Within the policing sector, the PC-P was commended for building a team of "the best of the best", based on a careful and deliberate recruitment strategy to find the best fit for the context. Advisers in the justice stream are however finding it difficult to demonstrate achievement in the absence of a framework, targets and indicators (see MERL section 3.3.1 above). They were seen by local counterparts to be strengthening capacity, supporting service delivery and representing agency interests by being a "mouthpiece to the project". However, the MTR found there are tensions between program management and justice advisers, who felt unclear on their roles and contribution to results and reporting. Reporting lines are also unclear between advisers and VAPJP management, with reports that advisers feel isolated from the program.

Additional options for strengthening professional development and capability within agencies should also be considered to complement the work of advisers. This can include a greater engagement with e.g. the Victorian Bar Association, and a variety of twinning arrangements. The program could also consider additional resourcing to support administration functions to ensure that key activities can go ahead, especially for staff in remote areas. AFP advisers' time is costly and high value, so better value for money could be achieved by reducing time required for administrative tasks, by reallocating resources for LES support.

The MTR found that cross-sector advisers tend to be focused on support to policing or support to justice programming. This is the case for the PFM, Police and Prosecutions Case Management and Communications roles, though these roles do work across both streams. This may be explained by the diffuse nature of the agencies and MJCS compared to the VPF structure, and the ease of reporting against policing outcomes which are more visible compared to outcomes related to strengthening the justice system. Other cross-sectoral advisers represent cross-cutting issues including GEDSI but are more closely connected with the justice than the policing stream of work.

Within VAPJP managing the complex area of **family protection and VAWC** is something that necessarily involves all of the justice, community and policing streams and attendant advisers and LES. While there are good relationships and communications between the respective streams, it was apparent that many across the program consider that the arrangements are not optimal for ensuring that all the parts collaborate toward the multi-faceted approaches required for preventing and responding to violence against women and children. Examining the optimal

arrangements is something that should be considered in more detail in the forthcoming design, however one possibility could be a cross-sector VAWC prevention and services advisor who is responsible for policy, governance, connectivity between government and community agencies, and interfacing with a separate AFP adviser whose role is advising the FPU on the important and demanding work of operational investigations. The cross sector adviser could also engage with AFP and VPF on the critical and connected areas of recruit training and community awareness raising to ensure consistent best practice messaging and approach across GoA programming. There are a variety of models that would work to achieve these outcomes, but success will be dependent on clear responsibilities and good communications between the actors involved.

The **infrastructure** modality has become increasingly important since the start of the program, partly responding to identified need, and partly responding to geo-strategic competition. Expenditure has ballooned against the expected minimum contribution of AUD1.6 m across VAPJP to an expected AUD4.3m, according to program calculations shared on 20 October 2023. The program has completed or is planning for 48 different activities, ranging from minor rehabilitation to planning, design and construction of Police Stations in Epi and Port Vila (ongoing) and Epi courthouse, and have also drawn on resources from the Australian defence program. The VAPJP Senior Manager was recognised and widely appreciated as skilled and effective in managing infrastructure planning and projects.

With pressure from government to move quickly, VAPJP has been able to navigate Vanuatu systems to deliver an impressive number of projects that are tested against quality standards. VAPJP has utilised their corporate partner Palladium Infrastructure to provide the police station design for the Port Vila Central Police Station valued at AUD 1.5m. The total build is estimated at this stage at AUD 32m and is the highest value infrastructure activity undertaken under VAPJP. VAPJP secured DFAT approval to sole source the preliminary design concept activity, with proper processes in place to ensure value for money through the delivery of the project. This is an efficiency which has to be balanced against a reputation and probity risk, given the relationship between Palladium as the managing contractor and Palladium infrastructure. It is likely that moving forward the project management of the Port Vila Police Station will be managed by the Infrastructure desk of the AHC.

There has reportedly been a recognition across the Australian aid program in Vanuatu that getting agreement from the GoV to provide ongoing maintenance of donated infrastructure has proved challenging, resulting in GoA assuming these costs for a period of time, and influencing the design of some infrastructure to require lower maintenance. There are also concerns about building infrastructure without sufficient personnel available to staff or manage them, which is particularly an issue for remote areas, where staff are reluctant to go. Donated mobility assets are provided to facilitate VPF response to community issues, including domestic violence reports. These are valuable assets, and it is acknowledged that there are issues with appropriate use and maintenance of these vehicles, with conflicting reports on the extent to which VPF are required to be accountable for the use and maintenance of mobility assets. While there is no current Fleet Management Policy, the AFP reports that this is being worked towards and there are recorded financial allocations against vehicle repairs. VAPJP and AFP have provided something of a safety net by providing all donated mobility assets with an initial package of maintenance support to cover 50,000km, together with an extended warranty. VAPJP is working hard to promote compliance with disability accessibility standards in infrastructure, as most public buildings, including some new GoV renovations, do not meet accessibility guidance. On one GoV legal office building visited by the MTR, while there was an accessible ramp present it was unable to be used as it was cluttered with pot plants making it inaccessible.

The **Community Grants and Project Delivery** modalities provide the mechanisms for DFAT to provide support to the only disability service provider (VSPD) in the country, to engage the community through CSOs and to progress the AP project, which sits between DWA and MJCS. The program was also able to utilise the mechanism with a large grant to support World Vision's Police Be the Change program. **The grants mechanism has not been realised as an open grants process and has not reached its full potential.** Flexibility, responsiveness, and innovation are extremely important for the essential community component of the program, but these include highly sensitive and potentially risky issues that affect the most vulnerable. Moving forward a robust grants program would need to include an accompaniment approach, and standards and processes should be in place to ensure appropriate technical review of grant proposals and activities, to manage risks and relationships with community and chiefs, and to ensure that a Do No Harm approach is employed.

Operational support to GoV is a realistic response to the long-standing resourcing challenges facing policing and justice in Vanuatu. It also allows for the flexibility and responsiveness that is considered so important to AFP, to facilitate the required support and maintain the strong partnership with the VPF. With a high level of support to be continued into the future, stronger governance and planning processes should remain a priority for VAPJP, for better management and accountability, and for achieving what sustainability is possible in the circumstances. However, it remains difficult for the program to drive long term planning or progress in this area in the face of GoV instability.

Resource allocation and expenditure

Program design anticipated allocations of 50% funding to policing, and 50% to Justice, Community and Sector Coordination. The January to June 2023 SMPR shows that 65% of activity funding has fallen to the policing side (AUD10m) and 35% to Justice, Community and Sector Coordination (AUD5.5m). This does not include additional

resources allocated for TC Harold Labour and Cross sector strengthening (see table 3, below). VAPJP notes that this is skewed by infrastructure and a grant for PIMS in VPF but agrees this reinforces a widespread perception that security is the VAPJP core priority, particularly within the Justice sector. It is however significantly easier to spend through the policing sector, which has high demand for infrastructure and mobility assets, and has seen more stable leadership than the justice sector overall.

Processes for allocating expenditure are managed through the governance processes outlined above, noting the challenges due to leadership transitions, and potential to strengthen transparency around how resources are allocated.

Analysis of spending patterns across VAPJP shows that the program has been efficient at continuing implementation despite significant challenges. At the end of 2022, annual reporting showed that expenditure was on track (73% budget expensed vs 75% time elapsed), indicating that the program was able to adapt and make up for delays caused by COVID-19. In mid-2023, following a GoV-wide cyber-attack, TCs and leadership challenges, expenditure also remained on track against the annual work plan, with 54% activities in the AWP considered completed or on track (94 activities on the 173 activities on the AWP). This was appropriate for the midpoint of the year.

The program has flagged the need for additional allocations to complete activities and meet objectives until December 2024. Future demands include additional personnel, support for anticipated natural disasters and approved infrastructure activities. In the 2023 SMPR, VAPJP forecast a deficit of AUD 2,934,921.27 for activities and operations by project end.

Table 3: Percentage expenditure across sectors²⁴.

Activity Sector	Program Activity Costs Actuals to date (2016 – June 2023)	% of Program Activity Costs
Policing	10,090,819.73	64.6%
Justice	3,558,587.47	22.8%
Community	1,241,227.92	7.9%
Sector Coordination	643,664.69	4.1%
Cross sector strengthening activities and targeted interventions costs	17,500.80	0.1%
TC Harold Labour	67,505.16	0.4%
TOTAL	15,619,305.77	100.0%

3.3 Relevance, appropriateness, and sustainability

This section addresses the relevance, appropriateness and sustainability of VAPJP through **KRQ3: How relevant, appropriate, and sustainable is the VAPJP investment?** It covers adapting to operating context, strategic alignment with Australia and Vanuatu's interests, and sustainability and considers the following sub-questions:

KRQ 3.1 How has the operating context changed, and how has VAPJP adapted to this?

KRQ 3.2 To what extent does the VAPJP design remain strategically aligned to Australia's interests and comparative advantage, and Vanuatu government development priorities?

KRQ 3.3 To what extent are VAPJP outcomes sustainable?



Finding: Many of the contextual factors and risks identified in the 2020 Design Update continue to be relevant to VAPJP. The program has pivoted to respond to the impact on the policing, law and justice sector of continued serious natural disasters and a whole of Vanuatu government cyber-attack. The program has adapted to continuing GoV instability, including in the leadership of the MJCS, although this has been challenging.



Finding: The VAPJP remains strategically aligned to Australia's interests and comparative advantage. The program is aligned to Australia's new international development policy (2023), the Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement (2022) and the expected contents of the forthcoming DFAT gender strategy and DFAT disability equity and rights strategy. VAPJP continues to be aligned with Vanuatu 2030: The People's

²⁴ Data drawn from VAPJP Expenditure until 30 June 2023 – SMPR, Annex F.

Plan, National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030 and the GoV National Security Strategy (2019), and the and the National Security Strategy Review (2022).



Finding: *In a context where both the policing and justice sector in Vanuatu are consistently under-resourced by GoV, determining what might constitute sustainable outcomes is a complex issue with a long history. This phase of VAPJP explicitly recognises the contribution that the Program makes towards supporting the GoV to maintain confidence of the public in stability and security.*



Finding: *There are a range of activities that the justice stream has undertaken that do not appear to be priorities within the scope of the program and stretch the attention of both the program and the absorption capacity of counterparts.*



Finding: *The work of the AFP advisor at the Police College is very much appreciated by VPF. However, there are four key factors that the MTR team were advised by various VPF officers that could make police training more sustainable and improve ownership. These are deploying an AFP advisor with a policing education (rather than community policing background), a greater emphasis on utilising a Train the Trainer approach and prioritising trainings in Bislama, and where possible decentralising training*

Relevance and adapting to operating context

Many of the contextual factors identified in the 2020 Design Update including an increased GoA focus on the Pacific region, economic downturn following COVID-19 and TC Harold, and the disproportionate effect of compound crises on women and children, including in relation to VAWC, remain relevant to the implementation of VAPJP in late 2023. In 2020 key risks identified related to major disasters; insufficient GoV budget allocations for sustainability of initiatives; potential changes to counterpart Ministries or agencies and low capacity in counterpart agencies (Anon, 2020).

More recent developments in the GoV that impact VAPJP include lack of a substantive DG within MJCS, movement of the VPF to sit within the PMO portfolio (with a possible return to the Ministry of Internal Affairs-MoIA), a snap election which saw a new government established in October 2022, and three Prime Ministers in the space of a month in late 2023. Plans to disband the MJCS have been shelved.

Vanuatu continues to be vulnerable to a range of natural disasters, including earthquakes, volcanos, landslides, coastal flooding, and tsunamis (DFAT, 2021). Modeling by the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment Financing Initiative estimates that on a long-term average, Vanuatu is expected to incur AUD48 million annually in losses because of earthquakes and cyclones. In the first week of March 2023, Vanuatu was hit by two category 4 tropical cyclones (TC Judy and Kevin) and earthquakes that affected more than 80% of the population. At this time the country was still recovering from the effects of category 5 TC Pam in 2015 and TC Harold in 2020, and several other disasters triggered by natural hazards including volcanic eruptions, drought, and infestation with coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB). Vanuatu was subsequently struck by a Category 5 cyclone (TC Lola) in October 2023 with considerable damage to infrastructure and services in the northern part of the country. VAPJP has responded to cyclones with assistance to repair law, justice and policing infrastructure and services, as well as contributed to business continuity planning. During this time the program has had to contend with reduced engagement with counterparts due to competing priorities and leadership changes.

The November 2022 cyber-attack on the GoV network continues to impact on sector functionality with extensive loss of data from PIMS and CMS. This has also impacted VAPJP's ability to report on progress towards outcomes, and the evaluability of the program. VAPJP has responded with extensive support to reload and restore this data and expressed their hope that the process will be completed by the end of 2023.

VAPJP also adapted to support GoV agencies during COVID-19 and associated restrictions, including through reallocation of funds to provide hand sanitiser, PPE, protective screens, sterilisation units, entry control technology, business continuity planning, supporting a switch to manual data entry for courts and extending teleconferencing facilities.

The focus of VAPJP on supporting the GoV decentralisation agenda remains relevant as Vanuatu's archipelagic geography and widely dispersed population, along with limited transport and other basic infrastructure, present major challenges to service delivery (Putt and Dinnen, 2023). VAPJP's PJSS confirmed that formal law and justice systems are not able to meet the majority of people's needs, and instead people largely continue to rely on diverse non-state actors including chiefs and community leaders to provide security and justice. VAPJP's scale up of its decentralised CA2J Justice component of the Program and enhancement of Police Rotations overlapping with CA2J services responds to this reality.

The PJSS noted that "To help inform any evaluation of whether the program is meeting the third end of program outcome area that focuses on public security and rule of law, we would recommend research on emerging threats posed by complex, cyber-based and transnational crime" (Putt and Dinnen 2023). During consultations the MTR team noted a growing demand for additional support on emerging crime types including money laundering and cybercrime which AFP, separate from VAPJP, has partly addressed by training from Cybersafety Pasifika and arranging the visit of two advisers to Vanuatu to advise on money laundering.

Strategic alignment

This section provides analysis of the VAPJP design and priorities against Australia's high-level strategic interest in Vanuatu and the region. This assists in understanding whether VAPJP remains a priority for DFAT and its partner AFP.

VAPJP aligns with Australia's new international development policy (2023) which supersedes the 2016 Pacific Step Up and the 2020 Partnerships for Recovery.²⁵ The new policy continues to emphasise the strategic importance of the Pacific, seeking to place Australia as "the partner of choice for our region" (DFAT, 2023a). VAPJP also aligns with the Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement (2022) which covers a range of security initiatives including those related to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; human security (such as activities that support the elimination of violence against women and girls, including violence prevention and increased access to justice), defence cooperation; and police, law enforcement and justice cooperation (GoA and GoV, 2022).

VAPJP continues to align with Vanuatu's NSDP, in particular with its emphasis on social inclusion; security, peace and justice; and strong and effective institutions. It also aligns with the National Security Strategy 2019, and the National Security Strategy Review 2022, notably pillars 1,3, 4, 5 and 6 pillars which respectively cover National Security Forces, Disasters and Climate Change Resilience, Justice and Human Rights, Cyber Security, and Human Security. Similarly, there is an alignment with GoV National Gender Equality Policy 2020 – 2030, National Disability Inclusive Development Policy, and the Vanuatu National Child Protection Policy 2016 – 2026. At a regional level the program aligns with the Revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) of the 52nd Pacific Islands Leaders Forum Meeting (PIFLM52) Communiqué, held in Rarotonga on 6-10 November 2023 (PIFLM52, 2023).

Australia's new international development policy notes that "Climate change is the greatest shared threat to all countries" (DFAT, 2023), with the severity of cyclone events expected to increase due to climate change (Asian Development Bank-ADB, 2023). VAPJP has already been required to significantly pivot its focus to respond to TCs Harold, Judy, Kevin (and now Lola). Support has been provided at the sector coordination level (since 2021) as well as to assess damage, assist with clean-ups, undertake rehabilitation of buildings and services in the sector, enable VPF to assist in national deployment operations for rapid assessment and distribution of aid to affected communities, and to support agency planning to ensure continuity of access to justice. It is clear that disaster preparedness and response for the sector should continue to be integrated in future planning and budgeting, together with the requirement for climate-change aware designs for any infrastructure. In relation to VPF the OPS is of the view that:

Whilst the timing of natural disasters can't be anticipated, the regularity of natural disasters in Vanuatu renders them somewhat predictable, such that it can be reasonably expected that several natural disasters will occur each year. To that end, proactively planning for [humanitarian and disaster response] HADR – including through inclusion of indicative costs in annual budget submissions – ought to be possible and would contribute to the maintenance of important policing functions during such periods.

While AFP is of the view that allocation of funding through the AWP runs the risk of a disaster NOT occurring, they believe that the key element for any flexibility in response is to ensure that DFAT allow for a buffer in any contract limitation to the program.

From 2024–25, at least half of all new GoA bilateral and regional investments valued at more than AUD3 million will have a climate change objective, with a goal of reaching 80 per cent in 2028–29. Concern about climate change is shared by the GoV, as outlined in the NSDP, the National Security Strategy (and 2022 Review). It is also evident in Vanuatu leading a coalition of 132 nations in Adopting by Consensus for a UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution calling for a non-binding Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice to gain clarity how existing International Laws can be applied to strengthen action on climate change, protect people and the environment and save the Paris Agreement.²⁶

VAPJP seeks to respond to development challenges facing the sector including limited access to justice, particularly for women, children and youth in remote and peri-urban areas; high levels of violence against women and children; limited community confidence in the effectiveness of justice institutions and the police; and increasing numbers of youth coming into conflict with the law. Many of these issues are best approached by formally

²⁵ The 2020 Design Update noted the alignment of VAPJP with the GoA's 2016 Pacific Step Up, which saw an agreed package of enhanced security cooperation between Vanuatu and Australia in 2018 (Nichols et.al 2019). This enabled Australia to enhance its support through the Program alongside complementary commitments of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to the VMF, a branch of the VPF, in their integrated policing and security structure). (DFAT, 2019). Alignment was also noted with the 2020 whole of government policy, Partnerships for Recovery – Australia's COVID-19 Development Response which pivoted Australia's aid program to work with partners to tackle COVID-19 in the Indo-Pacific region.

²⁶ The ICJ climate Resolution was adopted by consensus on 29 March 2023 during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly requesting the International Court of Justice to provide an advisory opinion on the obligations of States under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse effects of climate change.

connecting both police and justice actors so that they are coordinating effectively to improve access to justice. The mechanism to achieve this will be addressed further in the new Design.

The design of VAPJP is predicated on an understanding of the gender dimensions to policing and justice services in Vanuatu, with gender norms and women's low status in society impacting women's engagement in decision-making and leadership and underpinning the very high rates of domestic violence in Vanuatu. The US State Department Vanuatu 2022 Human Rights Report notes that there is a lack of investigation and accountability for gender-based violence, and that police sometimes did not promptly enforce court orders related to domestic violence. The report went on to note that:

According to the most recent survey data available, 60 percent of women in an intimate partner relationship experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner. According to the 2020 Offender Census Report from Correctional Services, 50 percent of prison inmates were charged with sex-related offenses. Most cases, including rape, were not reported to authorities because women, particularly in rural areas, were unaware of their rights or feared further abuse (US State Department, 2022).

The UN Women's 2016 study on Women and Children's Access to the formal justice system in Vanuatu found that 98% of women and children experiencing violence in Vanuatu do not access the formal justice system (UN WOMEN, 2016). The new GoA international development policy also notes that Australia is developing a new international gender equality strategy which will reinstate a target of 80 per cent of all development investments being required to address gender equality effectively and the new requirement for new investments of more than AUD3 million to include gender equality objectives.

VAPJP currently implements some limited initiatives to address disability inclusion. The US State Department (2022) notes that no law specifically prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, and that although the building code mandates access for persons with disabilities to existing and new facilities, most buildings did not facilitate such access. It is noted that Australia is developing a new disability equity and rights strategy "to ensure that we remain a strong and consistent advocate for disability equity and rights". A focus on disability remains relevant for VAPJP.

There are a range of activities within the justice stream that do not appear to be priorities within the scope of the program and stretch the attention of both the program and the absorption capacity of counterparts. While both customary law and working with children are priorities for the program, activities such as involvement with the Working Group on Customary and Informal Justice and SDG 16+, World Congress on Justice with Children and Pacific Oceania Working Group on Justice with Children were questioned as the most efficient and effective use of resources, contributing to the program being over-extended on the justice side. Pulling back from these types of activities would free up time, budget and attention to the core business of the program.

Sustainability

In a context where both the policing and justice sector in Vanuatu are consistently under-resourced the notion of what might constitute sustainable outcomes is a complex and longstanding issue. OPS (2022) argues that under resourcing of the VPF is in part attributed to no evidence-based understanding of the true cost of policing the nation, coupled with budget ceilings (McLeod, 2022). There is a sentiment that Australia's contribution is necessary to maintain confidence of the public in the ability of the GoV to provide stability and security. This sentiment has intensified amidst a sense of a growing geo-political contest in the region. As early as 2008 a review of the Vanuatu Australia Policing Program (VAPP) implemented by the AFP, found that

Australia, through the [Vanuatu Police Force Capacity Building Program] VPFCBP, was providing 35% of the VPF's budget, and the evaluators counselled both Australia and Vanuatu to 'recognise issues of sustainability, particularly recurrent cost financing implications' (Edmanley, A. et.al., 2012).

In 2012 the Independent Progress Report of the VAPP, found that

without continued financial support, many VAPP-funded activities are unlikely to continue and VAPP-funded equipment will not be adequately maintained. With their generous funding, VAPP has created some unrealistic expectations within the VPF of the services it, the VPF, can deliver. It could even be argued that the VAPP has decreased VPF sustainability by creating high expectations and an increased logistical burden. The team found that the VAPP's 'police post' scheme is unsustainable. Significant and enduring Australian monetary support will be required to maintain its current personnel levels and policing activities (Edmanley, A. et.al., 2012).

While it is likely that GoV policing and justice functions will continue to be under resourced, and it appears likely that GoA will need to continue to provide support to the policing, law and justice sector in Vanuatu for the foreseeable future, VAPJP has promoted ownership and sustainability to varying degrees and can support shifts in other areas, such as changes in laws, or knowledge, attitudes and practices that will have lasting impacts on the way people operate within these systems.

Sustainability has not been a strong focus of the program and this can in part be explained through the challenging context of continuing GoV instability and lack of substantive leadership of MJCS. However, there are a range of

positive examples of supporting improved ownership and sustainability through greater engagement with chiefs to promote sustainable access to justice solutions; the encouragement of VPF to undertake their own fire investigations building on experience gained with international experts when investigating the Chiefs Nakamal fire in Port Vila, and working toward re-accreditation of the PTC with the VQA. Some other examples cited in reports include VPF self-identification of priority for development of Asset Management Policy with focus on Fleet Management support at a national level, Maintenance of Courts Management Systems and Super-User training by the Courts ICT and Technology Systems Officer, previously delivered through VAPJP. However, there are opportunities to promote greater attention to sustainability by including it as a higher priority in programming, and capturing shifts in attitudes and behaviours through the MERL.

The work of the AFP advisor at the Police College is very much appreciated by VPF officers. However, there are four key factors that the MTR team were advised by various VPF officers that could make police training more sustainable and improve ownership. These are deploying an AFP advisor with a policing education (rather than community policing background), a greater emphasis on utilising a Train the Trainer approach and undertaking trainings in Bislama rather than English, and where possible decentralising training. This would ensure better participation by women, people living with disability, and others from regional area who may face barriers to travel.

In interview, VPF staff noted their appreciation for the contribution of the current police advisor but suggested that in future and for the new design it will be important to deploy an advisor with a more appropriate /relevant education and training background who can advise them on the specifics of e.g., their challenges with getting VQA accreditation and development of curriculum. Although police advisers report challenges with getting VPF to undertake and complete instructor courses, it would be good practice to focus in the future on training the trainer and delivery of course materials in Bislama rather than English. Collectively, these inter-related issues are frequently the subject of recommendations of evaluations of policing programs. While on this occasion the mismatch of background and responsibilities of the AFP advisor are in the area of the Police College, this is an issue that historically occurs in a variety of thematic areas in police missions. Decentralising trainings was particularly noted by the WAN as a way that female participation in training could be improved, as it would reduce pressure on female officers with family responsibilities who are reluctant to spend time away on training in Port Vila.

4 Future focus

This section focuses on **KRQ4**: What opportunities are there for Australia to contribute to the Vanuatu policing and justice sector effectively and efficiently, going forward?. It does this through addressing

KRQ 4.1 For the remaining period of VAPJP (to end 2024), what further adaptation is required for the program to remain relevant to security and justice challenges in Vanuatu.

4.1 Adaptations and recommendations until the end of this phase of VAPJP

With less than 12 months to run, VAPJP needs to consolidate its successes and identify practical pathways for change for those areas needing long-term support. In this section, the MTR brings findings from across the report together in high level recommendations for actions that should be achievable before the end of the program.

Recommendation 1. The justice stream of VAPJP should strengthen effectiveness by focusing on the ‘core business’ expressed in EOPO1 of improving the quality and reach of justice services, particularly for vulnerable women, children, youth and people with disability. This will require a concerted effort to strengthen visibility around outcomes and quality of results.

Recommendation 2. The policing stream does not need to significantly change its current focus, although it also requires a concerted effort to strengthen visibility around outcomes and quality of results. The policing stream should maintain its EOPO1 focus of improving the quality and reach of justice services, particularly for vulnerable women, children, youth and people with disability.

Recommendation 3. VAPJP should revisit earlier program approaches to capacity building and its measurement, modified to reflect current program circumstances. Consideration should also be given to developing a Theory of Change during the forthcoming design process that may also be of utility to the existing program.

The MTR found that VAPJP should continue to focus on, and extend, the focus inherent in EOPO1. It is well understood that improving services for vulnerable groups actually improves services for everyone. While the policing stream does not need to significantly change its focus, the justice stream is implementing a wide range of activities, some of which do not contribute directly to strengthening local capability, promoting gender equality within sector workforces or strengthening community access to prevention and responsive services for women, children and persons with disabilities, including in remote areas.

As noted elsewhere, VAPJP lacks a ToC, which would also provide better guidance for the VAPJP team and counterparts on how activities are contributing to results. VAPJP’s MERL team is working to collect qualitative and outcome data, and this effort should continue, so that the program can better demonstrate the value, standard and extent of change within the ‘core’ activity focus areas. This would also assist the new Communications STA to promote justice as well as policing work. While key messaging for communications purposes is contained in the draft communications strategy awaiting DFAT endorsement, in interview it appeared that the communications officer was principally focused on the policing stream.

The program should increase attention to areas where there are early signs of joint policing, justice and community outcomes, such as any results flowing from the Epi courthouse and police station development, identify support or activities that may strengthen these initiatives, and identify opportunities to replicate them or take them to scale.

Recommendation 4. Both the justice and policing streams of VAPJP should prioritise sustainability and exit planning for all activities, so that benefits outlast the program. With participation and input from counterparts across the program, VAPJP should develop a sustainability plan that reflects output and IO targets for the end of program, and identifies expected support required to maintain progress or protect changes already achieved.

Recommendation 5. The policing stream should consider four key changes to make police training more sustainable and improve ownership. These are deploying an AFP adviser with a policing education background (rather than a community policing background), a greater emphasis on utilising a Train the Trainer approach, prioritising trainings and curriculum development in Bislama, and where possible decentralising training which will encourage more female officers to undertake training.

As noted earlier in this report, the VPF and, to a lesser extent, MJCS, will continue to require levels of budget support to remain operational. However, the project is achieving change within knowledge, attitudes and practice, systems to strengthen efficiency, effectiveness and accountability and improvements in quality, and should set these up for ongoing success after the end of the current phase.

With the short time left to run, the program should embed a sustainability lens across all activities, including

training, asset management and maintenance, and infrastructure planning and management.

It is also important to embed activities such as the WAN within planning, to ensure ongoing resourcing and management priority even after the current PC-P leaves, or if other champions of change move on.

With participation and input from counterparts across the program, VAPJP should develop a sustainability plan that reflects output and IO targets for the end of program, and identifies expected support required to maintain progress or protect changes already achieved.

Recommendation 6. VAPJP reporting should be improved and rationalised to meet DFAT and AFP strategic requirements, as well as inform adaptive programming across VAPJP.

VAPJP and DFAT, together with the managing contractor, have been working to tighten program reporting, but this has been difficult to achieve, with too much output-level information provided and unclear guidance back to the program as to what should be included. Challenges related to the lack of a ToC and reporting that focuses on detailed output reporting are outlined in the MERL section of this report.

Reporting should provide a succinct summary of progress against outcomes in line with the program logic and MERL framework indicators and targets that also provide information about the quality and extent of change. An initial summary of progress against outcomes can be consolidated and presented with visual tools such as a traffic light system, which can then be broken down and explained under each Output and Outcome area. All narrative data should be synthesised and reported under headings related to the Outcomes and Outputs, with sub-headings to aid readers. This also applies for 'new' activity areas which reflect adaptation and learning, with explanation. Reflections on thematic areas for DFAT Investment Monitoring Report (IMR) and Final Investment Monitoring Report (FIMR) reporting can also be included. This approach means that not all achievements or activities will be summarised in the body of the report but allows reviewers to gain a stronger sense of the program's direction, progress and challenges. Annexes such as the AWP update and financial reporting provide sufficient detail for accountability, and reviewers have the option to request additional information as needed. The infographics that VAPJP develops are also useful as a complementary and responsive approach to sharing information, particularly with government and community stakeholders.

To aid reporting, the Outputs in the program logic in the Activity Logic could be reframed as IOs, as they provide a useful guide for understanding how the program activities are contributing to the EOPOs, which are very broad. For example, the Justice Outputs reflect changes in behaviour and processes, such as *Output ii. Build capacity of justice agencies to support vulnerable victims of crime*. Though framed as an output in the document, capacity development is in fact a higher-level change, that can be attributed to a combination of trainings delivered, planning support provided, standards for GEDSI promoted and so on.

This recommendation also ties in with Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 2 above, which calls for clearer definition of what success looks like for VAPJP in terms of quality, so that assessments and descriptions of quality (and challenges) can be based on the program's quality targets. Identifying quality standards and indicators would be best done through facilitated reflections sessions including the MERL team, technical advisers, key staff and government counterparts.

Recommendation 7. VAPJP, DFAT and AFP should support the transition to the new PC-P, with a view to maintaining and enhancing systems and processes for collaboration and joint outcomes across the Justice and Policing sector through strong communications, and recognition of shared goals and mutual accountability. Consideration could be given to engaging a Partnership Broker to assist with establishing this relationship from the outset.

At the time of the MTR mission, relationships between the two Program Coordinators were strong, and this contributed to the successes of the program. Many respondents expressed concerns that this may change with a change in personnel, with respondents citing earlier examples of less than satisfactory relationships. It will be important to establish robust systems and processes for a strong and positive foundation for collaboration between the Justice, Policing and Community streams of VAPJP, not only at management level but also at adviser level, since outcomes will be heavily dependent on good relationships. Experience from other policing and justice programs has shown this to be a risk area, given differences in priorities, culture and accountability between the policing and security and development spheres. It may be valuable to consider engaging a Partnership Broker to assist with establishing this relationship from the outset.

Recommendation 8. Management and advisers from the justice stream of VAPJP should work collaboratively, to build a positive workplace environment that facilitates understanding and recognition of advisers' contributions and challenges, and where possible increases connections between agencies.

As noted earlier, the MTR became aware of concerns about low morale, principally (though not exclusively) in the justice stream, particularly involving advisers involved with legal and community-facing work. These issues should be addressed to ensure the program can continue to deliver technical support and professional development opportunities in key areas, and to support wellbeing and a positive experience across the team and management. It may be valuable to engage Palladium or independent human resources support to explore underlying issues.

Recommendation 9. DFAT and VAPJP should review budget allocations to ensure sufficient funding for community-facing activities to strengthen prevention and responsive services to violence against women and children, and people with disabilities that align with best practice and Do No Harm principles. This applies to both the FPU in the policing stream and the CA2J activities in the justice stream.

The community access to justice activities sit at the interface of formal and traditional policing and justice systems and cover support for disability inclusion and gender equality, and work with chiefs and APs in communities to raise awareness around VAWC and the justice system. The MTR found that activities under the CA2J workstream are appropriately expanding, and need sufficient resources not only for the activities themselves but also to provide program oversight, ensure best practice and uphold Do No Harm standards. Community grants should also sit under the CA2J workstream, to ensure appropriate oversight of activities and technical approaches used.

The FPU in policing is also working with vulnerable people who are at risk of harm and need greater access to police resources to protect women, children and people with disability. Currently FPU does not have sufficient infrastructure to provide protection for women and children when making reports.

Recommendation 10. VAPJP and the managing contractor, in close collaboration with the AFP, should increase efficiency by updating logistics and procurement procedures, and improving resourcing for administrative and reporting support for AFP advisers, that currently take time of technical specialists away from delivering expert support and services. Delegations of authority can be reviewed in the new design.

AFP advisers are spending too much time on program reporting and administrative procedures that would be better spent working with the VPF to strengthen capabilities and extend policing services. This is causing some tensions. Some of these issues can be addressed through changes that are already underway within the managing contractor, related to travel arrangements and access to corporate credit. However further consideration should be given to understanding and meeting AFP advisers' needs for autonomy and flexibility so that they are able to support the VPF adequately and responsively in line with their policing mandate.

Recommendation 11. As infrastructure and provision of assets will remain a significant element of VAPJP, the program should continue to promote disability inclusion in designs, and planning for adequate utilisation, management and maintenance of assets and infrastructure developed.

VAPJP is recognised for providing high quality assets and infrastructure that meets the needs of, and responds to, requests by Vanuatu officials. VAPJP should continue to promote quality and sustainable use of assets and infrastructure to maximise the value of these contributions for both GoV and GoA. In addition, VAPJP is playing an important role in promoting gender and disability inclusion in infrastructure, through model designs, disability audits and awareness raising. This should continue, and further opportunities to take this to scale identified if possible.

Recommendation 12. Given the stated strategic importance of the VAPJP program, DFAT should apply significantly more resourcing at Post to management and oversight of the Program.

VAPJP is considered an increasingly strategic program for GoA, noting the challenges faced by the sector, and Vanuatu more broadly. Staff currently managing the program do an exemplary job, but it is not reasonable to expect them to continue to manage risks and provide oversight without additional senior level resources being applied.

Recommendation 13. Given the frequency and severity of natural disasters, VAPJP should continue to work with partner agencies on practical disaster risk reduction, and 'chain-of-justice' preparedness- including response and recovery, as well as responding to disasters in a coordinated fashion with the relevant GoV agencies.

Some respondents have suggested that global best practice in responding to disasters should be the focus of research within the program. The MTR team is of the view that it is planning and awareness, not research, that is required at this point; given the tendency for the program to continually expand its focus. The mechanism for ensuring sufficient budgetary allocations and flexibility for inevitable disasters are included in the program, without disrupting existing program activities, can be addressed in the forthcoming design.

Recommendation 14. There are a number of areas that warrant further attention at the design stage, which will overlap with the final year of the program. These include the multi-agency work being carried out on Epi to determine its strengths and challenges, and to what extent it can be used as a model in the future. It also includes coordination with other donors, the best model for achieving joined-up outcomes for prevention and response to VAWC, the best mechanism for ensuring responsiveness to natural disasters, the suitability of including Corrections in a future iteration of the program, and whether a six monthly PowerPoint, instead of written reporting would serve the interests of DFAT, AFP and VAPJP.

Annex 1: Consultation List

No.	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Arnold Kiel Loughman	Attorney General	State Law Office
2	Jackson Semeno	Director, Corporate Services Unit	State Law Office
3	Cherol Ala Ianna	Director General	Office of the Prime Minister
4	Pacco Siri	Acting Director General	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
5	Jocelyn Loughman	M&E Officer & Capacity Development Coordinator	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
6	Melvin Boesel	Organisational Performance Coordinator	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
7	Ginette Morris	Disability Desk Officer	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
8	Tristelle Karae	Child Desk Officer	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
9	Lawson Samuel	Secretary	Vanuatu Law Reform Commission
10	Rothina Ilo Noka	Director	Department of Women's Affairs
11	Josaia Naigulevu	Public Prosecutor	Office of Public Prosecutions
12	Joel Shemi	Chief Registrar	Vanuatu Supreme Court
13	Robson Lapsai	Senior Administrator	Island Courts
14	Jacob Kausiama	Public Solicitor	Public Solicitor's Office
15	Chief Willie Plasua	President	Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs
16	Chief Jean Pierre Tom	CEO	Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs
17	Raffey Taiwia	Chairman	Police Service Commission
18	Sandy Ronald Kalwas	Secretary	Police Service Commission
19	Robson Iavro	Commissioner of Police	Vanuatu Police Force
21	Kalo Willie Ben	Deputy Commissioner - Operations	Vanuatu Police Force
22	Collin William	Acting Commander JPOC	Vanuatu Police Force
23	Ray John	Operations Manager JPOC	Vanuatu Police Force
24	Pako Noah	OC Police information Management Systems	Vanuatu Police Force
25	Donald James	Director CID - Criminal Investigations	Vanuatu Police Force
26	Lilly Joel	Family Protection Unit	Vanuatu Police Force
27	Judy Bule	WAN President	Vanuatu Police Force

No.	Name	Position	Organisation
28	Dora Sahe	Former WAN President; HR Officer	Vanuatu Police Force
29	Leisavi Vira	WAN Member; Data officer	Vanuatu Police Force
30	Jackson Noel	Commander South	Vanuatu Police Force
31	Allanrow Bani	Deputy Commander South	Vanuatu Police Force
32	James Aru	OC Port Vila Police Station	Vanuatu Police Force
34	Rexton Langdon	Deputy Director Police Training College	Vanuatu Police Force
35	Jack Tallis	OC Professional Standards Unit	Vanuatu Police Force
36	Namen Jean-Yves Kali	VPF Chief of Staff	Vanuatu Police Force
37	Samson Garae	National Coordinator for Crime and Community Policing	Vanuatu Police Force
38	Jane Borenga	VPF Media Coordinator	Vanuatu Police Force
39	George Songi	Commander North	Vanuatu Police Force
40	Afremen Kender	Commander CID	Vanuatu Police Force
41	Jennifer Warsal	Professional Standards Unit (and WAN chair)	Vanuatu Police Force
42	Leirip Mahit	Officer, Family Protection Unit	Vanuatu Police Force
43	Kingsley Worek	OIC Crime Prevention Unit (Santo)	Vanuatu Police Force
44	Samuel Willie	Deputy Commissioner, Management Services	Vanuatu Police Force
45	Nettie Vuti	Director Corporate Services Unit	Vanuatu Police Force
46	Barry Patterson	Director, Vanuatu Section	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
47	Louise Foster	A/g Assistant Director, Vanuatu Section	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
48	Patrick Chan	A/g Assistant Director, Vanuatu Section	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
49	Heidi Bootle	Head of Mission, Port Vila	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
50	Suzanne Akila	Deputy Head of Mission, Port Vila	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
51	Stephanie Kimber	First Secretary – Development, Port Vila	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-
52	Cathy McWilliam	First Secretary, Port Vila	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-
53	Paul Regault	First Secretary, Infrastructure and Health	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-
54	Renie Anderson	Senior Program Manager, Policing and Justice	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-
55	Josiana Jackson	Senior Program Manager, Infrastructure, Port Vila	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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No.	Name	Position	Organisation
56	Lavinia Mahit	Assistant Program Manager, Policing and Justice	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
57	Melinda Phelan	Commander, Pacific Delivery	Australian Federal Police
58	Andrea Quinn	Commander, International Strategy	Australian Federal Police
59	Pam McGrath	A/g Team Leader, Evaluation & Learning, Strategy Design and Evaluation, International Command	Australian Federal Police
60	Louisa Osbourne	A/g Coordinator, Strategy Design and Evaluation, International Command	Australian Federal Police
61	Melissa Northam	Program Coordinator (Policing)	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
62	Scott Caulfield	General Duties Adviser	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
63	Andre Nant	Criminal Investigation Department Adviser	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
64	John Connoley	Professional Standards and Development Adviser	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
65	Simon Teece	AFP Liaison	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
66	David Crowe	Northern Command Adviser	Australian Federal Police/VAPJP
67	Alice McGrath	Program Coordinator - Justice	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
68	Scott Monteiro	Senior Manager	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
69	Polly Walker-Dorras	Community Lead	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
70	Catriona McLeod	Family Protection - FPU Adviser (Police)	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
71	Carlos Noronha	PFM & Corporate Strengthening Adviser	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
72	Mereana Mills	MEL Adviser	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
73	Vivian Fischer	MEL Coordinator (outgoing)	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
74	Joanna Garae	Finance and Administration Officer	Vanuatu Australia Policing & Justice Program
75	Sarafina Kaloran	Finance Assistance and Procurement Officer	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
76	Sally Cobb	Gender Coordinator	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
77	Krista Lee-Jones	Legal Policy & Legislation Adviser	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program

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No.	Name	Position	Organisation
78	Suzanne Mayhew	Adviser to the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP)	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
79	Natalie Elliott	Adviser to the Public Solicitor's Office (PSO)	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
80	Danny Smits	Communications Adviser	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
81	Morris Kerry	Disability & Inclusion Officer	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
82	Wayne Mills	Police & Prosecutions Case Management Adviser	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
83	Augustin Narun	ICT and Systems Officer	Vanuatu Australia Police Justice Program
84	Sarah Wilson	Program Manager	Palladium
85	Elin Buchanan	Senior Associate	Palladium
86	Judith Iakavai	Program Manager	Vanuatu Society for People with Disability
87	Shana Ligo	Program Director	The Reach Family Centre, World Vision
88	Amy Gardiner	Managing Director	The Reach Family Centre, World Vision
89	Vola Mataskelekele	Coordinator	Vanuatu Women's Centre
90	Kathy Bani	Project Officer - Sanma Counselling Centre	Vanuatu Women's Centre
91	Nelly Caleb	National Coordinator	Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association
92	Abby McLeod	Director	Ideate Pty Ltd
93	Parolees	Port Vila	Efate
94	Authorised Persons	Santo	Sanma Province
95	Community	Santo	Sanma Province

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Annex 3: Evidence matrix against Key Review Questions

Effectiveness - Key Question 1: Is VAPJP on track to achieve its end-of-program outcomes?

Review Questions and Sub-Questions	Review Focus areas	Assessment criteria/ factors for consideration	Desktop review	Primary data collection					
				DFAT/ AFP	MJCS	VPF	CSO – VWC, VSPD, WVC	Community	VAPJP Team
1.1 To what extent is VAPJP achieving its EOPOs and IOs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the justice stream of work led to individual or institutional behaviour change and contributed to the end-of-program outcomes? To what extent has the policing stream of work led to individual or institutional behaviour change and contributed to the end-of-program outcomes? To what extent have the justice and policing streams contributed to combined outcomes across the 'chain-of- justice'? To what extent has VPF, MJCS and justice agencies institutional capacity been strengthened? What sort of change resulting from VAPJP interventions has been experienced by targeted EOPO end users/ beneficiaries – particularly women, but also children and youth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline Extent of evidence of 3 end of program outcomes and 4 IOs Perspectives on changes at a governance level, capability/capacity, community level Strength of evidence available to support outcomes assessment Data related to women, children and youth 	VAPJP Program Reports MJCS reporting The Vanuatu-Australia Policing and Justice Services Study (Putt and Dinnen)	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2 To what extent is VAPJP achieving results in gender equality, disability and social inclusion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the program on track to achieve its gender equality objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline Extent of evidence of 3 EOPO and 4 IOs Perspectives on changes at a governance level, capability/capacity, community level Strength of evidence available to support outcomes assessment Data related to women, children and youth 	VAPJP Program Reports VPF reporting The Vanuatu-Australia Policing and Justice Services Study (Putt and Dinnen) VAPJP GEDSI Strategy	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3 Is the current MERL framework fit for purpose?	How effective is the M&E system in producing quality information on progress towards EOPOs and informing program decision making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions regarding adjustments to program management and implementation in light of COVID-19 Evidence of innovations that could be maintained, views on additional changes that could enhance program performance 	VAPJP Program Reports PMG Minutes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Efficiency - Key question 2: How efficient are VAPJP's delivery modalities?

Review Questions and Sub-Questions	Review Focus areas	Assessment criteria/ factors for consideration	Desktop review	Primary data collection					
				DFAT/ AFP	MJCS	VPF	CSO – VWC, VSPD, WVC	Community	VAPJP Team
2.1 Is the delivery and management approach of VAPJP fit for purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How efficient is the current management modality (i.e. DFAT/managing contractor/AFP)? How does the scope and level of engagement of implementing partners contribute to the efficiency or otherwise of program delivery? Is VAPJP taking sufficient steps to support localisation and local leadership within the program? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of expenditure - budgeted versus actual (overall, by core component and/or activity type if relevant) Perceptions regarding what activities are most effective for achieving program outcomes Perceptions regarding funding and resourcing, and if/where additional resourcing would enhance program outcomes Evidence of data being collected and used to inform decision making Perceptions regarding how the program applies lessons and knowledge generated under the program Perceptions regarding challenges and how learning and sharing of lessons from the program can be enhanced 	VAPJP project documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.2 To what extent do the governance and delivery modalities support progress towards IOs and EOPOs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are the governance mechanisms efficient in terms of facilitating delivery of EOPOs? Are the VAPJP delivery modalities - technical assistance, operational support and funding, training and professional development, community grants, infrastructure, and project delivery – still the most efficient way to provide support to the sector within this current phase? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent that the MEL system has been implemented and supports effective monitoring of progress against outcome KPIs Perceptions regarding the usefulness and limitations of the current monitoring system Evidence of recommendations being addressed 	VAPJP project documents PMG Documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
2.3 Are resources allocated appropriately across program streams?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How efficient is resource allocation across program streams and compared with Government of Vanuatu actual and budget sector expenditure? Is expenditure on track? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of MEL systems supporting program implementation and decision making 	VAPJP project documents GoV documents	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓

Relevance - Key question 3: How relevant, appropriate and sustainable is the VAPJP investment?

Review Questions and Sub-Questions	Review Focus areas	Assessment criteria/ factors for consideration	Desktop review	Primary data collection					
				DFAT/ AFP	MJCS	VPF	CSO – VWC, VSPD, WVC	Community	VAPJP Team
3.1 How has the operating context changed, and how has VAPJP adapted to this?	<p>How have the relevant settings in Vanuatu changed since 2019, such as security environment (e.g. increased focus on cyber-security), policy priorities (e.g. decentralisation), capacity/needs within relevant ministries and political settings? To what extent is VAPJP navigating these new settings?</p> <p>How has the Australia-Vanuatu relationship in the policing and justice sector evolved since 2019? How does this affect VAPJP framing and potential?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of VAPJP goals and outcomes with GoV and other stakeholder priorities Partner perceptions regarding how the program was designed/implemented Consideration of evolving GoV response to the security agreement 	<p>Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement</p> <p>Relevant academic analysis</p> <p>VAPJP Program Documents</p> <p>Academic and grey literature</p> <p>GoV documents</p> <p>PEA</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2 To what extent does the VAPJP design remain strategically aligned to Australian interests and comparative advantage, and Vanuatu government development priorities?	<p>Are the end of program outcomes still relevant?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of VAPJP goals and outcomes with GoV and other stakeholder priorities Partner perceptions regarding how the program was designed/implemented 	<p>VAPJP Program Documents</p> <p>Academic and grey literature</p> <p>GoV documents</p> <p>PEA</p>	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
3.3 To what extent are VAPJP outcomes sustainable?	<p>What evidence exists to suggest ownership of VAPJP priorities and results amongst program stakeholders, including GoV?</p> <p>Is there more that VAPJP could be doing to support the VPF in securing appropriate levels of budget support?</p> <p>How has the program's increased focus on the interface between kastom and formal justice systems affected its relevance and sustainability?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of VAPJP goals and outcomes with GoV and other stakeholder priorities Partner perceptions regarding how the program was designed/implemented 	<p>VAPJP Program Documents</p> <p>GoV NSDP 2016-2030</p> <p>Academic and grey literature</p>	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Future Focus - Key question 4: What opportunities are there for Australia to effectively and efficiently contribute to the Vanuatu policing and justice sector going forward?

Review Questions and Sub-Questions	Review Focus areas	Assessment criteria/ factors for consideration	Desktop review	Primary data collection					
				DFAT/ AFP	MJCS	VPF	CSO – VWC, VSPD, WVC	Community	VAPJP Team
<p>4.1 For the remaining period of VAPJP (to end 2024), what further adaptation is required for the program to remain relevant to security and justice challenges in Vanuatu?</p>	<p>Do the EOPOs and IOs remain relevant?</p> <p>Are there opportunities to redirect program focus into new, emerging priorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a need for consolidation or scaling back in some areas and/or deeper engagement in others to better influence change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other donor perceptions of VAPJP Evidence of partnerships with other development assistance programs in Vanuatu Evidence of partnerships with Australian Whole of Government 	<p>VAPJP Program Documents</p> <p>Australia's International Development Policy</p> <p>Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement</p> <p>Relevant academic and grey literature</p> <p>PEA</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>4.2 What opportunities are there for Australia to contribute to a next phase of support (2024-2028) to the policing and justice sectors in Vanuatu and how should this be delivered?</p> <p>[**Note 4.2 will be an annex for internal DFAT/AFP use]</p>	<p>Considering achievements to date, Australia's comparative advantage and future outlook, is there a need to review the current EOPOs and IOs for the next phase?</p> <p>What delivery modality is likely to be most effective and efficient?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the strengths and weaknesses of the 'chain-of-justice' approach, compared to standalone policing and justice programs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of shared outcomes/attribution Perceptions of emerging/possible future partnerships 	<p>VAPJP Program Documents</p> <p>Australia's International Development Policy</p> <p>Australia Vanuatu bilateral security agreement</p> <p>Relevant academic and grey literature</p> <p>PEA</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓

Annex 4 VAPJP Design Update Annex 10: One page overview

