

# VANUATU

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PRIMARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM REFORM: ROLL-OUT OF A  
MULTILINGUAL APPROACH IN EDUCATION



# Context

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- population : about 272,000. 70% rural area
  - over 80 islands
  - over 100 languages
    - Bislama - national language
    - French & English – official languages
  - One of the highest linguistic density in the world
  - 455 primary schools, 52,789 primary students and 1,908 teachers
- Why a curriculum reform?
- 2009 VANSTA demonstrated low performance of students in yrs 4 &6
  - A sample survey in 2011, showed that less than 30% of the adult population was functional literate
  - 2012 Council of Ministers endorsed an education language policy recognising the importance of mother tongue

# Steps towards a curriculum reform

- Primary school grant was initiated in 2009- more autonomy to the schools
- Establishment of the in-service unit within the Vanuatu Institute of Teachers' Education 2010
- Technical support to the Curriculum Development Unit – reflection on the use of languages in schools with provincial consultations

The 2012 Policy: Vanuatu Language Policy inclusive of pre-school centres :

- Support the development of bilingual education.
- Provide the overall authority and guidance for teaching and the learning of all languages at the classroom, school and system level.
- Support the teaching and learning of French and English as the official languages of education from Primary to the end of schooling and recognise the importance of beginning education using children's first language.
- Support the use of local vernacular languages and Bislama, our National language, to fulfil educational and cultural needs and practices.

# Australian support to Education in Vanuatu

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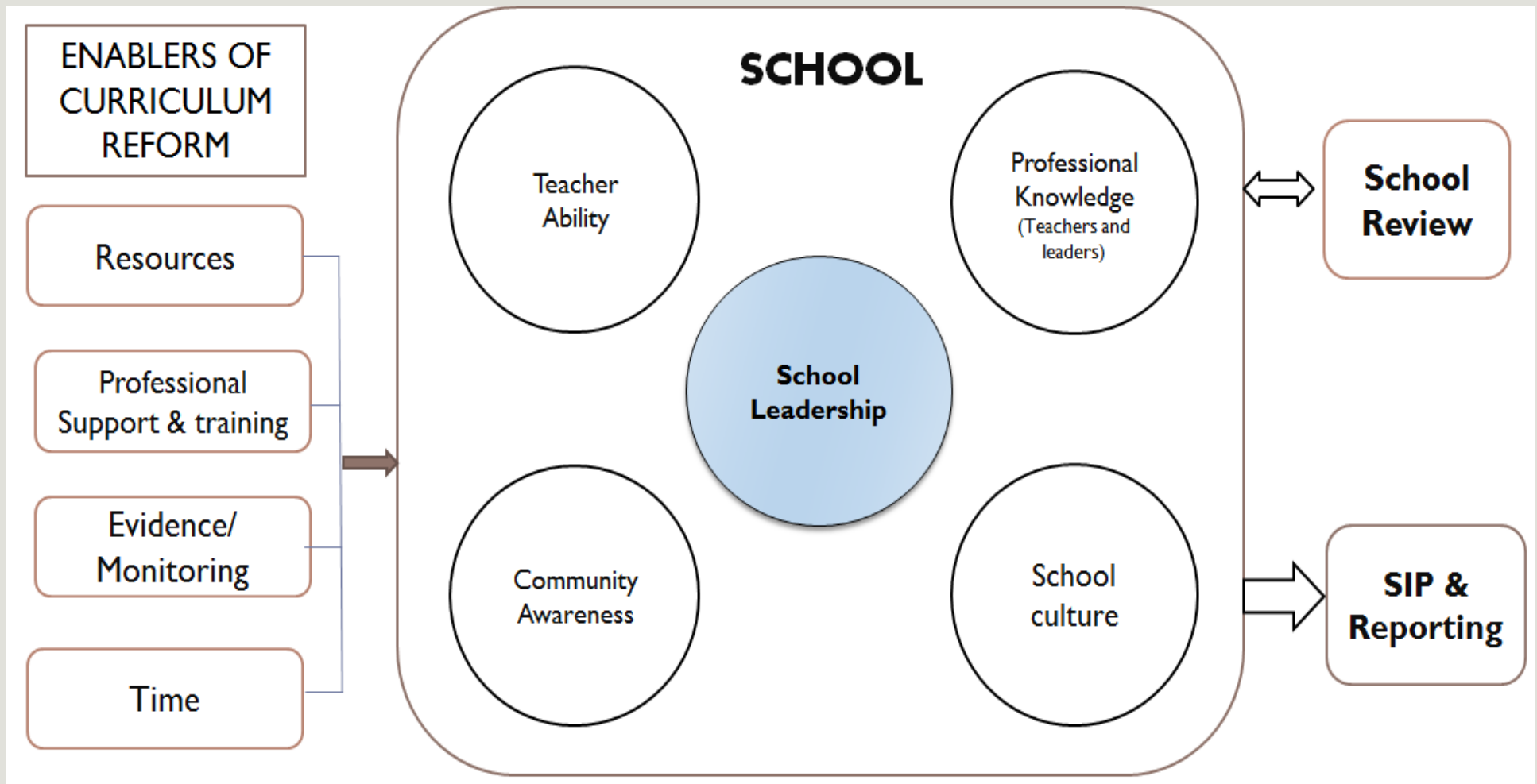
Vanuatu Education Support Program (VESP)– in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training and New Zealand Government

VESP commenced in September 2013 and the first phase was completed in January 2019 leading to phase 2.

The focus is on improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for children in primary years of schooling with support being implemented through interrelated strategies:

- train and support teachers to implement the new primary curriculum
- increased school based management
- development of teaching material and reading material in 60 languages

<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>An enabling phase that included consolidation of policy and processes, materials development, awareness raising, training of trainers and distribution of some "starter" literacy and numeracy kits</b>
2016	Year 1 curriculum implementation in primary schools
2017	Year 2 curriculum implementation in primary schools
2018	Year 3 curriculum implementation in primary schools
2019	Year 4 curriculum implementation in primary schools

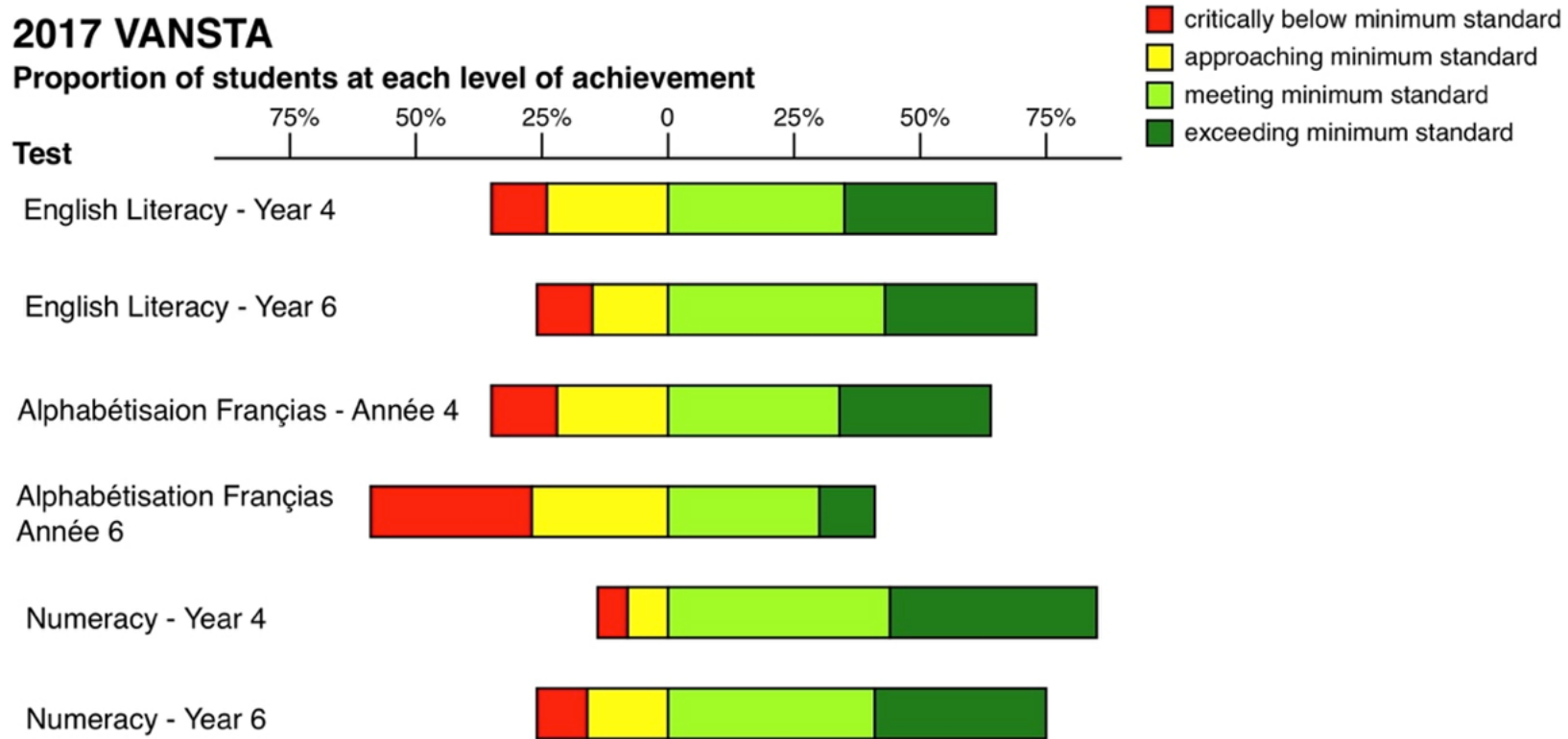


## What has been done so far :

- Implementation of a new language policy that endorses the vernacular or Bislama as the language of instruction in Years 1-3.
- ECCE curriculum developed 2014-15 and implemented
- National awareness campaign on new curriculum and right age policy and early learning advocacy campaign
- Development and distribution of teaching and learning materials from year 1 to 4;
- Teacher training and professional development
- Instructional leadership training for principals;
- Development of national literacy and numeracy minimum standards;
- Review of a national literacy and numeracy standardised testing instrument - VANSTA;
- Development of Bachelor courses in Education in VITE;

## 2017 VANSTA

### Proportion of students at each level of achievement



# Successes and Challenges

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- more student centred approaches using formative assessments : interactive teaching methodology
- higher literacy and numeracy rates
- more material available in the classroom
- more teachers training
- strong advocates of the language policy
- defence of vernacular languages
- ambitious & complex reform
- request of more awareness at all levels of the population
- challenge of working in 60 different languages
- Teachers training and posting
- increase of population and schools overcrowding in some places
- natural disasters
- adequacy of regional testing

# Next steps

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- development and roll-out of years 5 & 6 curriculum in 2020-2021 – more material accessible in the schools
- VANSTA in October 2019 tested the first cohort of students who went through the reformed curriculum
- support teachers to manage the transition in English and French
- more in-service training for teachers – various modalities
- implementation of Bachelor in Education in VITE in 2020
- stopping exams in years 6 and 8 to increase access to Secondary Education
- devolution : shifting support services closer to schools (SIOs)
- strengthening support to community : awareness, tools for parents

Tankiu tumas

Thank you

Merci beaucoup

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