

INVESTMENT DESIGN SUMMARY

A: Investment Design Summary Title: WAN SMOLBAG THEATRE		
Proposed Implementing Partner/s: Wan Smolbag Theatre		
Start date: 1 January 2018	End Date: 31 March 2021	Option period: 2021-23 and 2024-26
Total proposed DFAT funding allocation: \$4.3 million		
Total funding from all donors: (NZ and Oxfam figures only available for 2017-2019) A\$5.8 million		
Risk and Value Profile: Low Risk / Low Value AidWorks Investment number: INI637		
Quality Assurance (QA) Completed: Peer appraisal / review		
Delegate approving design at post: Jenny Da Rin, High Commissioner		

B: Proposed Investment and rationale for DFAT involvement (Why)

Development problem/issue to be addressed:

Vanuatu has significant development challenges, including rapid population growth (the highest in the Pacific at 2.3%¹) and associated pressures on the natural environment; an increasingly youthful population (50% under 18 years of age and 65% under 30 years²); and intensifying urban migration and crowding. According to the 1967 census, Port Vila's population was just over 3,000 people, but by 1997, it had grown to more than 30,000³. Over three decades, the population of the settlement area of Blacksands grew from 134 people in eight households, to nearly 4,000 people in over 900 households⁴. The proportion of men and women are living below the national poverty line is 12.7 per cent, with poverty rates proportionally highest in urban areas.⁵

Studies have identified rapid population growth, youth unemployment and urbanisation, and the associated increase in urban settlement communities in particular, as of growing significance to a range of issues from governance and law and justice, to the provision of key services including health care, education and adequate housing.⁶ There is a paucity of accessible health services, the education system is overcrowded and under-resourced and the proportion of out-of-school youth is high (11.2%⁷).

As people move away from villages and rural areas for extended periods of time, and increasingly find themselves in more mixed, transient settlement communities, traditional support systems and safeguards are significantly weakened. The "absence of national social services"⁸ places a much greater importance on informal services provided through community and church, as well as through civil society organisations.

While urban migration is a concern, the majority of people (75%) still live in rural areas. The geography makes travel between and within islands difficult, hindering economic development and access to information. Challenges are heightened by extreme linguistic diversity and relatively low levels of literacy (the adult literacy rate is 27%). This results in the vulnerable communities having limited knowledge of social and development issues, government policies, laws and basic rights.

Lack of employment opportunities or access to further training marginalises young people and can cause a range of negative consequences, including increased risk of conflict and violence⁹. Socio-cultural norms and traditions make it difficult for young people to get information on, or access to, reproductive and other health services.

¹ Vanuatu National Statistics Office, *2016 Mini Census*

² www.unicef.org/infobycountry/vanuatu-statistics

³ Sarah Mecartney, *Blacksands Settlement: A case for urban permanence in Vanuatu*. Unpublished MSC thesis, 2000, University of Sydney, Page 51

⁴ Ibid, page 67

⁵ Vanuatu Bureau of Statistics and UNDP Pacific Centre, *Analysis of the 2010 Households Income and Expenditure Survey*, 2012

⁶ United Nations, *United Nations Common Country Assessment: Vanuatu*, 2002, page ix

⁷ Note 1

⁸ UNICEF, *Vanuatu: A Situation Analysis of Women, Children and Youth*, 2005, page v

⁹ UNICEF and SPC, 2011

Government services are extremely limited, and there is very little 'demand for better governance' and increased services from civil society. Non-state actors, civil society and faith-based organisations play an important role in service delivery across Vanuatu, in the absence of state services and across almost all sectors.

Significant lifestyle changes in Vanuatu over the last 20 years has also resulted in a rise in non-communicable disease¹⁰ and sexually transmitted infections, an increase in drug and alcohol use, and a growing sense of distance from traditional community and resources. These changes, together with Vanuatu's economic and geographic context, have intensified challenges around provision of health care, law and order, food security, environmental degradation, and economic hardship.

Women have a low status in society, with limited acceptance of, and support for, women's rights. They are often excluded from participating in decision-making processes. There are high levels of violence against women and children, with 72% of women and girls experiencing physical and sexual violence in their lifetime, of whom 21% were left with permanent injuries. The vast majority of women and men aged between 15-49 years think that wife-beating is justified in certain circumstances, pointing to a high level of community acceptance of this behaviour. The majority (60%) of offenders in Vanuatu Correctional Centres are servicing sentences for offences against morality (violent sexual offences), most of whom are between the ages of 19 and 25. Most of their victims are girls (70% are between ages 11-15).¹¹ The violence and control often means that women are excluded from fully participating in the economy or even completing/continuing education.

Proposed partner:

Wan Smolbag Theatre (WSB) is a vibrant civil society organisation (CSO) in Vanuatu that equips communities with information that is easily understandable and targeted. WSB activities support people, including the most vulnerable, to make informed choices about their lives and resources. This gives them the opportunity to participate more fully in society and to contribute to Vanuatu's continued development and growth. WSB is a highly flexible and politically aware CSO that fosters an environment in which citizens and organisations can make legitimate demands of their governments. It also assists in preparing communities for natural disasters, given that Vanuatu is ranked as the world's most vulnerable country to extreme natural events¹².

The innovative CSO stands out as one of the best examples of community media and Communication for Development (C4D) in the Pacific¹³. The company has raised awareness about social issues, not only in Vanuatu but across the Pacific region. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the 'edutainment' model in the Pacific and the value of telling Pacific stories through local media such as radio, TV and theatre. The company also produced Love Patrol, a TV series distributed across the Pacific, which resulted in some significant social changes¹⁴.

During the last 3 years of support (2014-2016), WSB has delivered the following results:

- 46,000 women and men accessed reproductive health services, or provided primary healthcare (at the request of the Ministry of Health), at the WSB health clinics or through mobile clinic services;
- 26,000 young women and men were engaged in peer education sessions in target locations;
- 6,000 girls and boys, young men and women, registered with the youth centres and took part in workshops and youth centre activities;
- audiences of 115,500 men and women attended some 30 theatre and film productions and 80,000 WSB resources (DVDs and educational materials) were distributed to 16 countries;
- provided emergency accommodation and shelter for 256 men and women, boys and girls, including 2 living with a disability, at their centre in Port Vila during TC Pam and worked on improved resilience in 5 communities with 2600 community members on Efate and Malekula; and
- 80% of a sample of the audience (watching plays or participating in workshops) surveys conducted reported an increase in awareness on issues covered.

¹⁰ Diabetes is among the highest in the Pacific with 20,300 cases in Vanuatu in 2015

¹¹ Vanuatu Correctional Services, *Offending Against Morality in Vanuatu*, 2017

¹² United Nations University – Institute for Environment and Human Security, *World Risk Report*, 2014, <http://ehs.unu.edu/news/news/world-risk-report-2014.html#info>

¹³ PACMAS, *Vanuatu State of the Media and Communication Report*, 2013

¹⁴ Robyn Drysdale, *What role can a Pacific soap opera play in the HIV response?* University of New South Wales PhD Thesis, 2014

WSB's holistic approach to community development has evolved over 28 years. Theatre is at the heart of WSB's work and approach. Beyond its core acting group, WSB also hosts a community theatre troupe, a youth drama group, and the Rainbow Community Disability Theatre, a drama group made up of community members with cognitive and physical disabilities. It involves travelling to communities to perform plays, screening films and running workshop programs on key social issues. It complements this by running health clinics (in partnership with the Ministry of Health), youth centres, and a youth nutrition centre, with school students coming to see theatre plays and taking part in other activities. It produces and uses high quality live drama, films and radio to create awareness and motivate action on critical social, economic and environmental development issues, and to allow people to make informed choices about their lives and resources. WSB is noted for challenging social norms on issues such as political corruption, reproductive health rights and attitudes to HIV. The Love Patrol TV series and recent films 'Talemaot' and 'Laef I Swit' highlight the serious issue of violence against women, and the low status of women in society.

Wan Smolbag actively promotes inclusion of boys and girls, men and women in all activities where appropriate. While participation alone is important, efforts are also made to ensure women have leadership and decision making opportunities in program activities. At present, four out of six members of the management team are female. WSB female staff continue to occupy key roles such as: senior lead actresses, program coordinators, peer education coordinator, nutrition centre manager and script writer. Independent reviews show that WSB has well-trained, highly skilled and hard-working Ni-Vanuatu staff with a good national and regional reputation. WSB has strong and long-term partnerships with communities, government and other non-government organisations and an extensive, long-standing network of national and international contacts. WSB has a very large repertoire of plays that can be adapted for use across the Pacific and a large stock of films, videos and radio programs together with innovative and easy-to-use materials that encourage discussion and information exchange and include storylines of dramas in comic format for those with limited literacy skills.

WSB has wide-ranging physical resources and through building skills, providing opportunity, encouragement and employment over the years, WSB has made positive changes to the lives of many young men and women, most of whom had their first opportunity to participate in society through WSB.

The organisation's activities extend beyond theatre. During disasters, WSB has become an official evacuation centre for those in the peri-urban communities and settlements of Blacksands, Tagabe River and Prima. During the Ambae evacuation, WSB centres in Luganville and on Pentecost were able to respond and help displaced communities.

Apart from achievements through theatre, there are many examples of positive, sustainable change as a result of other activities. For example:

- The Vanua-tai turtle monitors network created 20 years ago by WSB to address the decline of turtle populations around Vanuatu and to provide productive activities for communities has expanded to over 500 community volunteers in villages across Vanuatu. The network has been recognised internationally with an award for turtle conservation, and they are used by the Department of Fisheries for marine conservation work.
- WSB's youth centre created Vanua Fire Dance who are now an independent group, managing their own funds and regularly performing in hotels and at events. In 2014 (when still managed by WSB) this group gave performances across at least eight venues for an estimated 33,000 people – with gross revenue of VUV3.6 million (A\$44,000).
- The sports program has developed the skills of young people who have moved on to represent Vanuatu in international competitions.

DFAT Partner Performance Assessments continue to acknowledge that WSB has consistently been a high performing and reliable partner, filling a niche in front-line service delivery, particularly for young women and men in the growing urban and peri-urban areas. An area of weakness has been monitoring and evaluation, with a need for a stronger focus on outcomes and impact rather than inputs and outputs. DFAT and WSB have agreed to dedicate more support to strengthen monitoring and evaluation in the next phase of support.

Policy alignment:

The proposed investment aligns with DFAT's *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*, as it will continue to work on the prevention of violence against women, enhance women's voice in decision-making,

leadership and peace-building within the WSB organisation (itself) as well as through its work at the community level, and will promote women's participation in small business training opportunities at the Port Vila youth centre.

The proposed investment also aligns well with the *Development for All (2015-2020) Strategy* for strengthening disability-inclusive development as it will offer opportunities to people living with disability through direct employment, participation in youth centre activities, and advocating for issues of disability inclusion using film, plays and through radio, as well as using their own Rainbow Theatre (a theatre group made up of people living with disability and their carers).

It is in Australia's national interest to promote stability by reducing vulnerability, poverty and risk in the Pacific region. A key priority in the *Australia-Vanuatu Aid Partnership Arrangement* is to improve community safety and resilience in order to deal with issues such as population growth, youth bulge, urbanisation and access to essential services and vital economic opportunities for women, children and people living with a disability.

WSB's work aligns with a number of priority areas under the Pacific Development Framework. Under 'skills and jobs', WSB supports creative individuals and groups to develop their skills and identify opportunities for self-employment. WSB supports 'resilient communities' through environmental conservation work and by supporting communities to be more prepared for disasters. Through 'health' programs, WSB is addressing priority health needs, particularly sexual and reproductive health services. Finally, WSB's work supports accountable leadership – both through their work with Chiefs and community leaders, complemented by creative media that reinforces messages and encourages public awareness and discourse on governance issues. The investment also aligns with Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and its work with communities on being climate informed and farming weather dependent crops.

The proposed investment aligns with the Vanuatu Government's *National Sustainable Development Plan*, contributing to the society and environment pillars.

Funding:

Since 2010, Australia has provided A\$11.8 million to WSB to use drama to raise community awareness of sensitive issues, and for programs in creative media, youth and community, health, environment, governance and policy research. Total funding provided by Australia to WSB through the current arrangement is A\$2.9 million (2015-2017). Funding proposed for the next three years (2018-2020) is A\$4.3 million¹⁵.

In addition to bilateral Australian funds, WSB receives core funding contributions from the New Zealand Government and Oxfam:

- New Zealand is providing A\$4.3 million over 5 years (2015-2019).¹⁶
- Oxfam provides A\$258,000 annually (through ANCP).

We will continue to liaise closely with these core partners to ensure funding is consistent and reporting is streamlined as much as possible.

WSB also receives support from the Government of Vanuatu, and in particular through the Ministry of Health for its health programs, and the Department of Corrections. WSB also receives funding from a variety of other donors and through private partnerships, including UNICEF, UNDP, World Vision Vanuatu, CARE International, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Pacific Peoples Partnership, Greens Hands, Grant Norton, IP Connect and National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration. A number of Australian aid programs (eg. Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development and the Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program) have also contracted WSB for specific activities.

WSB is heavily reliant on donor funding – not least because it operates in a small economy, with limited private sector activity and limited local government revenue space. This context is common in the Pacific and means that civil society service providers rely on development partners. Those WSB activities that do engage where the

¹⁵ \$1.6 million in 2018, \$1.4 million in 2019 and \$1.3 million in 2020. This gradual decrease is based on expectations of the level of funding from the New Zealand Government from 2020 onwards.

¹⁶ New Zealand's planned expenditure is A\$578,000 in 2018 and A\$425,000 in 2019. Average annual expenditure over the five year period of their current commitment is A\$860,000, with New Zealand's funding front-ended and Australia's contribution increasing in 2017-18. We expect New Zealand's annual contribution to be approximately A\$860,000 p.a. from 2020.

economy is vibrant (e.g. Vanua Fire Dance) have been managed by WSB to become independent and self-sustaining.

While WSB continues to look for other funding sources, including from private partnerships, a study to identify options to further diversify WSB's funding in 2016 noted that the issue of financial sustainability has been exhaustively queried, discussed and analysed throughout its 28 years. Funding Opportunity¹⁷, Commercial Opportunities¹⁸ and the Mid Term Review¹⁹ all suggested ways of generating some income, but did not identify significant sources outside of donor funding. Nothing significant in context has changed from these earlier reviews. Due to the range of services it provides communities and society in general, WSB will rely on substantial foreign aid for the foreseeable future (until the Vanuatu Government provides adequate, consistent social services). WSB will however need to be proactive and responsive to other partnerships to build diversity in its resource base. We will support WSB where appropriate to partner with appropriate individuals and organisations to develop a business model where those partnerships can offer greater financial diversity and sustainability.

C: Proposed outcomes (What)

WSB has a comparative advantage amongst other actors to influence the formal and informal rules that organise social/ political relations. WSB has demonstrated an ability to respond and take advantage of entry-points for reform and social/behavioural change in culturally appropriate ways with the greatest reach, including to the most disadvantaged pockets of society. WSB's knowledge of community values and beliefs, together with their understanding of how development problems impact individuals and communities and how best these issues might be addressed, make them best placed to respond to the key development challenges highlighted above.

WSB's vision is a strong and well-governed Vanuatu, across all sectors of society, from rural to urban communities, and inclusive of everyone, particularly those who are more marginalised. This investment will run from January 2018 to March 2021, building on current programs. Program outcomes will be:

- WSB maintains a high quality and reach of live theatre, film, radio productions and supporting publications on contemporary development issues.
- 'At risk' young men and women from targeted communities participate in the social and economic development of their communities.
- Women and men (including young people) from target communities are accessing quality age-appropriate and confidential sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning.
- Target communities are increasingly knowledgeable about, and taking action to support, environmental sustainability and resource management; and target communities are better prepared for natural disasters.
- Leaders in target communities demonstrate good governance, leadership and accountability across all of society; and target communities (including 'at risk' young men and women) demand good leadership from their leaders and make efforts to hold them to account.
- WSB increase their focus on progress towards outcomes (ie. behaviour change), creating an evidence base for policy and programming decisions.

WSB's "Roadmap for Change" Strategy (2014-25) focuses on creating and promoting an environment for change across all sectors of Vanuatu society. WSB achieves this through activities that facilitate dialogue and engagement with people, communities and institutions, particularly between those with power and authority and those who are more marginalised. WSB adopts a wide range of strategies, approaches and action to achieve change, including:

- creating awareness, dialogue and empowerment in a range of areas from governance, development, health and wellbeing, and resource management (by sharing information, encouraging reflective practice, challenging attitudes, encouraging behavioural change, cultivating a sense of belonging and community, and decreasing stigma and discrimination);

¹⁷ Sandcliff AB Ltd, *Funding Opportunity*, 2003

¹⁸ Richard Barber, *Commercial Opportunities for Wan Smolbag Theatre*, 2006

¹⁹ Heidi Tyedmers, *Mid Term Review of Wan Smolbag*, 2012

- direct assistance and support to people to improve their lives and wellbeing, and to support them in making a positive contribution to their families, communities, society, and to the governance of Vanuatu; and
- facilitating collaboration and engagement amongst a wide range of citizens and stakeholders, including community leaders, policy makers, politicians, government, civil society and more marginalised communities and individuals.

WSB will deliver activities across the six inter-related program areas to meet the program outcomes.

- **Creative Media** activities that aim to promote individual, community, and societal reflection, engagement, and dialogue. WSB will produce high quality theatre, radio and film products. Given WSB's extensive knowledge of communities, their development needs and emerging development issues, the themes and performance schedules for this component are flexible and will be agreed annually, or when necessary, with partners. Topics could include, but are not limited to, human rights and civic duties, government and leaders' responsibilities, gender equality, violence against women and children, disability, electoral rights, conservation, environmental sanitation and protection, sexual and reproductive health, and nutrition and healthy eating. WSB will also produce (where appropriate) written materials to accompany productions that can be used in a classroom or community setting to raise awareness and encourage community discussion. DFAT will also encourage WSB to develop more material aimed at a younger audience (pre-adolescent).
- **Youth and Community** activities that aim to promote responsibility, wellbeing and resilience in young people and their communities including in times of disaster. WSB will provide high quality services, such as non-formal education and sporting opportunities, for young unemployed, out-of-school young men and women in poor peri-urban settlements. Particular attention will continue to be given to gender equality in all youth centre activities, including sports. These activities aim to build knowledge, skills and confidence among young men and women, encourage self-reliance, resilience and leadership and promote positive participation in Vanuatu's socio-economic development. This will include helping young, creative groups and individuals harness economic opportunities.
- **Health** activities that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. WSB will provide age-appropriate and confidential sexual and reproductive health services, including peer education and clinic services (Port Vila, Luganville, Pentecost and mobile clinic services), in partnership with the Ministry of Health. Awareness and education on non-communicable diseases will also be covered through the creative media, youth and community program areas.
- **Environment** activities that aim to promote environmental sustainability and community resource management. WSB will continue to support the strong community-based volunteer conservation (Vanua-tai) network, working closely with the Department of Environment and Fisheries. There will be an increased focus on working with target communities to ensure they are climate informed, and dealing with highly weather dependent crops. WSB will also train and manage a small number of Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (linked to NDMO, Oxfam and Red Cross). Linked to the creative media program area, community drama, films and radio programs will provide information and encourage discussion and community action on environmental governance, climate change and adaptation and conservation of natural resources. Conservation training and follow-up will be provided for the network. There will also be a continued focus on waste management.
- **Governance** activities that aim to promote good governance, leadership, increased community voice and accountability across all of society. WSB will work with Chiefs and community leaders to highlight governance issues, challenge society norms on violence against women and children and provide support for practical action in target communities. This will be complemented by creative media, including theatre and film, to reinforce messages and encourage discussion. Activities are mutually reinforcing and together form a powerful approach to improving governance at different levels of society.
- **Monitoring, Performance and Results** activities that aim to inform strategic choices by WSB and management of their programs as well as creating an evidence base for policy advocacy and promoting individual and societal engagement and dialogue. In this phase there will be a more deliberate linking of results measurement, change processes and reporting to tell a more structured story of change supported by or attributable to WSB. Monitoring and results measurement will be used to assess adequacy of progress

towards sustainable change (e.g. increased cost recovery in creative media; reduced repeat visits to the clinic for diseases linked to risky behaviours; a focus on reducing waste streams in the environment, not just cleaning up and disposing of waste after consumption). An increased focus on monitoring, evaluation and learning in this phase will be complemented by support for WSB to use evidence and learning to inform programming in all program areas. The investment will include funding for a dedicated performance assessment officer, with mentoring and coaching provided by a dedicated Performance Assessment Adviser. A proportion of funding (\$50,000 p.a.) will be performance based, with clear annual targets agreed each year to improve monitoring and evaluation.

WSB will continue to mainstream gender equality and disability inclusion in all activities, and developing, where necessary, guiding documents to help articulate these approaches.

D: Implementation arrangements (How will DFAT engage in the partnership?)

A direct grant will be provided to WSB. A Memorandum of Understanding with WSB, New Zealand and Oxfam will set out clear responsibilities and streamline monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements of all core donors. One monitoring and results measurement framework will be used for WSB to report progress and results to all partners.

Australia will engage with WSB formally through quarterly Partnership Coordination Committee (PCC) meetings, which include the WSB management team, the three core donors and other key stakeholders (eg. the Ministry of Health). The PCC meeting provides an opportunity to oversee annual plans, activity plans, progress reports, budgets and financial acquittals. Australia will also meet directly with WSB whenever required to address specific issues and as part of regular monitoring visits.

A strengthened monitoring and results measurement plan (aligned with DFAT M&E Standards 2 and 3) will be developed in consultation with WSB in the first 3 months of the new grant agreement, with support from the dedicated Performance Assessment Adviser. Up to A\$100,000 p.a. will be allocated for the strengthened monitoring, performance and results program area. The focus over the next phase will aim to improve monitoring and results measurement to a standard where DFAT can then consider other management efficiencies for the next phase of support (e.g. delegated cooperation with New Zealand or Oxfam, or consolidation with another bilateral Australian aid program).

E: Risk assessment approach (What might go wrong?)

The investment is assessed as low risk. Key risks are:

- WSB are heavily reliant on donors for funding. A decrease in funding from any donor could result in a reduction of staff resources to carry out planned activities and/or put pressure on the Australian Government to increase funding. Poor donor harmonisation could take staff resources away from program activity work to meet donor demands, creating fractured relationships and reduced capacity to carry out planned activities.
- Child protection – with a large number of youth at WSB centres, there is a risk that WSB personnel or participants could cause a child protection incident. WSB has a duty of care to provide a safe environment to prevent the incidents and/ or to manage a situation should an incident occur. WSB will update their child protection policy that takes into account comments from DFAT's Child Protection Section and re-submit to DFAT.

F: Quality assurance (Does the design meet DFAT's quality criteria?)

Contracting Services Branch has been consulted on the process (for a partner-led design).

Peer review participants included the following DFAT expertise: gender equality, disability inclusion, child protection, climate change, and governance. Written feedback has been incorporated in this Investment Design Summary document.

