

**GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN
VANUATU
1999 - 2002**

A. Background

1. Current social, economic and political indicators highlight female disadvantages in all areas in Vanuatu. The fertility rate is high, as is population growth. Poor nutrition of both mothers and infants is a major health concern. Girls are less likely than boys to finish their schooling, or even to continue into secondary school. Women are more likely to be involved in unpaid tasks and work, on average, 16 to 17 hours a day, compared with men's average work of 10–11 hours per day. Women are generally more successful in small businesses and are more reliable borrowers of bank funds. Nevertheless, women are rarely involved in formal decision-making, either through traditional or modern democratic structures. In 1995, the Vanuatu Government ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and included a National Plan of Action for Women in its Development Plan.

B. Objectives

2. In all activities in Vanuatu, the Bank will intensify efforts to pursue the following gender and development objectives:

- (i) Promote the equal participation of women in the economy, with particular attention to the productive sectors and skills development; and
- (ii) Encourage explicit targeting of gender-specific concerns and active involvement of women in decision-making processes, including by promoting the inclusion of specific gender and development considerations in the policy frameworks of all sectors, and by strengthening links between Government and civil society.

3. These objectives are not intended to be comprehensive in addressing existing gender inequalities in Vanuatu. They aim to provide a practical focus on key areas where there is potential for change in the short to medium term in the context of Vanuatu's particular circumstances, and where Bank has a comparative advantage to assist. The Bank's strategy recognizes that, because of existing gender inequities in Vanuatu, women are disproportionately affected by changes in poverty levels and restraints in public expenditure. Their roles in production and income earning opportunities are also likely to be affected, both directly and indirectly. Women are therefore particularly vulnerable to the impacts of rapid social and economic change, and particular attention must be paid to the role of women in all development activities.

C. Action Plan

Ongoing and Planned Bank Operations		Gender and Development Action Plan
A. Loans		
1624-VAN	Comprehensive Reform Program (including TA 2984 & 3046)	Promote the integration of gender and development concerns in all aspects of CRP implementation, through policy dialogue and all TA support. Provide assistance for the effective monitoring and social impact assessment of CRP reforms.
1448/1884-VAN	Urban Infrastructure Activities	Ensure consultation with women, particularly in light of potential impacts on access to markets, education, etc
(2000)	Outer Islands Infrastructure Development (including PPTA)	Ensure regular consultation with women on all aspects of priority setting and design within the project.
(2001)	Rural Financial Services (including PPTA)	Incorporate lessons learned from VANWODS Microcredit Project for Women.
(2001)	Skills Development (including PPTA)	Ensure participation of women's NGOs in project design, including ongoing work in relation to Rural Training Centres.
B. Technical Assistance		
(1999)	Performance Enhancement of Selected Frontline Services	Ensure effective participation of women in the development of performance indicators for assessing the effectiveness of basic service delivery.
(1999)	Information Dissemination and Reform	Ensure gender equity concerns are adequately addressed in the development of information strategies and campaigns.
(1999)	Strengthening the State Law Office (SLO)	Promote awareness within the SLO of disproportionate gender impacts of proposed reform legislation; where possible, provide advice on improvements.
(2000)	Environmental Management	Gender priorities to be specified during fact-finding.
(2001)	Ni-Vanuatu Business Development	Gender priorities to be specified during fact-finding.

Ongoing and Planned Bank Operations		Gender and Development Action Plan
B. Technical Assistance (continued)		
(2001)	Commercialization, Corporatization and Privatization	Gender priorities to be specified during fact-finding.
C. Economic and Sector Work		
(1999)	Budget and Expenditure Review	Assess the social and economic impact of budget allocations in terms of gender and development priorities, and make recommendations as appropriate for improvement.
D. Regional Technical Assistance (RETA)		
(1999)	Regional Assistance on GAD Issues	Provide assistance to the Vanuatu National Council of Women to facilitate improved liaison with Government on gender impacts of reform.