

MARAMA YOUTH FOUNDATION Youth Empowerment Program (YEP)



- Phase 1: Leadership Training

Vanuatu is an archipelago made up of 83 islands situated in the South Pacific with a population of around 300,000 people where half of this data comprises the youth age groups from 13 – 35 years of age. A country has its own challenges, the same would be about Vanuatu in the scope of Youth's activities which have shown that there is a lack of resources being utilized to address the social problems accumulating in communities. Though there are youths who are contributing to the development of Vanuatu, this is, however, only a small percentage, that a great number of youths are either sitting in juvenile, in community gangs who some are causing problems in their communities, teen parents, unemployed and victims of arranged marriage practices.



Through the Yut Pawa Project that is funded by the Commonwealth of Learning, collaboration was initiated between MYF, V- Lab and Youth Challenge. In phase 1 of the project MYF was tasked to develop and deliver a 1-day leadership training for 300 youths on Efate in a period of 5 months.



An induction training for facilitators took place in February of 2023, who then went on to deliver the training to the 300 youths in the grass root communities. The leadership modules covered “what is

leadership?”, “Understanding myself”, “Creating my own goals”, and many more in the local language - Bislama. Wrapping up the training session included a practical community exercise where the youth participants would come up with real-world solutions to addressing social issues that are currently occurring within their community.

With 12 trained facilitators, a mixture of confidence, anxiousness and readiness was in the air as the team geared up to deliver the first series of training in April.

The first series of training commenced within 3 consecutive days, targeting the youths from Mele-Maat Village, Mele Village and Erakor village. In May, Yut Pawa Leadership training was delivered to youths residing in and around Ekoftau church, Tanvasoko Area Council and Ifira island. In June, training took place at Pakaroa Church, Lagoon Tokyo and with high demand, a second group of the youths from Tanvasoko Area Council. In July, the team was stationed at Seaside Paama, Pango village, Seaside Tongoa, Malaribu – an area within Mele Village and the National 7s Rugby Union team for both Men and women. And finally, concluding August and Phase 1 of the Yut Pawa Project, the MYF team delivered the leadership training with Mele NTM Youths and Mele AOG Youths.



All in all, the outstanding facilitators who delivered the Leadership training were Sisilia Roqara, Mala Roqara, Tevita Taravaki, Rebecca Leo, Brenda Peter and Virginia Taravaki.

In order for the Yut Pawa leadership training to be accessible in the community, meeting arrangements were made prior with community focal points to secure venue, participants, catering and logistics. On the day of training, participants would complete registration forms and Pre-Training questionnaires. With 7 interactive activities which involve a lot of group discussions, presentations and live debate, the focus is set to create a learning environment where participants could feel comfortable to share, speak their minds and learn. A transition is noticeable at the beginning of the training where participants at first were shy and very quiet to end the day with more confidence – this is recognizable in group discussions & presentations and asking questions without hesitation to MYF facilitators. Concluding the training is an awareness of V-Lab and Youth Challenge Vanuatu programs, where opportunity presents itself to the grassroots youths to apply to either of the two NGOs for Phase 2 of the Program. Feedback forms are then collected for data purposes on the overall MYF delivery and Commonwealth of Learning.



There were highlighted moments encountered during the course of delivering, from meeting fellow youth participants who could not read nor write but actively participated in all activities to having some participants who would leave work just to attend the Yut Pawa Training.

Tasked to reach 300 youths in 5 months proved to be a challenge for a young social enterprise, yet Marama Youth Foundation persevered by using its social networks to reach its target and exceedingly above 320 youths. To ensure a positive output, effective communication is paramount when dealing with community projects, a big takeaway for the Marama Youth Foundation moving forward and there is room for improvements. The Yut Pawa Project has allowed MYF to build its confidence when dealing with different communities and has opened doors to more networks while creating long lasting friendships with participants who have attended such training.