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Universal Access Policy Implementation in Vanuatu

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UAP



The Government
of The Republic
of Vanuatu



Telecommunications &
Radiocommunications
Regulator

The Policy

- Developed by the Government of Vanuatu, under the Telecommunications & Radiocommunications Regulation Act 2009 (The Act), after in-depth, lengthy and comprehensive policy consultation
- Approved by the Council of Ministers in November 2013
- Universal Access Policy is aimed at reaching the last mile: unserved & underserved from current telecommunications operators
- Policy proposes a ‘Pay’ (collect a levy) or ‘Play’ (agree with operators on an approach that will achieve Policy objectives) approach
- The Act allows the Regulator to conclude contracts on behalf of the Government for subsidies of telecom services to UAP areas



UAP Fund



- **UAP Fund (Provided for in The Act)**
 - Trust fund set up by the Minister for the purpose of UAP.
 - Administered by the Regulator as trustee.
 - Apart from any Licensee's levy, any entity can contribute to the UAP Fund.
 - Currently UAP Fund contains GoA (GfG) and TRR funding.
 - TRR can levy licensees up to 4% of net revenue.
 - To date TRR has estimated a levy each year but has not imposed collection of the levy.
 - TRR advises Industry annually of its UAP levy intentions.
 - Levy applies annually from 1st of July to 30th June.

Utilization of the Fund is decided by the tripartite TRR, OGCI and GfG



UAP Highlights

- By 1st of January 2018, 98% of the population must have access to voice, narrowband and broadband internet services
- Broadband internet speeds of 21Mbps download and 12Mbps upload
- Such services shall be in place to all schools, health facilities and public offices
- TRR has major role to specify QOS, implement and monitor the Policy
- TRR can levy a fee up to 4% on all operators (the “pay”) if some or all do not participate in alternate methods to achieve the UAP goals (they “play”)

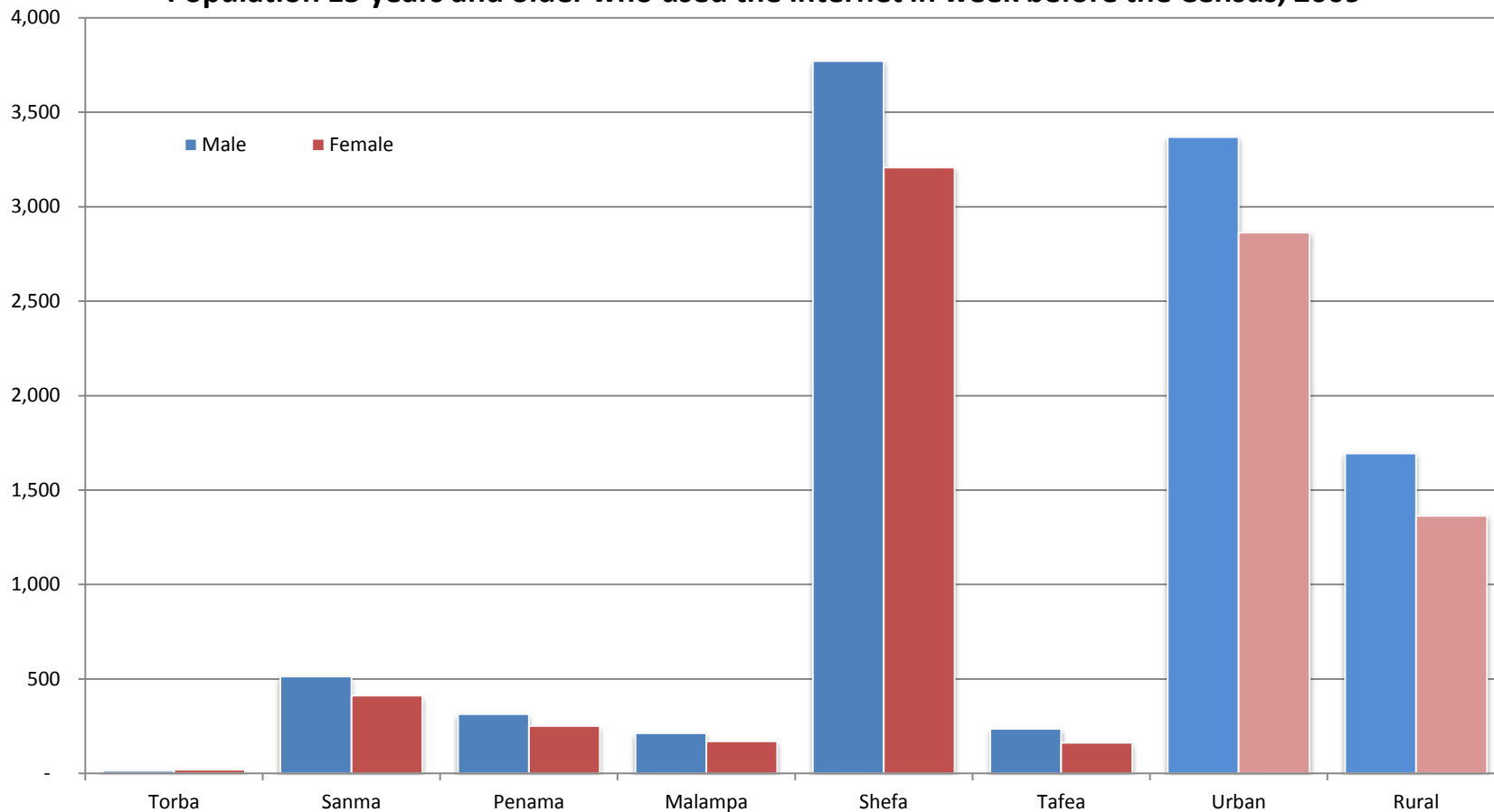


Interesting stats

- Voice & SMS population coverage is currently estimated to be around 92%.
- Internet Usage nationally is very low. 2009 Census report finds:
 - 6.7% of population uses internet
 - 16.3% usage in Urban areas & 3% in rural areas.
- Anecdotal indications show 23% internet growth by mid 2012.
- But subscriptions remain very low particularly in rural and remote areas.
- Digital Divide gap must be closed – Government's UAP is intended to overcome this challenge.



Population 15 years and older who used the internet in week before the Census, 2009



Source: National Statistics Office



INTERNET USE IS STILL LIMITED, BUT PEOPLE WANT IT

72%

OF ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE **NEVER SEEN OR USED THE INTERNET**

79%

OF **RURAL RESPONDENTS** HAVE NEVER SEEN OR USED THE INTERNET



12%

OF ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE **SEEN AND USED THE INTERNET**

17%

OF ALL RESPONDENTS HAVE SEEN **BUT NOT USED THE INTERNET**

Net Effects

Social and economic impacts of telecommunications and internet in Vanuatu

Selected data from 2011 research findings report



Pacific Institute
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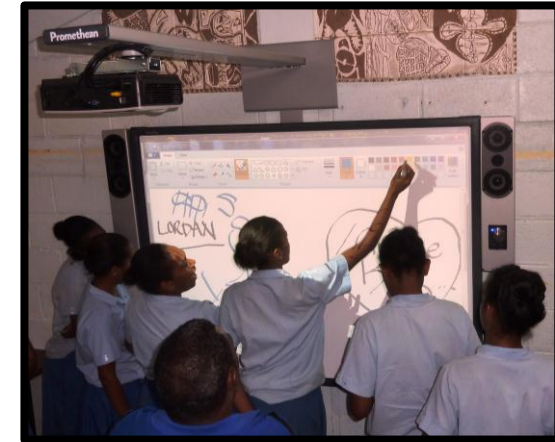
Where are we today?

- We now have a Universal Access Policy
- Kick start meetings with operators and key stakeholders have occurred
- Players and Payers identified
- Sub marine cable has hit our shores November 2013
- Key operators have connected to the sub marine cable
- An exciting time for broadband users in Port Vila with increase in access to and use of broadband services - particularly mobile broadband.
- Challenge remains to deliver this to rural and remote parts
- Increased variety of choice and cost to broadband internet services
- Development of other UA initiatives to drive demand and contribute to achieving 98% pop coverage objective



Other UA Initiatives

- Three grant programs were developed, two of which are directly tied to our Nation's schools:
 - (i) CLICC (Computer Lab & Internet Community Center)
 - (ii) Tablets for Students
 - (iii) Community internet cafes
- APT Telecentre Project at 3 rural locations
- Other Initiatives



How to achieve this?

- Cooperative working with operators, stakeholders and other relevant parties is TRR's methodology
- Rollout out of services to unserved and underserved areas by operators, the players
- Collect levy into the UAP Fund to rollout services from the payers
- Deployment of other UA initiatives to drive demand and add to achieving overall population coverage



Expected Outcomes

- Increased ICT usage in schools and communities to drive demand
- Improved access particularly mobile broadband is expected to drive Vanuatu's economy
- Connecting those that do not have access to existing services will add social and economic value and benefit
- By January 2018, 98% of Vanuatu's population will have access to not just mobile voice coverage but also mobile or other broadband coverage.
- Increased consumer benefits including faster speeds and lower costs
- Provides consumers with enhanced products and services
- Encourage more business activities through ICT for small business owners



Thank you tumas

