

# National ICT day will see display of Vanuatu's broadband future!

**THE WHOLE COUNTRY WILL TURN** out to celebrate National ICT Day on Friday, May 16 and Saturday, May 17! The event, one of the biggest on the social calendar in Vanuatu, which focuses on information and communications technologies (ICTs), was so successful in 2013 that it has expanded to two days this year. The theme for this year is "Broadband for Sustainable Development" – very appropriate for Vanuatu, which has just set its broadband goal of 98 percent coverage by 2018.

The main venue for National ICT Day will be the Port Vila Sea Front. The event will feature a huge parade, numerous booths, string bands and other entertainment, a free computer lab, speeches by the Prime Minister and Miss Vanuatu, demonstrations of ICTs, and lively discussions on all the ICT issues of the day.

The event will kick off on Friday morning, May 16 at 7:30 am at the Moorings, at the north end of downtown, where the parade will assemble and will include the Vanuatu Mobile Force Band, three floats, and almost a thousand participants. The opening ceremony will take



A happy participant from National ICT Day in 2013 looks forward to the two days of celebration on Friday and Saturday, May 16 and 17, 2014.

place at the Waterfront Stage and will feature the Prime Minister, Miss Vanuatu, and a message from the Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The event will also include the official launching by the Prime Minister of three

major national documents: the National ICT Policy, the Universal Access Policy, and the National Cyber-security Policy and the handing over of the Rensarie Telecentre to the Rensarie community.

A tour of key booths will be followed by discussion sessions

and presentations over the two days on the status of the submarine cable, the benefits of e-government, global trends in ICTs, schools' access to ICTs in Vanuatu, mobile banking, cybersecurity, social media, consumer issues, and ICTs and disaster response. Experts from

Vanuatu and around the world will present their forecasts for ICTs and the future of Vanuatu. Famous local string bands and the entertainers and dancers of Wan Smol Bag will amaze the crowd with hours of entertainment.

The Friday events will

close at about 5 pm, but more excitement will run on Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm, again with seminars, presentations, entertainment, booth tours and demonstrations. The forum discussion sessions on Saturday will begin with the most exciting one on "The Rise of Social Media in Vanuatu's Political and Social Life".

Vanuatu's National ICT Day is the local celebration of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD), set as May 17 by the ITU to raise awareness of the power of the Internet and ICTs in economic and social development.

May 17 marks the 149th anniversary of the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in 1865 and the creation of the International Telecommunication Union. The first trans-Atlantic submarine cable only carried seven words per minute. Now, with the new submarine fiber optic cable, Vanuatu can receive and transmit millions of words, pictures and videos per minute. Come to National ICT Day, and find out what will happen over the next 149 years!