



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



1. Organizational Background and Capacity

About Further Arts Vanuatu

1.1: Further Arts is a charitable association (equivalent of a not-for-profit, non-government organization), incorporated in Vanuatu on 20 December 2000 under the Charitable Associations (Incorporation) Act [CAP 140]. Further Arts' aim is to empower Melanesians to develop long-term social and commercial enterprises in the industries of creative arts, agriculture and communications that are culturally, socially, environmentally and financially sustainable.

Core Business of Further Art Vanuatu

1.2: Further Arts' primary focus on gender equality and women and girls' rights is advanced throughout its activities: advocacy and policy dialogue, awareness raising, research, networking and facilitation, and provision of services. The majority of Further Arts leadership and staff are indigenous Pacific Island women with a wealth of experience working with women, youth and grassroots communities throughout Oceania.

1.3: Further Arts has strong, broad and deep local networks within Vanuatu and Melanesia, especially to traditional social groupings and authorities; and also to key regional cultural institutions such as the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and the Pacific Arts Alliance. Further Arts has been engaging with cultural and creative sectors in Vanuatu and Melanesia for almost 20 years. With a sensitivity to local culture and a strong philosophy of enabling and promoting self-reliance and indigenous sovereignty through innovative actions and collaborations, Further Arts is well placed to facilitate and contribute to locally-driven community and cultural development practice.

**Individual Stakeholder submission to the 4th Universal Periodic Review Report,
11 October 2023**



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



Contents

Organizational Background and Capacity	1
About Further Arts Vanuatu.....	1
Core Business of Further Art Vanuatu.....	1
Executive summary.....	3
Key issue 1: Lack of awareness of positive expression of culture to adapt to climate change and disaster risk reduction.....	4
Recommendations;Bookmark '_Toc146891968' is not defined within the document.	
Key issue 2. Lack of recognition to integration creative arts into school curriculum.	7
Recommendations;Bookmark '_Toc146891970' is not defined within the document.	



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



2. Executive summary

2.1 : Traditional knowledge and cultural approaches have, over centuries, enabled communities in Vanuatu to address environmental, economic and social challenges. Communities have been able to use kinship networks and links, including chiefly relations, as part of displacement governance preparation and planning: such mobilization occurred, for instance, in the case of some families and communities who moved to Santo during the Ambae volcanic eruptions. The ability to mobilize customary networks may allow people to experience more stable and harmonious living conditions, in which cultural norms and principles can be upheld.

2.2: Currently, however, there is little documentation of these cases. This makes it difficult for decision-makers to: 1) understand the contribution to and impact of how traditional systems are informally utilised in displacement management and, 2) know the details of local resilience and culturally-appropriate options, in order to then integrate these practices into displacement planning.

2.3 : Vanuatu is prone to natural disasters and lessons learned from the recent TC Pam in 2015, Tropical Cyclone Harold 06 April 2020, COVID19 and the recent twin cyclones Judy and Kevin which made landfall in Vanuatu on 06th March 2023, as well as the mass evacuation of the island of Ambae in 2018 and other planned relocation experiences in Vanuatu, also reveal the need for people to remain connected to existing cultural practices and relationships during and following displacement to support resilience and recovery.

Key Issues:

- Key issue 1: Lack of awareness of positive expression of culture to adapt to climate change and disaster risk reduction.
- Key issue 2. lack of recognition to integration creative arts into school curriculum



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



3. Key issue 1: Lack of awareness of positive expression of culture to adapt to climate change and disaster risk reduction.

3.1: The population of Vanuatu is comprised of people of Melanesian descent, the ni-Vanuatu. Because of the Christian missions that took place in the late 1800s, Christianity is the predominant religion, with 83 percent of the population being Christian. This does not mean, however, that indigenous culture has entirely disappeared. Locals still see owning a pig, particularly one with large, rounded tusks, as a symbol of a person's wealth and standing. Young men still go through several coming-of-age rituals like circumcision or land diving. Visitors heading out to small villages will see the village clubhouse, the *nakamal*, which serves as a general gathering place for the entire village. Traditional music can still be heard in these small villages as well. Instruments include wooden slit drums and gongs, rattles, and many others.¹

3.2 : However, with the influence of outside world and during the last pandemic (COVID19) all schools were closed in the country and during the displacement in 2018 during the Ambae Volcano, children find it hard to concentrate in formal education to completing their home packages. In the report from Further Arts Vanuatu, children found it best to waves matts and other cultural practices to ease the stress and pressure of the situation they're in.

3.3 : Under the Vanuatu National Development Plan 2016 – 2030, Under Social Pillar, SOC 1, Vibrant Cultural identity, A nation based on traditional governance and Christian principles, which underpin our culture and continue to bestow life skills and knowledge to future generations.

Policy Objectives:

SOC 1.1 Promote and protect indigenous languages.

SOC 1.2 Preserve and enhance cultural and traditional knowledge, including appropriate medicines, natural remedies, and healing practices.

SOC 1.3 Conserve sites of cultural and historical significance

SOC 1.4 Strengthen links between traditional and formal governance systems SOC 1.5 Strengthen the role of churches in the provision of community services.

¹ <https://www.iexplore.com/articles/travel-guides/australia-and-south-pacific/vanuatu/history-and-culture>



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



SOC 1.6 Integrate culture and heritage into the national curriculum.

SOC 1.7 Safeguard the traditional economy as a valued means of contributing to the wellbeing of the population and complementing the formal economy.

3.4: Further Arts Vanuatu commends that Vanuatu Government for putting in place a National on Climate Change and Disaster -induced displacement 2018 with the aim to help guide emergency and development planners to work with the Government of Vanuatu to address the needs of all communities affected by displacement. The Policy also aim to enable government ministries to work together to provide protections for people at each stage of the displacement cycle, with the goal of achieving durable solutions for all people affected by displacement. The policy proposes twelve strategic priority areas for action to ensure displacement and human mobility considerations are mainstreamed into Vanuatu’s planning at national, provincial, and local levels, building on existing national policy initiatives. Strategic areas are grouped into systems level interventions and sectoral-level interventions. Systems-level interventions relate to:

1. institutions and governance
2. safeguards and protection
3. evidence, information, and monitoring
4. capacity-building, training, and resources.

Sectoral-level interventions relate to:

1. safety and security
2. land, housing, planning and environment.
3. health and well-being
4. education
5. infrastructure and connectivity



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



6. agriculture, food security and livelihoods
7. traditional knowledge, culture, and documentation
8. access to justice and public participation.

The Strategic Area 11: Traditional knowledge, culture and documentation has the objective to protect the cultural identity and spiritual resources of communities.

3.5: Further Arts Vanuatu knowledge Vanuatu’s participation to the existing of the Pacific Regional Culture Strategy 2022 – 2032, which its mission is to foster an inclusive culture sector that is supported by national, regional and international partnerships; encompasses the daily lives of people of the Pacific region, and contributes to their holistic wellbeing; and, to the sustainable social, economic and environmental development of the region.

3.6: However, Further Arts would like to state that there’s no report, no government policy nor strategy in place to encourage the awareness of cultural knowledge in time of displacement and during disaster for children and citizens to have access. The cultural protocols are never considered during a disaster such as putting all people of a community in an evacuation center without considering the rights of privacy and ensuring that customs relationship is respected; example mother in law in a same evacuation center with her son in law.

3.7: Recommendations.

Further Arts Vanuatu is calling on the Vanuatu Government and the National Disaster Management Office.

1. To ensure the full implementation of the evacuation building plans.
2. To work with the Vanuatu Malvatumauri Council to develop a standard cultural protocols procedure (SOP) for the movement of people into the evacuation centres during a disaster to ensure the cultural protocols are respected.



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



4.Key issue 2. Lack of recognition to integration creative arts into school curriculum.

4.1 : Further Arts Vanuatu acknowledges that Vanuatu is not a party to International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights but Government have ratified the Convention on Right of Child in 1992 and in Article 30, it stated; *“In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of **his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language”**.*

4.2 :Further Arts Vanuatu commends the government through the Ministry education for its curriculum statement of 2010 for its mission to;

- to provide a well-structured curriculum that produces students who:
- have faith in God and an understanding and tolerance of other beliefs.
- are self-reliant, multilingual citizens.
- cherish Vanuatu values and respect themselves and their families, communities, and many cultures; strive to develop their potential to build and strengthen our nation.
- acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes and are critical thinkers.
- express themselves with confidence; and
- adapt to regional and global academic competition; and to achieve this we will:
- provide competent teachers with an understanding of and the ability to implement the national curriculum.
- enhance our institutional capacity and quality control to ensure improved curriculum effectiveness and efficiency; and
- provide and value relevant assessment and evaluation tools to meet national, regional, and international standards.

4.3: The Civil Society Organization acknowledges Ministry of Education and training for woods work and food technology integration in Schools, however, Further Arts Vanuatu noted that most of the Education Policy are not reviewed and updated and there is no Policy, plans or strategies in place to integrate creative arts including culture heritage, knowledge practice into the school curriculum.



: Vila, Vanuatu
:11 / [Viviane.obeds@gmail.com/](mailto:Viviane.obeds@gmail.com)
[org/](http://www.furtherarts.org) www.furtherarts.org



4.4: Recommendations.

Further Arts Vanuatu calls on the Vanuatu Government and the Ministry of Education and Training.

1. To review and include content into the school curriculum about the history of Vanuatu.
2. Emphasis how culture play an important role in uniting people of different culture during pre-colonization and pre-independence.
3. Integrate into school curriculum the importance of cultural governance within the modern age.
4. Increase the recognition and protection of owners of the traditional knowledge. (Traditional Knowledge and Expression of Culture – TK&EC).
5. Review the current policies and curriculum to capture local content in partnership with Vanuatu National Culture Council.
6. Review Representation and Membership of the Vanuatu National Cultural Council to include the Representative of the Civil Society Organization such as Further Arts Vanuatu.