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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Looking Beyond Disaster Workshop for TAFEA Youths**

*Port Vila-* The Vanuatu National Youth Council in Partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has undertaken a Looking beyond Disaster (LBD) Workshop in TAFEA Province.

The Workshop was held on the 2-4<sup>th</sup> November at Tennis Futuna community on Tanna Island.

More than 25 participants from around Tanna, Futuna, Erromango, Aniwa and Aneityum attended the workshop. Each island and community area sent two participants to the workshop.

The LBD Workshop aims to gather youths from different communities to share and showcase their learning and disaster experience. By the end of the three day workshop, young people have drafted an action plan for their community with a focus upon local preparedness. The action plans also include opportunities for upcoming skill development activities that can be carried out within their communities.

The young people attending this workshop showed leadership through their intelligence and respectful representation of their communities. These young people are community leaders today and will be into the future; therefore they are a valuable asset for their communities. The young people attending showed their dedication to positive change for disaster preparedness and their ideas of how this can occur.

In his closing remarks for the workshop, the Director General of the Ministry of Youth & Sports – William Nasak said, ***“It’s a short time to fit a lot of things, however, its two people to think about what to do for their community to help a large number of people”***.

***“It’s a hard thing to do, but, for you to start thinking about what to do for your community is a good thing. It is you that will change your community, if you don’t, then no one else will”***, Nasak continued.

The Youth participant shared their stories as well as information about community projects of which they have been involve. As a part of the experience, the youths also visited an

agriculture project site and an evacuation centre (still under construction) at the TAFEA Provincial headquarters.

***“This workshop has shed light for me to look beyond upcoming disaster. I have learnt a lot about community Disaster preparedness as well as use existing available resources and my skills to do something for my community”,*** says Japhet Amon – a youth participant from Tanna.

***“I will ensure that whatever I learnt will be shared to other youths in my community to educate them on how to make a change rather than depending on government or donor partners to make a change”,*** says Amon.

The Vanuatu National Youth Council (VNYC) acknowledges the great support from UNESCO as its funding partner, the Vanuatu Government, TAFEA Youth Council, Tennis Futuna Community and the Looking beyond Disaster participants for a successful workshop.

Another great outcome of the weeks work included the handing over of a Recreational Tool kit as part of the Psychosocial Support training from the Department of Youth & Sport (UNICEF Project) towards the Community of Tennis Futuna.

This was handed over by DG Willam Nasak to Tanna’s Psychosocial Support Officer, Mr. Charlie KitchiKitchi.