

Terms of Reference

DFA and Literacy Grant Review Consultant



Expertise	Direct Funding Arrangement (DFA) and Literacy Grant Review Specialist
Project	Vanuatu Australia Education Support Program (VAESP)
Reports to	VAESP Team Leader
Duration of assignment	Up to 40 input days
Location	Port Vila, Vanuatu
Open to	International and national consultants, with a requirement to be locally based in Vanuatu

Working relationships:

- VAESP Team Leader – primary reporting line and day-to-day oversight.
- MoET Finance & Administration Directorate (FAD) – for access to financial records, DFA arrangements, and grant data.
- Provincial Education Offices (PEOs) – to review literacy grant allocation, disbursement, and use at provincial level.
- Provincial Curriculum Improvement Officers (PCIOs) – for information on grant implementation and school support.
- School Principals – to understand school-level use of literacy grant funding and its impact.
- DFAT and the VAESP Managing Contractor (Tetra Tech International Development) – for coordination on DFA implementation, reporting, and program considerations.
- Relevant Government of Vanuatu stakeholders – as required for financial, governance, and compliance discussions.
- Governance for Growth (GfG) analytical work counterparts – to ensure alignment and collaboration where relevant.

Our Values



Program Overview

The Vanuatu Australia Education Support Program (VAESP) is a long-term investment funded by the Australian Government and implemented in partnership with the Government of Vanuatu through the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The primary goal of VAESP is to help ensure MoET achieves its goal of improving education access, quality and management, as detailed in the Vanuatu Education and Training Sector Strategy (VETSS) and operationalised through MoET's 2024-2028 Corporate Plan.

The Program supports the MoET through the utilisation of Direct Funding Arrangements (DFAs) to strengthen national systems and improve service delivery, particularly at the provincial level. One key component of this provincial level support is the Literacy Grant, intended to improve literacy outcomes at the primary and Early Childhood and Education (ECE) levels in the provinces.

Building on previous DFA-related reporting, a comprehensive review of the current education DFAs and the Literacy Grant is required to ensure fiduciary integrity, equitable distribution, and pedagogical impact at school level to improve student learning outcomes.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this consultancy are:

- Assess the efficiency of the DFA funding against their intended use and for the literacy grant assess flow from the national office to provincial offices.
- Assess the MoET's compliance with GoV and GoA policy and legislative settings in use of the DFAs.
- Evaluate to what extent provinces are utilising the literacy grant to support schools to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, identifying blockers and enablers to this process and provide recommendations for improvements to inform future programming.
- Build collaboration with analytical work currently being planned on sub-national budgeting through GfG.

Summary of Duties

The consultant will be responsible for:

A. DFA financial management review

- Review of previous DFA-related reviews and reports.
- Analyse MoET Financial Management Manuals, DFA agreements and financial reporting requirements and determine if they still align with the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act.
- Evaluate the MoET's adherence to the DFA financial clauses and the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) PFM Act.
- Compile the DFA financial reports from previous years (2023–2025) and integrate them with 2026 data.
- Ensure that DFA-funded activities (e.g., School Grants, Recovery grants) are correctly captured in the Government's Financial Management Information System (FMIS).
- Identify any "unacquitted" funds or outstanding financial queries from the DFA.
- Identify key fiduciary risks in the current arrangements and provide recommendations to mitigate these. Review current risk management assessments and make recommendations to update them.
- Verify and assess the respective roles and responsibilities of MoET, DFAT and the VAESP Managing Contractor vis-a-vis DFA implementation and identify any lessons and considerations for future programming.
- Assess whether the contribution of the DFAs to overall VAESP objectives been adequately captured, monitored and reported through the VAESP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems, and identify any lessons and considerations for the future.

Summary of Duties

- Investigate whether DFAs support policy reform/change agendas, and make recommendations for how they could better do so in the future.
- Assess whether governance, reporting and audits followed agreed terms and whether these could be improved, if at all, to manage for risk and improved education outcomes.
- Identify areas where VAESP could assist to strengthen PFM and intended outcomes.
- Identify success factors, barriers and challenges for both the MoET to use and manage the funds effectively and for DFAT and VAESP to support their effective use.
- Identify key lessons and considerations that are relevant to future programming, including the suitability of the current DFA mechanisms.

B. Literacy Grant Review

- Review the allocation and disbursement records for the Literacy Grant to all six Provincial Education Offices (PEOs) – note this will involve travel to at least two provinces.
- Identify enablers and blockers to effective usage and impact of the Literacy Grant, drawing from interviews to be conducted with MoET Finance & Administration Directorate (FAD), Provincial Education Officers (PEOs), along with School Principals and Provincial Curriculum Improvement Officers (PCIOs) who were recipients of the DFA funding and Literacy Grants.
- Review school-level spending to see how grants are used and to what extent this is in line with the strategic intent of improved student learning outcomes, ensuring collaboration with GfG analytical work as relevant.
- Provide recommendations to address any identified capability gaps or other blockers in the effective utilisation of funds to maximise impact on student learning outcomes.

Milestone Schedule

Milestone	Description of Milestone	Indicative Number of Input Days	Means of Verification/ Acceptance
Inception Report	Detailed methodology, work plan, and list of interviewees.	5	Final approved inception report Verification and acceptance by VAESP Team Leader
Draft DFA Financial Management Review Report	Findings on the effectiveness, efficiency, management arrangements, risks of the current DFAs and recommendations for improvement.	15	The DFA Report Verification and acceptance by VAESP Team Leader & DFAT
Literacy Grant Analysis	A specific report on provincial spending patterns, enablers and blockers of effective usage, and recommendations for improved disbursement arrangements for enhanced student learning outcomes.	15	Final Literacy grant report. Verification and acceptance by VAESP Team Leader & DFAT

Milestone Schedule

Final Review & Recommendations

Comprehensive summary report with actionable recommendations for future investments to improve impact on student learning, based on the DFA and literacy grant report incorporating feedback from DFAT/VAESP leadership. **5**

Verification and acceptance of the comprehensive summary report by VAESP Team Leader and DFAT.

Selection Criteria

Qualifications

- Master's degree in economics, Public Financial Management (PFM), or International Development.

Experience

- Minimum 10 years in finance and education sector reviews, specifically with Direct Budget Support or DFA modalities.
- Experience working in Vanuatu and familiarity with the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act.

Knowledge and Skills

- Relevant understanding of government finance systems.
- Proficiency in financial auditing and school-based management (SBM) grants

Personal Attributes

- High level of analytical capability to assess financial management arrangements, identify risks, and develop practical, evidence-based recommendations.
- Demonstrated integrity and sound judgment in handling sensitive financial, governance, and compliance matters.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills to engage effectively with government, provincial, and school-level stakeholders and to present findings clearly.
- Collaborative and adaptable approach with the ability to work across multiple locations, manage competing priorities, and deliver quality outputs to deadline.

Child Protection

Tetra Tech International Development is committed to protecting the rights of children. We reserve the right to conduct police checks and other screening procedures to ensure a child-safe environment.

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion

Exemplifying Tetra Tech International Development's commitment to technical excellence in gender equality, our team of dedicated GEDSI advisers work closely with our partners to ensure a context-specific and consistent approach is applied to all of our programs to improve the livelihoods of the world's most marginalised groups.

Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, Modern Slavery and Safeguarding

Child Protection

Tetra Tech has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), child abuse and exploitation, modern slavery and safeguarding related retaliation, and this zero-tolerance extends to inaction. Tetra Tech is committed to being a child safe organisation, and to promoting a culture that supports gender equality, and addresses the gendered drivers of violence against women and children. It is committed to fostering a culture where we prevent and respond decisively and appropriately to harm against people, and that all people are treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of country, program, or office where we work. This will require compliance with Tetra Tech's Safeguarding and other Codes of Conduct and our associated safeguarding policies (Child Protection and Child Safety, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) policy and procedure, and Modern Slavery. Any successful applicants will be required to undertake satisfactory referee and criminal record checks prior to being appointed to any position.

Tetra Tech does not charge money or any kind of fee at any stage of the recruitment process (this includes applications, interviews, meetings, processing, administration, service and training). Tetra Tech will never ask for your sensitive information, such as bank account or other login details, including username or password.

Tetra Tech International Development has a 40 year history in successfully delivering international development projects on behalf of donors right around the world, including Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, USAID and the UK's Department for International Development (now known as the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office). Our people work side by side with local partners to support stability, economic growth and good governance, positively changing people's lives.