



Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Annual Report 2021

26th VCCI Annual Report

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Acronyms

BCP	Business Continuity Plan
BASPs	Business Advisory Services Providers
BLP	Business Link Pacific Programme
BSS	Business Support Services
CCIV Act	Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Vanuatu Act CAP 236
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EDF11	European Development Fund 11
ESP	Employment Stimulus Package
GFG	Governance for Growth
HLLM	High Level Leaders Meeting
IDF	Industry Development Fund
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LMC	Luganville Municipal Council
MALFFB	Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Fisheries Forestry and Biosecurity
MFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOCC	Ministry of Climate Change
MSMEs	Micro Small Medium Enterprises
MTTICNVB	Ministry of Tourism Trade Industry Commerce Cooperatives and Ni Vanuatu Business
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NSDP	National Sustainable Development Plan
NTDC	National Trade Development Committee
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PVMC	Port Vila Municipal Council also Port Vila City Council
SCBF	Special COVID-19 Banking Facility
SBG	Small Business Grant
SBO	Safe Business Operations
SMEs	Small Medium Enterprises
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TLAC	Tripartite Labour Advisory Council
UNDP CBI	United Nations Development Programme Connecting Business Initiative
UN WfPA	United Nations Women for Peace Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAMU	Vanuatu Aid for Trade Management Unit
VBRC	Vanuatu Business Resilience Council
VFSC	Vanuatu Financial Services Commission
VCCI	Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VEO	Vanuatu Employers Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHS	Work Health Safety
WSS	Wage Subsidy Scheme

President's Address

Dear Members,

As President, my mission is to continue the work that had been undertaken by my predecessors and to pay particular attention to the performance of the Chamber in relation to supporting the private sector and working in collaboration with Government.

The VCCI has worked hard to improve its service delivery over the past year and through the difficult times of the COVID-19 crisis. During the second year of border closures and government priorities situation, we organized and facilitated two strategic High Level Leaders Meetings with the Honorable Ministers of Vanuatu in 2021. The objective of these meetings is to discuss key important priorities and agree on how to work together to address the economic challenges and support businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, the State of Emergency and border closures. It has definitely not been business as usual this year for any of us.

Our members of VCCI are registered business license holders across Vanuatu. In 2021, VCCI benefited from the annual Vanuatu Government grant and continued to deliver more services to support businesses than ever before. In order to effectively deliver these services, donors have stepped in and supported our expanded operations and projects – in particular the Australian Governance for Growth program. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Australian Government and all of our donors, without their assistance VCCI would not be able to meet the needs of the business community.

The attached report gives you an overview of the work by the VCCI team over the past 12 months.

While we are all aware that 2021 was full of unprecedented challenges, I am proud to report that VCCI has stood up to the challenges and delivered exceptional support to its members and our registered business community. In addition, there has been significant work on partnerships with key stakeholders, including and in particular the Government of Vanuatu.

At the 2022 Annual General Meeting we will proceed to elect 8 new Council members representing Financial and Commercial Services, Large Businesses, Small Businesses, Tourism, Manufacturing, Construction, and Land Transport. We hope that the Council members who do join the VCCI Council will continue to assist the business community to the best of their ability and help navigate the challenges we will inevitably face in 2022 moving forward towards borders reopening and recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity of serving as President of the VCCI in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Antoine Boudier, President

Dated: March 2022

General Managers Overview

I would first like to acknowledge the hardships faced by many of you in 2021. Vanuatu's business community has proved that it is a resilient one. And we hope that offering our services we have made the journey through the COVID-19 crisis easier for you, where possible.

The mission of VCCI under its new strategic plan 2022-2026 is to support the private sector in making a unique and significant contribution to the achievement of the National Sustainable Development Plan's goals and the Vanuatu Recovery Strategy 2020-2023 objectives, by delivering services that produce value for VCCI's membership, Government and other valued stakeholders.

VCCI remains committed to supporting the development of policies, strategies, legislation, regulations, treaties, agreements and initiatives that enable businesses to grow in ways that are sustainable, have positive impacts on the economy, society and the environment.

I take this opportunity to thank all VCCI Council members, members of the VCCI sub-committees, in particular the Vanuatu Business Resilience Council, and our business members for their continued feedback, engagement, effort, support, and commitment to strengthen our work.

I would also like to thank all VCCI staff and Business Development Adviser for their inputs, continuous hard work, strong support, dedication and commitment to deliver the activities and services throughout 2021.

Lastly, I sincerely thank the Vanuatu Government for their continuous support in providing the annual institutional body grant, Ministry of Tourism, Trade, Industry, Commerce, Cooperatives and Ni Vanuatu Business, development partners, and our clients for their long-standing support and contribution to strengthening the VCCI.

In conclusion, I wish to highlight the positive steps we have taken to create the new normal of open Government Business dialogue, of collaboration and working relationships, with the participation of Honourable Ministers and Director Generals in the two High Level Leaders Meetings in 2021.

Best regards,

Astrid Boulekone
General Manager

Revision of VCCI's Strategic Plan in 2021

Mid 2021 VCCI went through a collaborative review process to refocus its strategic plan and direction. From this, VCCI has condensed its key focus areas, with a prioritization on advocacy and partnerships. It is VCCI's mission to support policies, strategies, legislation, regulations, trade agreements and initiatives that enable businesses to grow in ways that are sustainable and positive for the economy, society and the environment.

When engaging with Government and others, it is impossible for VCCI to represent the diverse views, ideas and interests of every Vanuatu businessperson. What it can do, and will do, is to facilitate national conversations and provide awareness back to Government on issues that are affecting businesses. VCCI will continue to advocate and lobby for improvements to the ease and cost of doing business in Vanuatu on behalf of its business membership

VCCI's Mission is to:

- To make a unique and significant contribution to the achievement of the National Sustainable Development Plan Goals, by delivering services that produce value for VCCI's membership, Government and other stakeholders; and
- To support policies, strategies, legislation, regulations, agreements and initiatives that enable businesses to grow in ways that are sustainable, having positive impacts on the economy, society and the environment.

During the strategic planning process of 2021, a new vision statement for the organization has been created, based on the Economic Goal 1 of *Vanuatu 2030 – The People's Plan*:

'Supporting Vanuatu's economy via a stable and prosperous business community, encouraging trade, investment and providing sustainable business opportunities for all members throughout Vanuatu.'

Accomplishments in 2021

VCCI's flexibility, adaptability and ability to pivot quickly to meet the needs of our members allowed us to continue to reach and support businesses across all sectors in 2021. With a focus on resilience and sustainability of our COVID affected businesses, supporting Government initiatives, while working on preparing the private sector for COVID via safe business operations shaped our work plan.

Engaging with Government on policy issues on behalf of our membership

High Level Leaders and Technical Dialogue with Government Officials

VCCI organized and facilitated two high level meetings in 2021. These meetings brought together the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Finance, Minister for Trade and Minister for Health and other distinguished members of Government to discuss issues affecting the private sector, and ways forward.

This collaboration resulted in the planning of the second stimulus package, specific tariff changes to import duties, and the recognition of the need to plan appropriately for an eventual border opening. In conjunction with these meetings, VCCI worked specifically with key departments to find solutions to ease of doing business for our membership.

Positive results from Key Department Technical dialogues

- Department of Customs and Inland Revenue – led to amendments to import duties, excise taxes, and export duties in Import Duties Act Amendment Order no.10 of 2022.
- Department of Health – led to revision of Essential Services list and Standard Operating Procedures for essential services to continue to operate at COVID-19 alert levels from 1 to 3
- Shefa Health – solving of logistics planning and transport for the Vaccination Roll out Program in Port Vila and Efate
- Department of Tourism – delivery of safe business operations training to non-tourism businesses across 4 provinces
- Provincial Councils - review of legality of newly introduced bylaws affecting businesses
- Department of Water Resources – revision of bore water commercial users fees
- Department of Public Works - to action maintenance of drainage system in CBD areas
- Department of Energy – concerns and issues affecting businesses raised via the Vanuatu Sustainable Energy Investment Forum
- MOU developed between Vanuatu Post, Vanuatu Terminal Services, Air Vanuatu, Ministry of Trade (Department of Industry) for a reduced tariff on small parcels (1-5kg) of Vanuatu made branded products.
- Vanuatu Business Resilience Council initiated a draft MOU with the NDMO to create a partnership between private sector and humanitarian response support to the Government.

Input into important Act and Policy reviews

Throughout the year VCCI represented the private sector in consultations with Government on important Act and Policy reviews such as the review of Employment Act CAP 160, Labour (Work Permit) Act, the Changes of the Reserved Occupations List, Business License Act, Remote Workers Visa policy, Economic Development Zone policy development, National Ecommerce Strategy, New Caledonia Vanuatu Bilateral Trade Agreement meetings of DoET, and the Bill for the Small Business Development Act.

VCCI also participated in the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council to represent employers, Stimulus Steering Committee of Department of Finance, Industry Development Fund Board, Cooperatives Development Fund Board, VNSO National Population and Households Census Steering Committee, Labour Mobility Working Group coalition, Skills and Labour Industry Working Group coalition, Cooperation on COVID-19 Safe Business Operations in Tourism and other sectors, and sat on the National Trade Development Committee, the MSME Financial Working Group under the Reserve Bank, and Trade Facilitation Steering Committee.

VCCI ensured that the voice of representing the business community was raised through its representatives on issues and concerns for the best interest of businesses during the COVID-19 border restrictions.

Member Consultations and Engagement Forums

Government and Private Sector Tourism Event held on 17 May at Holiday Inn – this event provided updates and information based on key questions from the tourism operators, focusing on travel corridor planning, future of Air Vanuatu, and national economic recovery planning by MFEM. Over 150 business owner/operators from the Tourism Sector were in attendance.

Bisinis Toktok forums held on 21 and 22 June in Santo – these events provided business owners and operators information on the Tamtam Bubble (VTO), Health and Vaccination roll out program briefing (Department of Public Health), and support services available to businesses via VCCI.

E-banking events were organized and facilitated by VBRC in Port Vila, Luganville, and Lenakel over the third quarter of 2021, designed to bring together all 4 commercial banks to provide information to the public via a open day events, where bank staff could promote their services and the public could learn more about e-banking and its benefits during COVID times. The events were targeting business owners and operators not using online banking services.

Santo/Sanma Business Subcommittee meetings – a sub-committee of VCCI was formed in July 2021 to input into the capital’s Council and to provide business information dissemination in Santo.

Launches and Publications

Employers Guidebook

The VCCI Employers Guidebook was launched by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs at the Labour Day Celebrations organized by Department of Labour along with TLAC members on 30 April 2021.

The Guidebook was developed to assist Employers navigate Employment Law in Vanuatu. It is available in all 4 languages (English, Bislama, French and Chinese), is also available online and in hard copy. Accompanying the guidebook is an online contract builder tool, which provides step by step guidance on creating employment contracts for businesses and their employees. This can be found on the VCCI website - <https://vcci.vu/resources/employment-contract-builder/>

Vanuatu Private Sector Economic Update October 2021

In October 2021 VCCI launched the **Vanuatu Private Sector Economic Update**. The purpose of this report was to provide an update ‘one year on’ to the September 2020 Vanuatu Economic Outlook Report. The initial report was written to assist both the public and private sector understand how businesses are faring during the ongoing economic crisis caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. <https://vcci.vu/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Vanuatu-Private-Sector-Economic-Update.pdf>

Employment Vanuatu

In December 2021 Department of Labour (DOL), in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), VCCI, and the Vanuatu Council of Trades Union (VCTU) launched a new web platform for job seekers and employers.

The new platform, EmploymentVanuatu.gov.vu, is specifically designed for 3 segments of the working population: employers, job seekers and self-employed workers, contractors or service providers. A fundamental outcome of this platform is to have a system that provides the DOL with updated labour market data.

Services and Business Support Initiatives

Second Stimulus Package application support

VCCI was engaged in the Second Stimulus roll out via an agreement with MFEM, providing application support to over 2000 businesses across 4 provinces. A team of 4 support officers worked full-time from 23 July to 30 September 2021, assisting business license holders to apply for the Small Business Grant and Wage Subsidy Scheme in Efate, Tanna, Santo, Malekula and Anytieu. This support would not have been possible without a small grant from the New Zealand High Commission.

Workshops and Trainings

VCCI was engaged by the International Labour Organization to train 40 Government and Private Sector trainers across the Pacific region – Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Palau - to be able to deliver Business Continuity Planning training, developed by the Vanuatu Business Resilience Council in 2019. This training has been recognized regionally as the leading business resilience training toolkit available. It has become crucial to business survival over the COVID effected period of 2020 to now.

In addition in collaboration with the Department of Tourism and Department of Public Health, VBRC via VCCI has provided accredited Safe Business Operations training in Efate, Santo, Tanna, and Malekula to the formal business sector to 1,800 businesses' Safety Officers plus videos.

Business and Life coaching

The service is provided in two components, individual business and life coaching sessions and workshops. The purpose of the life coaching is to encourage and counsel clients on a range of personal and professional challenges particularly around stress and management of the changing work/life environment. The business coaching is to support the establishment of clear and appropriate business goals and supporting the development towards these.

Watch video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-0ACQUiDu0>

Business and Life Coaching on a one-to-one basis was provided to 68 clients during 2021 in Efate and Santo. Via workshops Business and Life Coaching was accessed by over 300 business participants in Efate and Santo.

One on One Business Mentoring

This service provided free business support over a 6-month period to selected small to medium sized businesses in Port Vila. A mentor (Vanuatu business person) was provided to clients, for a six-month period, providing up to weekly one on one support to look at and strengthen all parts of the client's business – from financial management to marketing to HR management.

These inputs have resulted in improved business performance, and raised the confidence of the clients. The service also included access to technical workshops and external learning opportunities.

During 2021, 28 business owner/operators from in a variety of industry sectors including construction, retail, restaurants and handicraft vendors all graduated from this program with enhanced business skills.

Business Planning support

Over an 8-week intensive group workshop schedule, businesses were taken through all the facets of business to strengthen their knowledge and approaches to ultimately develop a 5 year business plan, with support from coaches.

This pilot approach was deemed extremely successful, with all 10 participants reporting great satisfaction and improved skills development, as well a 5-year goals which will help guide their business decision making. This pilot will be expanded in 2022 to reach clients in Santo and Tanna.

Workshops and Skills Development opportunities

In 2021, over 2,000 individuals attended VCCI's business skills and soft skills development workshops, across 4 provinces. The workshop program was developed to support business skills development, business resilience and personal development support during difficult times.

The workshops were based on a range of skill sets and personal development topics, all to assist business men and women, including: Financial management – understanding profit and loss, cash flow, and product

pricing: Marketing and sales - including product innovation, market identification and using social media to grow your business: Soft skills including dealing with change, personal organization and time management.

Export Pathway Support

VCCI is directly supporting local businesses to access new export markets in the new post COVID-19 economy.

Working with the country's leading specialist in HACCP and organics certification Mr. Dion Palu we have been able to support potential exporters of food and beverage products, offering the necessary guidance to achieve HACCP audit ready and organic certification.

As well as supporting businesses VCCI has been able to extend its support via Dion's expertise to the Vanuatu Bureau of Standards and Department of Bio-Security where he has been assisting staff to strengthen their operations and procedures (SOPs).

12 businesses were assisted and supported for the HACCP certification and organic certification in 2021, with 4 businesses attaining the HACCP certification during this time.

Communications and information sharing

Communications with our business members remains an important focus of VCCI. Relevant and up to date information is provided to businesses via the VCCI Business News to 4,000 email subscribers at least once a week, via VCCI Facebook page with over 7,000 followers, via our website, radio talk back shows, and articles in the newspaper.

Office opening in Santo

Due to multiple requests from our membership a VCCI office has been opened in Luganville on 15 October 2021. One of our business support services officers is there 2 weeks out of 4, while businesses being supported also by the newly formed Santo business sub-committee.

COVID readiness, response and recovery

In 2021, VCCI and its coalition partners (Department of Tourism, APTC, World Vision and VITE) developed a WHO approved training toolkit for the private sector in safe business operations.

VCCI rolled out Safe Business Operations training to over 1,800 businesses in Efate, Santo, Tanna, and Malekula (as mentioned previously).

VCCI also developed a website to support its COVID-19 Ready activities, producing downloadable resources for businesses, 5 videos in Bislama, industry sector Standard Operating Procedure templates in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Public Health Department, and legal advice on employment law and COVID. <https://vcci.vu/covid-ready/>

VCCI also worked in partnership with Shefa Health, and its vaccination roll out program, providing logistics support, staffing support and transport over the last quarter of 2021, leading to thousands of community members outside of Port Vila Municipality receiving their first dose of vaccine.

VCCI also produced 12 videos pushed via social media on the importance of getting vaccinated, while also hosting bi-weekly talk shows on FM 107 to promote COVID preparedness, SBO training and getting vaccinated, alongside representatives from the Ministry of Health.

Donor Funded Projects in 2021

Funding for National Manager position, Vanuatu Business Resilience Council

The Vanuatu Business Resilience Council, hosted by the VCCI, provides a coordination mechanism for local private sector actors to engage with government and key stakeholders on resilience building, response and recovery initiatives. The VBRC provides a platform for businesses to both manage impacts to themselves, and support government, civil society and development partners to build resilience and respond to disasters and emergency events in a variety of ways.

The National Manager role was supported in 2021 via donor funding from USAID Climate Ready regional program, run out of Fiji, and the Connecting Business initiative, UNDP. Additional funding from CBI, under the management of the National Manager, was utilized to produce business climate ready knowledge management materials, and a research paper on uses for blockchain technology in the Vanuatu context.

The VBRC represents the **private sector** on the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB) as an observer, representing local business and industry.

UNWomen in Business Support Program

The Phoenix Women in Business Project is a COVID-19 response project funded by the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund, with technical support from UN Women and is only one of 5 such grants awarded in the Pacific and the first time Vanuatu has received such funding. This project focuses on providing the participating women business owners with the tools to endure the current period of economic downturn, then supported to grow their business the right way - The core focus of this is to accelerate economic recovery by providing targeted support to women small business owners who in turn will lead the economic recovery of their communities.

It also includes a women in leadership focus, with capacity building in this area delivered by DFAT's Balance of Power regional program.

VBRC engaged VCCI to implement the project (not having any staff themselves). VCCI has provided specialist support to these women lead businesses over a one-year period. This has included a mix of life coaching sessions, one on one business mentoring, business skills coaching and leadership skills development. The approach has been to ensure workshops are delivered by industry experts and specialists engaged to support where required to ensure that the program is tailored to the specific needs of these women and their businesses. The relationship built between women and their coaches, trainers and mentors has proven especially important to building confidence and implementing the learning in real life situations.

After 7 months of intensive support the women were supported to develop detailed individual business plans. The women then presented these plans to a selection panel, along with a grant request of up to 1MIL vatu, as per the program design. The panel was made up of X, X and X, and grant amounts issued were based on a scoring matrix including their commitment to the program, attendance records, attitude and outputs via workshops.

Grants were issued in November 2021. Early indicators demonstrate that as a result all businesses are now registered for VAT and also paying VNPF for their increasing staff numbers.

Oxfam Unblocked Cash Program

The compounding impacts of COVID-19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold in Vanuatu as well as ash fall issues in Tanna resulted in a significant reduction in income and livelihoods across Vanuatu, particularly amongst households with pre-existing vulnerabilities. In order to address the needs of the people Oxfam in Vanuatu

has deployed a large-scale cash transfer response across Santo, Tanna and Shefa islands. Oxfam has implemented their proven approach for humanitarian response/emergency recovery here in Vanuatu – an Unblocked Cash response. VBRC and VCCI have partnered with Oxfam to provide selection services, training, and support to the shops, stores, transport operators (road and sea) and market vendors that form the backbone of the program’s vendor network.

Rather than receiving funds in the form of cash or food supplies, the recipients in this program are being provided with a way to pay for goods and services via a “tap and pay” card that allows recipients to pay for any goods that stores across the network are selling. The stores are equipped with a smart phone app that processes the payment directly to the shop’s bank account. This response is unique as it allows the beneficiaries the choice in what to purchase that best suits their recovery needs. So local stores continue to work supplying goods and services to the households. With this system, no cash money exchanges hands and all transactions, including what is being purchased and where, is fully traceable, and is available via an online dashboard monitored by Oxfam and partners.

VCCI has registered, trained, and supported over 370 vendors in the 3 provinces to join this program. These vendors include pharmacies, market vendors, hardware stores, buses and boats, small community shops, utility providers and more. In the Shefa response, the team have also set up a special free bus service to assist the beneficiaries living with disabilities, allowing them access to go and do their own shopping and freedom to choose what they need.

Industry Development Fund (Aelan Bisnis) Support Project

In early 2021 VCCI was informed that their NPP titled *‘Start Smart’ Agriculture Sector Expansion Support project –Business Services in Santo and Tanna* had been approved.

The purpose of the initial NPP was to support investments being made into the agri-business sector via EDF funding through MALFB and MTTICNVB. The initial NPP’s activities were designed to complement and strengthen the planned investments by MALFB and MTTICNVB into increased agricultural production at provincial level for domestic and export markets.

VCCI proposed the expansion of its existing business support services to two provincial level locations for the first instance, selecting Santo and Tanna as largest market operators.

In May 2021, a meeting was called by in-country team leader for the EDF11 program Mr Nik Soni. During this meeting a request was made for VCCI to support via its NPP the successful agri-business and manufacturing/value addition businesses applying for the Industry Development Fund, to go live mid-year. The fund was to be offered for businesses in both Efate and Santo. VCCI agreed and awaited the process to begin under the direction of the Department of Industry.

In June, VCCI was asked to nominate a representative to the IDF Board. By the end of the application round and review process performed by the IDF selection panel in late September, a total of only 9 applications were approved in the first round for Efate and 11 for Santo. VCCI offered its services to assist in increasing this number so that the EDF11 grant allocation of 150MIL could be utilized in 2021 and not lost back to the EU, and more locally owned and run businesses could benefit from the grant scheme.

VCCI reviewed the shortlisted applications and met with each. The businesses were recommended to work with a VCCI mentor to improve their investment proposal and re-apply. This support was provided during the month of September (Efate) and November (Santo). Upon reapplication, a total of 35 locally owned businesses were successful in their applications across both islands.

The remaining applicants, whose knowledge and general business skills were in need of more basic development were offered a specifically designed 6-week support program of capacity building and skills development in a range of business management areas. This course was completed in December 2021 with all participants completing a 5 year business plan with their mentors.

In 2022, VCCI will focus on supporting the 35 beneficiaries of the IDF grant scheme across Efate and Santo islands, leading to a higher success rate of businesses being able to confidently expand and prosper due to grant funding.

Business Link Pacific (BLP) Program - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Government

This regional program has been running since 2018, with over 390 businesses benefiting from Business Link Pacific (BLP) services - access to practical and affordable business advisory services from the BLP Vanuatu Business Service Network.

In 2021, 154 SMEs were assisted with a subsidy to access business advisory service providers. A COVID response support initiative launched in 2021 received 80 BLP Adaptation Grant applications, with clients assisted with submissions by VCCI's BLP Program Manager. 68 Adaptation Grant applications have gone through Peer review and are awaiting validation by BLP.

Institutional strengthening of the Chamber

VCCI started the review of the CCIV Act under funding of EIF of VAMU, Ministry of Trade, in 2021. After research and analysis including survey consultation with VCCI Council and businesses, a proposed draft amendments CCIV Act is currently under consultation process with government officials and provinces through face to face and online meetings depending on COVID-19 conditions under the Public Health Emergency Declaration. After the submission of the draft legal instructions document as COM paper to Council of Ministers, the national consultations or validation workshop of CCIV Act Review based on bill with amendments drafted by Office of AG is to be held by June 2022. This is the final step before submission of the bill for CCIV Act amendments to Parliament by November 2022.

Staff

With the starting up and closing off of several donor funded projects, VCCI welcomed and farewelled many people in 2021.

The VCCI team grew by 1 full-time staff member joining the Business Support Services team, funded by a donor. Our new Receptionist joined us on in April 2021, new Administration Officer joined us in October 2021 and new Gardener/Handyman joined us in June 2021, replacing existing staff members who had left, under our Government grant.

Council

In April 2021, VCCI held its annual AGM, with 3 new members joining the Council. These were Mrs. Galia Hubbard representing Tourism, Mr. Sheng Lee representing Financial and Commercial Services and Mrs. Millie Ogden representing Utilities.

4 representatives were re-elected in the VCCI Council, namely Mr. Antoine Boudier representing Large Businesses, Mr. Loic Bernier representing Financial and Commercial Services, Mrs. Julia Johnstone representing Air Transport, and Mr. Mark Pardoe representing Shipping.

VCCI's focus for 2022

VCCI's new Strategic Plan provides a clear roadmap for focus areas for the Chamber for 2022. VCCI will continue our response to counter the adverse effects of COVID-19 and border closures on our business members, while focusing on the nation's economic recovery, border reopening, and activities aligned with the National Sustainable Development Plan's Goals and the Vanuatu Recovery Strategy.

VCCI plans to continue its constructive and productive engagement with the Vanuatu Government, and to deepen its relationship with supportive donors, while supporting and representing our members.

The VCCI remains focused on completing the review of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Vanuatu Act CAP 236, as well as implementing various projects and activities including the IDF Aelan Bisinis Support Project to deliver services to businesses in the provinces in Efate, Santo, Tanna and Malekula to complement and strengthen the planned investments by MALFB and MTTICNVB into agriculture, industry and export to increase agricultural production at provincial level for domestic and export markets.

2022 priority deliverables:

- Well informed, constructive engagement with Government on behalf of our membership, including on the anticipated Private Sector Development Policy
- Accessible help for businesses across three key provinces – in person, by email, on the phone; in English, French and Bislama
- A national business conference in 2022
- Private Sector Economic report 2022
- Lobbying and advocacy in relation to the prioritization of infrastructure development
- Completion of the CCIV Act review and amendments

The VCCI is continuing to implement its transformational strategy under the new VCCI's **Strategic Plan 2022-2026** that aligns with NSDP goals including new vision, mission and values, new structure, clear outcome objectives, strategies to achieve objectives, and an evaluation matrix.

The new VCCI's **Business Plan 2022-2024** has specific deliverables/outputs split between core budget (Government appropriation) and donor funded projects, roles and responsibilities, and budget forecasts.

Financials for 2021

Core funding from Government under Section 7 of the CCIV Act, and additional funds

In 2021, the VCCI grant of VT31,918,961 was received, as approved per Appropriation (2021) Act no. 9 of 2020.

A first NPP payment release of VT5,000,000 was provided for the Aelan Bisnis Support Project under EDF11.

Donor funded projects and initiatives

- **USAID Climate Ready:** Funding received in 2021 is for part salary of VBRC National Manager
- **CBI Initiative UNDP:** Funding received in 2021 is for part salary of VBRC National Manager, and related activities
- **UN Women Peace Keeping Fund:** Funding received in 2021 is for Phoenix Project activities
- **Oxfam:** Funding received in 2021 is for Cash Transfer Project TC Harold and Covid 19 - Partner Working agreement with VBRC
- **Business Link Pacific (BLP):** Funding received in 2021 is for the salary of the Business Services Manager and related activities
- **ILO:** Funding received in 2021 is for supporting the Delivery of BCP Training for Vanuatu BDS Providers
- **Australian Aid through DFAT and GFG (Governance For Growth) program:** Funding received in 2021 is for topping up support to VCCI Business Services Centre projects
- **New Zealand High Commission:** Funding received in 2021 is for supporting the 2nd Stimulus Package Roll out
- **Tourism Marketing Development Fund:** Funding received in 2021 is for supporting COVID-19 SBO Training and Awareness

Audited financial statements

You will find attached the audited financial statements of VCCI for the year ending 31 December 2021.