



Ministry of Education & Training

Government of Vanuatu

Official Speech:
Honourable Alfred Carlot
Minister of Education and Training

**at the Opening of Staff Training for the Computer Lab and Internet Community Center (CLICC) Program,
in Port Vila, Vanuatu, 23 August 2015**

Honourable Ambassadors, Directors-General, Government Officials, Distinguished Guests, Teachers, Educational Administrators, Technical Experts, Ladies, Gentlemen and Our Children:

Welcome to the historic first Opening of Training for the CLICC Program!

As your Minister responsible for Education and Training, it is my great pleasure to open this training session, and to speak to you today on the important topic of the Computer Lab and Internet Community Center (or “CLICC”) program.

Today I wish to take a few minutes to share our accomplishments and goals in Information and Communications Technologies (or “ICTs”) in education, and describe how this vital CLICC program is leading the way to a brighter future for our children.

Change is coming. It is coming fast. It is coming in the form of new technologies that challenge us to keep up with the rest of the world. It is coming in the form of disasters that strike our schools and harm our children's education. It is coming in the form of new waves of knowledge, values, and information that are very valuable but that challenge us in holding on to our traditional island culture.

This CLICC program addresses all these complex issues, and offers us the best chance to become even stronger as we face these challenges.

What you will learn here in this training will bring the latest technologies to our children. What you learn here will give you and your communities new ICT tools to analyze and prepare for disaster threats that threaten your island. What you learn here will give you new ICT tools and techniques to preserve, document and celebrate our precious island values, languages and cultures for future generations.

The CLICC program brings a computer lab and Internet access to 15 schools across all the major islands of Vanuatu. These will be windows on the world for our children, who will be able to learn amazing new things in a whole new manner.

But each CLICC can and will be much more than that. Remember – a window works both ways! It is very important that you to use your CLICCs to develop new local educational and cultural content that you can proudly show to the world. Thus the world will be able to see you, your school-children and their accomplishments, your community, and your proud Vanuatu.

It is vital that you involve your communities in the operation of the CLICCs. Each CLICC must be open to the community in the afternoons and evenings, to allow small businessmen, village members, pastors, women and anyone to use the Internet and its wonders.

The schools and communities must work together to “own” the CLICCs and make them sustainable for the long run. The teachers and administrators will need to work diligently to maintain the equipment in our difficult environment. It is key that the Internet connection to the outside world is “up” 99 percent of the time, and provides high speed and high quality of service.

The CLICCs are the leading edge of a bigger ICT program that is transforming Vanuatu. We already have 94 percent household penetration of mobile phones. By January 1, 2018, thanks to our Telecom Regulator, government leadership and the major ICT operators, we will have 98 percent penetration of broadband Internet access. This important Universal Access Program will place Vanuatu in the lead among Pacific Island nations. Our new high level of access will affect education, educational program design, educational donors, and every other sector in society.

CLICCs are also part of a bigger program being run by TRR (our Telecom Regulator) with us, to provide Tablets for Schools in selected locations, and to develop private Internet Cafes in rural areas.

The National ICT Policy states that education is the top priority sector for ICT development. We call upon all our MoET staff, donor partners, contractors, and school administrators to recognize the importance of ICTs, and to incorporate ICTs into their plans and programs.

Under the National ICT Policy, ICTs will provide new jobs and career paths for our graduating youth, and give them a new and exciting outlet for their boundless creativity.

A big part of our job as educators in this new age will be to give our children the tools to let them to do research and projects so they can educate themselves, with our guidance. This new work will require careful attention and support from our MoET senior staff, curriculum developers, educational donors, Provincial Education Officers, Zone Curriculum Advisors, and of course Principals, Headmasters and teachers.

You teachers are absolutely vital to this important project. Through the training you receive during this session, you will become “Champions of ICT Learning.” You will have a major influence on your schools, your communities and your school children. I predict that your students will remember you – and thank you -- for the rest of their lives.

I thank you now, for your successful efforts in applying for this important program, and for being here today.

In closing, I want to thank the many persons and organizations that have made this CLICC program possible. First and foremost is the Australian Government and its hard-working Government for Growth program, which provided much of the funding for the CLICC program. We also want to thank the World Bank, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator. We are happy to have the support of Ahapi IT Solutions, which is organizing this training.

I now declare the Training Session for the CLICC Program
officially open – let the future begin!

Tank yu tumas!

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