



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Vanuatu Public Service Commission

2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Women in Leadership Program is an initiative of the Ministry of Health in partnership with the Public Service Commission through the Vanuatu Institute of Public Administration and Management.

The Women in Leadership Program is supported by



in partnership with





MINISTER OF HEALTH FOREWORD

Hon. Gaetan Pikioune

We acknowledge the Government of Australia for their support through the Vanuatu–Australia Health Partnership for this Women in Leadership Program and we are grateful for the partnership with the Public Service Commission and other partners, particular thanks to the University of the South Pacific for the formal recognition and graduation of participants with the Certificate of Professional Development in Public Service Workplace Leadership.

The graduation is the culmination of a four-month leadership journey for 16 women in senior and middle management in the Ministry of Health. We are very proud of initiating and driving this first ever Women in Leadership Program and we have seen visible improvements in workplace leadership and performance.

The program participants are more confident, assertive, effectively communicating, producing timely reports, greater sense of purpose and effective team leaders. This Women in Leadership Program graduation cements a vision and pathway to the Ministry of Health to strengthen leadership and accountability of the Vanuatu health sector.

INTRODUCTION



CHAIR OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Mr. Martin Mahe



The Public Service Commission (PSC), as the Government of Vanuatu employer, is very pleased to witness the graduation of the Women in Leadership Program Cohort 1, a flagship program implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Health. PSC acknowledges the support of the Australian Government, and we thank the Vanuatu-Australia Health Partnership and other partners for the organisational capacity support to Vanuatu Institute of Public Administration and Management (VIPAM).

The PSC mission is to provide outstanding human resource management and development services to the public service workforce and we are pleased that the 16 participants will graduate with a Certificate in Professional Development in Public Service Workplace Leadership by the University of the South Pacific.

Congratulations to the 16 graduants! We trust that your leadership journey has already led to transformation and improvements to the positions you hold, the teams that you lead and most importantly, to the overall quality and standard of health care and services delivery and public services to our people in Vanuatu.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

The role of the Technical Working Group (TWG) was to monitor and evaluate the design and structure of the program, the expected changes and outcomes are achieved; and to reflect and input into the implementation of the program. The TWG met to assess each workshop session and will be reviewing the program for future planning of other cohorts.

Membership consisted of: Judith Melsul – Acting DG, Ministry of Health (Chair); Pala Luen – Manager VIPAM (Co-Chair); Shirley Tokon – Partnership Director, VAHP; Dorothy Ericson – Acting Director of Corporate Service, MoH; Hannah Tamata – Gender Coordinator, IPM/MOH; Wilson Toa – Country Manager, Balance of Power; Viviane Obed – General Manager, Further Arts; Sherol George – Inclusion Manager, Vanuatu Skills Partnership; Lekita Kalorib – GET Project Manager, Care International; Patricia Fred – Program Manager Health, DFAT; Belinda Karae-Lewa – Program Manager Health, DFAT; Jodie Kapalu – Program Manager Gender, DFAT; Berlinrose Nimbtik – GEDSI Coordinator, VAHP (Secretariat); Emele Duituturaga, GEDSI Support, VAHP (Secretariat).



FACILITATOR

Jinny Ruben is a qualified Occupational Therapist and Life Coach who is passionate about journeying with people to empower them to reach their goals and full potential. Jinny is a Vanuatu citizen, married to Mr Ruben from the island of Tongariki, mother of four children and has lived in Vanuatu for the past 18 years.

Jinny was contracted as the Facilitator of the Women in Leadership Program which was run over a period of four months. Jinny has seen significant increase in competence, confidence, and compassion in the participants.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



ORIENTATION



THREE WORKSHOPS



THREE INDIVIDUAL
COACHING SESSIONS



TWO-DAY RETREAT

DR ANNETTE GARAE

PAEDIATRICIAN



Meet Dr. Annette Garae, from Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. Recently, she earned her Masters of Medicine with a specialisation in child health from the University of Papua New Guinea. Currently based in the Paediatric Department at Vila Central Hospital, Annette finds comfort in family time, outdoor activities, cooking, and her love for netball.

Participation in the Women in Leadership Program has enriched Annette's journey by reminding her of the significance of self-value and her cherished core principles.

Empowered by the program, Annette mastered the art of open communication, even during challenging discussions, an essential trait in professional and personal spheres. Improved listening skills, driven by a desire to understand rather than immediately respond, have become her hallmark.

For Annette, leadership transcends titles, embodying an everyday act of service to oneself and others. Rooted in values like integrity, courage, and compassion, leadership, to her, is an integral part of life. Envisioning leadership as a circular concept, empowering women extends the benefits to homes and nations, aligning with the famous adage: "If you educate a woman, you educate a nation."



BETTY MASSING

MEDICAL IMAGING TECHNOLOGIST



Meet Betty Massing, from the island of Malekula. Betty is a Medical Imaging Technologist.

Through the Women in Leadership Program, she strengthened her confidence, public speaking, and decision-making skills while gaining valuable insights into various leadership styles. The program empowered Betty to enhance communication, delegation, and empowerment within her team, fostering growth and collaboration.

Betty believes in transformational leadership and serves as a role model at home and in the workplace, inspiring others to be their best.



With her dedication to empowering others and promoting fairness, Betty continues to drive positive change as the Assistant to the Director of Curative and Hospital Services since January 2023.

CHARITY DAVID

SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Introducing Charity David, from the island of Paama.

With two brothers and a sister, Charity's journey to leadership has been both enriching and inspiring. Presently, she holds the position of Senior Human Resource Development Officer at the Ministry of Health for the past one year and seven months, where she has showcased her skills and expertise.

Participating in the Women in Leadership Program has profoundly transformed Charity's perspective of herself as an individual and a leader, both professionally and personally.

The program equipped her with tools, techniques, and skills that amplified essential leadership principles, shaping her into a more self-aware and empathetic leader. She cherishes the opportunity to better understand her own leadership journey and to empathise with other women and men.



For Charity, women in leadership embody individuals who value teamwork, uphold good virtues, and fearlessly accept failure as an opportunity for growth.

DR CRYSTAL GARAE TARINAVANUE

GENERAL PATHOLOGIST



Meet Dr. Crystal Garae Tarinavanue from the islands of Ambae and Malekula. Her journey as a dedicated healthcare provider began in 2009 when she started her career at Vila Central Hospital. With a specialisation in pathology since 2017, she currently holds the position of General Pathologist. Beyond her professional achievements, Crystal is happily married and a proud mother of a 13-year-old son.

Participating in the Women in Leadership Program has been a transformative experience for Crystal. It served as a therapeutic oasis within her demanding life as a doctor, emphasising the significance of self-awareness and self-care. Recognising that nurturing her own well-being is pivotal to effective leadership, she replenishes her "reservoir of strength and positivity." Her aspiration is for her women colleagues to undergo this rejuvenating process, promoting holistic well-being.

Crystal's interpretation of women's leadership is about fostering a partnership of positivity and support with male counterparts, impacting homes, workplaces, and communities. She believes this influence starts in the home and extends through life's stages, emphasising the importance of managing people appropriately.



DR ERROLYN TUNGUNABOE

CONSULTANT IN OBSTETRICS & GYNAECOLOGY



Meet Dr. Errolyn Tungunaboe, from the island of Ambae. With an impressive educational journey, she holds a Masters of Medicine in Obstetrics & Gynaecology, earned after completing a series of qualifications including a Bachelor of Medicine & Surgery, various postgraduate certificates, and a diploma in Obstetrics & Gynaecology. She has served as a dedicated Consultant in Obstetrics & Gynaecology at Vila Central Hospital for eight years and has held the role of Acting Medical Superintendent.

Participation in the Women in Leadership Program marked a turning point for Errolyn. It illuminated unconventional ways for women to thrive in male-dominated societies, reshaping leadership perspectives. The program enabled self-discovery, enhancing relationships, decision-making, and aligning with core values.

For Errolyn, leadership is about service, driving effective solutions, dismantling gender barriers, and fostering inclusive work environments. She envisions this ethos breaking stereotypes and propelling Vanuatu toward structural and cultural transformation, paving the way for a more equitable and inspiring future.



DR JENNY STEPHENS

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Introducing Dr. Jenny Stephens, from the island of Lamenu, situated north of Epi. With a fulfilling personal life as a devoted wife and mother to two grown children. As a seasoned dentist with over two decades of clinical expertise, her journey took an extraordinary turn when she assumed the role of Consultant Dental Public, pioneering the establishment of the Integrated Oral Health Unit within the Department of Public Health after completing her postgraduate studies.

Jenny's professional journey culminated in her elevation to the role of Acting Director of Public Health from late 2021 to 2022, during the challenging period of Covid-19. She then was formally appointed as the Director of Public Health in October 2022. Beyond her impressive career trajectory, Jenny remains a firm advocate for personal growth and empowerment.

Her leadership emphasises delegation as a means to not only alleviate her own workload but also to foster the development of her team's skills and potential.

Jenny firmly believes in the empowerment of women leaders and their invaluable contributions to societal progress. She asserts that women's leadership has a multiplier effect, boosting productivity, collaboration, and equity in societies. Even as she assumes higher leadership roles, Jenny remains grounded in her roots and champions the cause of women's empowerment in all spheres.



DR JENNY TANGIS

DENTAL REGISTRAR

Meet Dr. Jenny Tangis, from the island of Santo. Married and a proud mother of three children, Jenny pursued a Bachelor of Dental Science and a Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry, reflecting her commitment to excellence in her field. With an impressive 16 years of service to the Ministry of Health, Jenny currently holds the position of Dental Registrar.



The Women in Leadership Program has been instrumental in shaping her leadership journey, empowering her to recognise her values and envision realistic goals for her team. Jenny now inspires and motivates her colleagues to achieve their aspirations while effectively handling conflicts and chronic issues at the workplace through enhanced communication skills.

Beyond her professional endeavours, the program has also equipped Jenny to find innovative approaches to address challenges both at home and work. Embracing the caring attitude inherent in women leaders, she is passionate about involving women in leadership roles and empowering them to make impactful decisions. For Jenny, leadership starts at home, as she believes women possess natural leadership qualities.

MELISSA BINIHI

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION OFFICER



Introducing Melissa Binihi, from the island of Pentecost. She has a Bachelor of Public Health and has worked six years in the Ministry of Health. Melissa is a passionate Community Mobilisation Officer in the Health Promotion Unit.

As a devoted mother to a beautiful one-year-old daughter, Melissa's journey in the Women in Leadership Program has been transformative.

The program has not only helped her identify her strengths and weaknesses but has also instilled in her the belief that being a woman leader goes beyond just holding a position. It is about understanding one's true self.

For Melissa, being a woman leader entails setting an example, embodying values, integrity, respect, and self-worth. Compassion and courage are qualities she cherishes, knowing they contribute to creating a better Vanuatu. By nurturing these characteristics, Melissa envisions a transformative impact within her society.



MERIAM BEN

PRINCIPAL HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

Meet Meriam Ben, from the island of Emae. With a Bachelor in Management & Public Administration and Economics from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, Meriam embarked on a remarkable career journey with the Ministry of Health in 2010, starting as a Junior Health Planner and later assuming the role of Principal Human Resources Officer in 2017.



Participating in the Women in Leadership Program has had a profound and positive impact on Meriam. The program served as a transformative experience, guiding her towards becoming a better version of herself. It illuminated the right path for her and helped her rectify past mistakes. While acknowledging there is still more to learn, Meriam is confident that the program's lessons will greatly benefit both her personal and professional life.

For Meriam, women's leadership encompasses the power of unity and encouragement, where women uplift and support one another rather than engaging in backstabbing or competition. She believes in being a role model for both her family and subordinates, emphasising the importance of self-care and inspiring her team to achieve their goals.



NELLIE MURU WOULOSEJE

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UNIT MANAGER



Introducing Nellie Muru Wouloseje, from the island of Malekula. For five years, Nellie has been the Manager for the Environmental Health Unit in the Public Health Department, constantly learning and growing in her role. A mother of two, Nellie embraces the challenges of leadership with determination and grace.



Participating in the Women in Leadership Program has been a transformative experience for Nellie. It has equipped her with diverse strategies to tackle situations both at work and home, empowering her to lead with understanding and empathy. Learning from powerful women leaders in her cohort, Nellie realised the power of shared experiences, understanding that telling our stories can inspire and support others facing similar challenges.

For Nellie, women's leadership is about being an agent of change and setting an example for others to follow. She firmly believes that by initiating positive change within us, we can inspire those around us to create better workplaces and homes.

PAULINE LISHIE

NURSE IN CHARGE MEDICAL



Meet Pauline Lishie, from the island of Futuna. With a commendable 15 years of service to the Ministry of Health, Pauline has been the Nurse in Charge Medical for two years at Vila Central Hospital.

The Women in Leadership Program has been a transformative experience for Pauline, empowering her with valuable knowledge and insights on effective leadership. Embracing the notion that leadership is a continuous journey, she approaches each day with resilience and a commitment to personal growth, further improving her competence as a leader.

For Pauline, women's leadership plays a pivotal role in advocating for gender balance in society, particularly in patriarchal settings where women are often excluded from decision-making processes.

The program has inspired Pauline to use her voice as a catalyst for positive change, fostering inclusivity and empowering women at all levels, including culturally.



PRUDENCE RYMILL

NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES COORDINATOR

Introducing Prudence Rymill, from the island of Ambae. As the Coordinator for Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Ministry of Health, she has served with unwavering commitment for nearly three years while also balancing the responsibilities of being a devoted mother to her son.

Participating in the Women in Leadership Program had a profound impact on Prudence's life and work. It equipped her with essential skills such as improved public speaking, enhanced confidence, and effective listening to colleagues and family members. The program also empowered her to handle conflicts in the workplace with tact and compassion. Above all, it reminded her to value and care for herself better, recognising the significance of self-worth and self-care in leadership.



For Prudence, women's leadership embodies the power to make a difference in communities, workplaces, and families. She believes that women have the ability to fearlessly express their thoughts and ideas for the betterment of society. Her journey showcases the transformative potential of the Women in Leadership Program, inspiring her to lead with authenticity and compassion, and empowering her to speak up and contribute positively to her community.

RACHEL TAKOAR

HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGER

Introducing Rachel Takoar, from the island of Paama. With a recent accomplishment of earning a Masters in Computer and Information Sciences, Rachel has served as the Health Information Systems Manager at the Ministry of Health for over five years.



As a devoted mother of four children, two boys, and two girls, Rachel's leadership journey has been characterised by continuous self-improvement and a commitment to positive change. The Women in Leadership Program played a pivotal role in her transformation, enabling her to reflect and strengthen her leadership role. The program instilled in her a fresh perspective on exceptional leadership, especially as a woman.

For Rachel, women's leadership means being a positive influence on other women, empowering them to recognise their potential and become outstanding leaders in society. She firmly believes that women leaders can foster gender-balanced leadership across all levels, showcasing their innate managerial skills by expertly managing their homes, families, and communities. As women continue to assume leadership roles, they contribute to better management at all levels, both at home and on a broader societal scale.



REBECCA IAKEN

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OFFICER



Introducing Rebecca Iaken, from the island of Tanna. A resilient single mother to two daughters and a son. Her role as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, alongside her temporary position as Principal Health Planner, highlights her dedication to healthcare. She joined the Ministry of Health in 2019.

Rebecca's participation in the Women in Leadership Program has been transformative. Collaborating with formidable women leaders within the Ministry of Health, the program has encouraged her to reflect on her core values. This journey prompted her to prioritise self-care, recognising its crucial role in nurturing her ability to care for both family and colleagues.

For Rebecca, women's leadership signifies a profound transformation within the realm of leadership itself. Her experience underscores the importance of personal growth and resilience in driving positive change. Through her dedication to both her family and her professional commitments, Rebecca Iaken exemplifies the essence of leadership through transformation and empowerment.



RINI HARRIET SAM

PRINCIPAL NURSING OFFICER



Meet Rini Harriet Sam, from the island of Emae. Her educational journey started at the Vanuatu College of Nursing Education, where she pursued a Diploma of Nursing over three years. Her determination and thirst for knowledge led her to acquire a Bachelor of Nursing and, more recently in 2019, a Masters in Health Services Management. She ascended to the position of Principal Nursing Officer at the Ministry of Health in November 2020.

Rini's participation in the Women in Leadership Program has been transformative. The program united her with women colleagues at the Ministry of Health, fostering understanding and camaraderie among them. Rini emphasises the importance of recognising individual strengths within the group and fostering mutual respect. The program has empowered her to be receptive to others' experiences, sharing their own stories with openness.

For Rini, effective leadership encompasses envisioning a clear path and leading a diverse team toward shared objectives. She draws parallels between leadership and captaining a ship, requiring qualities like courage, determination, and passion to guide her team. Her approach involves maintaining momentum, acknowledging incremental successes, and ultimately aiming for a positive impact on Vanuatu society.



DR SEREANA NATUMAN

DIRECTOR OF CURATIVE AND HOSPITAL SERVICES



Meet Dr. Sereana Natuman, a leader with a passion for medicine and a heart for making a difference. Originally from the island of Tanna, and the Lau group in Fiji, Sereana has a strong educational background, including a Masters of Medicine in Internal Medicine, a Postgraduate Diploma in Internal Medicine, and a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery.

Sereana has held various senior roles, including Head of Department of Internal Medicine and is now the Director of Curative and Hospital Services. Her dedication to her profession is matched by her commitment to her supportive husband and three daughters.

The program has provided her with valuable insights into approaching her work and colleagues in a more impactful way. It has also emphasised the importance of self-care, recognising that to make a positive impact, she must prioritise caring for herself as well.



For Sereana, women's leadership means leading with the heart, bringing passion and dedication to their work to create a positive impact in their workplaces. She believes women leaders possess a holistic perspective, capable of handling multiple issues simultaneously.

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