

NAVIGATING SUCCESSFUL POLICY REFORM

# Securing Reserved Seats for Women in Vanuatu's Municipal Councils

*Allan Mua Illingworth and Elizabeth Faerua*



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Case Study No. 2 | May 2023

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# Series Introduction

This paper is part of the 'Navigating Successful Policy Reform' series undertaken by Coalitions for Change and the Institute for Human Security and Social Change at La Trobe University. It is one of three case studies<sup>1</sup> exploring developmental policy reforms in Vanuatu, Kenya and Indonesia that demonstrate politically smart and learning-oriented ways of working to achieve change in challenging political contexts. In particular, the cases investigate whether those reform stories bear similarities to the development entrepreneurship model that has been highly successful within the Philippines.

The development entrepreneurship model emerged from experiences of various Philippine economic policy reforms dating back to the early 1990s, including in telecommunications, civil aviation, sea transport, tobacco and alcohol tax, land governance and other areas (Fabella and Faustino, 2011). Around 2010, some, including the Governance Advisor at the Australian embassy, wondered if the model was applicable to other types of development challenges. Out of those discussions, two developments emerged. One was a publication of [Room for Maneuver: Social Sector Policy Reform in the Philippines](#) (Fabella et al., 2014). One of the volume's lead editors was Adrian Leftwich, a of the founder of the [Developmental Leadership Program](#), a research initiative that explores how leadership, power and political processes drive or block processes of social change.

The second was the creation of the Coalitions for Change Program (2011-2024), a partnership between the Australian Government and The Asia Foundation in the Philippines. The Asia Foundation uses the development entrepreneurship model to implement the program, identifying twelve principles focused around three strategic questions to increase the likelihood that development interventions make a difference. The table below summarises the model:<sup>2</sup>

## Strategic question 1: Which reform will improve outcomes?

To answer this, the model suggests looking for reforms with these three criteria:

<b>(1) impact</b>	the likelihood the reform will change the incentives and behaviour of organisations and individuals that will lead to better outcomes for people and society
<b>(2) sustainability</b>	the likelihood the reform will continue beyond the time-bound intervention or without additional donor support
<b>(3) political feasibility</b>	the likelihood the reform will be introduced given existing political realities

<sup>1</sup> The three cases are: introduction of single-use plastics ban in Kenya; securing reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils; and passing of the Disability Law in Indonesia.

<sup>2</sup> <https://developmententrepreneurship.org/about/>.



**Strategic question 2: How will the reform be identified and introduced?**

*To answer this, the model suggests using the five principles of entrepreneurial logic:*

<b>(4) just start</b>	begin with who you are, what you have, and who you know
<b>(5) make small bets to learn by doing</b>	test and act to see what might work, adjust based on those tests, then eventually make larger bets
<b>(6) expect and exploit surprises</b>	the ability and courage to recognise and act on unexpected opportunities
<b>(7) build coalitions and networks</b>	the ability and willingness to identify individuals and organisations who can help
<b>(8) influence the future with action</b>	a mindset that the future cannot be predicted but can be influenced through action

**Strategic question 3: Who will do it?**

*To answer this, the model suggests collaborating with leaders who exhibit these four behaviours:*

<b>(9) grit</b>	the willingness to persevere with limited resources
<b>(10) confidence</b>	the willingness and courage to tackle large problems
<b>(11) humility</b>	the willingness to listen to others, to be challenged, to admit mistakes, and to let others take credit
<b>(12) autonomy</b>	the strong desire to be self-directed, take initiative, and change the status quo

For Coalitions for Change, the outcome of using the model has been positive. As of July 2023, Coalitions for Change and Philippine leaders have helped successfully introduce 94 policy reforms. The reforms cover a wide range of areas including electoral reform, gender and disability inclusion, disaster risk reduction, education, mobility, Internet broadband and others (Sidel and Faustino, 2019).

Development entrepreneurship has built a significant following in international development, as well as in policy reform in the Philippines (Booth and Faustino, 2014 and Green, 2015). An online training course on *Development Entrepreneurship* has run since 2021, attended primarily but not only by Filipinos, with the goal of exposing developmentally-minded reformers to ideas and stories of how change can be achieved. Yet there has been an open question about the extent

to which this model of developmental change applies outside of the Philippines or not. Does the development entrepreneurship model work elsewhere? The answers to this question are pertinent for the Australian Government's aid program – and other development partners – who are interested in supporting locally-led reforms.

Through a partnership between the Institute for Human Security and Social Change and Coalitions for Change, these case studies explore instances of developmental policy reform in settings outside of the Philippines, detailing the reform experience and reflecting on the relevance of the development entrepreneurship model. The cases were identified through an initial literature scan to longlist examples of successful developmental policy reform and key informant interviews with international development experts who have backgrounds in supporting locally-led, adaptive reforms that 'think and work politically.' From this longlist, the cases were interrogated further through literature review and a small number of initial interviews to determine whether they appeared to be a good fit with the development entrepreneurship model. Ultimately, four reform stories were selected for case studies, with three proceeding. The three case studies are: securing reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils, banning single-use plastic bags in Kenya and passing of the Disability Law in Indonesia.

The three cases reveal a number of shared features across contexts that provide important learning about how developmental policy reform can be achieved. They demonstrate the potential relevance of the development entrepreneurship model outside of the Philippines alone and the similar ways in which reform leaders in multiple contexts navigate their environments. While in each case study different development entrepreneurship principles emerge as more or less relevant, in all of them there are resonances, suggesting that the model indeed has potential outside of the Philippines context. Notably, all of the shortlisted cases of reform occurred in democratic settings, raising questions about the applicability of the development entrepreneurship model in other political contexts. This is yet to be explored.

This case study was developed through review of relevant academic and grey literatures, as well as interviews with key stakeholders centrally involved in the reform securing reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal parliaments. In particular, the personal account of Dorosday Kenneth-Watson was central to unpacking the reform story and strategies used to achieve change. The accounts of reform that are captured here thus tell the stories from the point of view of those directly involved in reforms. These are not disinterested voices – but they are critical to understanding the detailed process and *ways of working* that enabled reforms to be achieved. Revealing these ways of working is the primary aim of the case studies in this series and opens up the possibility for greater learning across contexts about how change happens, as well as about the roles external actors can play (or not) in supporting such reforms.

**Dr. Lisa Denney**  
**Deputy Director and Senior Research Fellow**  
**Institute for Human Security and Social Change**

# In Memoriam: Dorosday Kenneth Watson



As this case study was being finalised for publication in December 2023, The Institute for Human Security and Social Change and Coalitions for Change were deeply saddened by the passing of Dorosday Kenneth Watson, an extraordinary leader whose leadership in advancing gender reform in Vanuatu is documented in this case study.

The authors of this report were privileged to have worked alongside Dorosday in preparing this case study and to learn from her impressive leadership. As we mourn the loss of this inspirational figure, we honour Dorosday Kenneth Watson's lasting legacy. Our thoughts are with her family, friends, and the community she profoundly impacted. We hope that this case study documents and pays tribute to some aspects of Dorosday's incredible leadership, often against the odds, and rooted in her strong spirituality. Her passing is a great loss for Vanuatu; and her life a great inspiration for developmental reformers everywhere.



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# Acronyms

<b>AusAID</b>	Australian Aid Program
<b>CEDAW</b>	United Nations Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CLGF</b>	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
<b>MPs</b>	Members of Parliament
<b>PLP</b>	Pacific Leadership Program
<b>RRRT</b>	Regional Rights Resource Team
<b>SPC</b>	The Pacific Community
<b>TSM</b>	Temporary Special Measures
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>USP</b>	University of the South Pacific
<b>VANGO</b>	Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>VNCW</b>	Vanuatu National Council of Women
<b>VRDTCA</b>	Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association
<b>VWC</b>	Vanuatu Women's Council (VWC)
<b>WISDM</b>	Women in Shared Decision Making

# Summary

*In Vanuatu, women have long been underrepresented in political decision-making due to cultural traditions and structural barriers.*

This means that women's issues and interests are neglected in political decision-making fora – from municipal to national levels. Previous efforts to redress this situation had been attempted by civil society and women's organisations, who had submitted an unsuccessful proposal in 2006 for reserved seats for women at all levels of government (national, provincial and municipal).

Building on these failed attempts, a small coalition within government pursued a new route to reform to increase women's participation in politics. The reform idea was the implementation of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) to reserve seats for women candidates for a limited time period at the municipal level (the lowest level of political representation in Vanuatu). This more pragmatic approach of time-bound participation at a level of politics where there was some appetite for change was considered a feasible way of providing women with a platform to contribute to and shape policies and demonstrate the value of women's political representation more widely. Because politics is perceived as a

'man's game,' the political risks are bigger at provincial and national levels, so it was more feasible to start at the municipal level, where it was also felt that women could bring to bear their knowledge and experience of local issues. Moreover, the reform was guided as a technical reform to municipal councils, rather than as an explicit gender equity reform, in order to prevent pushback from Vanuatu's entirely male Parliament who would vote on the reform.

In 2013, Vanuatu's Parliament passed an amendment to the Municipalities Act, putting in place TSMs supporting women's representation within the municipal councils of Vanuatu. This legislation required that 30% of seats be set aside for women candidates contesting municipal elections in Vanuatu for the next four electoral terms (16 years). Despite being implemented only at municipal levels, the TSMs were a first for Vanuatu (and rare in the Pacific more broadly), where women's representation and participation in both national and local government had been largely non-existent.

Leading the charge was Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, the Director of Women's Affairs in Vanuatu at the time. Other key actors who drove the reform included the former Prime Minister, Moana Carcasses Kalosil and Member of Parliament Ralph Regenvanu, who was Minister for Lands at the time. This dedicated team of individuals were passionate about advancing gender equality and possessed the necessary skills to advocate for change. Through their persistent efforts, the reform team succeeded in pushing for successful legislative action.

As a result of the amendment, the number of women elected to the three municipal councils in Vanuatu has increased from 1 woman (3.7%) in 2011 to 11 women (25.6%) in 2021. The shift in women's participation has opened up debate about implementing reserved seats for women at provincial and national levels to create more equitable representation of women. The positive changes resulting from the policy reform were significant. Women's representation in municipal councils saw a remarkable increase, amplifying their voices in crucial decision-making processes. This shift not only challenged traditional gender roles but also fostered a more inclusive and diverse political landscape.

Moreover, the reform became a catalyst for broader societal discussions and actions. At the time of writing, a revised Electoral Act is being submitted to Parliament for discussion and endorsement. Within the Act, reserved seats for women at municipal levels are incorporated as a permanent change, with the removal of this as a temporary measure.

While it is not clear whether the Act will pass, securing and implementing the TSMs for the past ten-years has put women's political representation firmly on the radar in Vanuatu and demonstrated that change is possible.

In achieving this reform, Dorosday Kenneth-Watson and the coalitions she built, demonstrated a number of the principles of Development Entrepreneurship. Most notably, the TSM reform experience underscores the importance of politically feasible reforms that are possible in the prevailing political context, the use of coalitions and networks to push forward change, and a preference for 'just starting' and 'making small bets' by trialling and testing approaches and 'expecting and embracing opportunities' as they arise. The TSM case also involved a leader with the attributes of grit, humility and the autonomy and confidence to act. Securing reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils thus demonstrates the potential applicability of the development entrepreneurship model of policy change outside of the Philippines context.

# The Development Challenge

*Vanuatu is a republic with a population of around 307,000 people. It has a 52-member parliament, and coalition governments have become the norm in recent years.*

There are municipal councils to govern the three urban centres covering 25.67% of Vanuatu's population (Port Vila, Luganville and Lenakel), while provincial rural communities are served by six provincial councils (CLGF, 2016). Since independence in 1980, women have struggled to gain representation at any level of Vanuatu's political system, despite the fact that women have held leadership positions outside of formal politics. Indeed, it is indicative of the status quo that only six women have ever been elected at a national level as members of parliament (Baker, 2019). Prior to 2010, women members of parliament constituted just 1.4% of the total; provincial councillors constituted 0.3%; and municipal councillors constituted 4.3% (Ilo-Noka and Dalesa-Saraken 2010). During the 2007-2011 period, only one woman was elected as a municipal councillor alongside 27 male councillors.

The situation at the provincial level was worse, as 99 male councillors were elected with no women representatives (Commonwealth Local Government Forum, 2018).

While low levels of political representation of women is a common challenge across the Pacific, Vanuatu has had especially low levels. In 2006, while the Pacific averaged a rate of 4.5% of women in national parliament, Vanuatu had zero (Clark, 2014). As Barbara and Haley (2014) note: 'Improving women's leadership and political participation has proved to be a key developmental challenge for Pacific Islands Countries, particularly the Melanesian countries.' Without women's political representation, neglect of women's needs and interests in government decision-making and budgeting is sustained and contributes to women's needs and interests being marginalised.



The problem of low representation of women in elected office is a complex one, related to Vanuatu's political landscape and cultural norms, making it particularly challenging to address. Money plays a central role in Vanuatu's electoral politics, making it difficult for women to participate as there are often sponsors or allowances for male candidates that support 'donations' to potential voters (Cox et al., 2007: 24-25). One interviewee noted that "most elected officials have access to allocated council funds which can be used to 'thank' supporters .... you would be surprised that an amount as small as a thousand vatu [US \$8] can swing a vote" (Interview with Anthea Toka, 5 May 2023). As such, women face barriers in attaining candidacy and election due to their lack of access to such political patronage or personal wealth. Indeed, one commentator from the Vanuatu National Council for Women used the example of a 100-metre race and noted "that in terms of the election, the female candidates are at the starting line while the male candidates of the recent legislature are already at the 70-meter mark with only 30 meters to go" (cited in Pacific Women in Politics, 2020).

Vanuatu's cultural context, characterized by Christian beliefs and cultural traditions (*kastom*) also present challenges to gender equity reforms. Overcoming these attitudinal barriers and fostering a change in societal norms and perceptions regarding gender equity is a fundamental challenge. This is further complicated in Vanuatu by the fact that many gender reform initiatives,

including the TSMs, are heavily supported by international or regional organisations and as such, are often perceived as "international agenda" projects, leading to backlash and opposition (Baker, 2019). Other attempts at addressing women's rights to land have experienced similar setbacks. As noted by Naupa (2017) "Vanuatu's traditional leaders have not responded positively in the past to a rights-based approach to gender and land." This complicated mix of Vanuatu's electoral politics and customary and religious culture mean that increasing women's political representation was a particularly difficult problem to address.

# The Protagonists

*The key individuals who led the TSM reform were mainly senior public servants and politicians within the government of Vanuatu who were able to mobilize and drive change quickly.*

## Dorosday Kenneth Watson

Dorosday Kenneth Watson played a central role in driving the TSM reform. She had served previously in the Vanuatu Ministry of Agriculture before being appointed as Director of the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) in 2009. Although she acknowledges that prior to taking on the role, she had no knowledge of gender issues, having been a technocrat in agriculture, she credits spiritual guidance in giving her a vision for promoting gender equality and empowering women in politics:

“*When I was appointed to the role, it was a political move (appointment) and I was given less than a week to move (to DWA) and I didn't have any briefing or time to understand the department's role. I prayed and asked God what I was supposed to do. (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth, 4 May 2023).*

Kenneth-Watson's motivation stemmed from a dream she then had, where a woman holding an infant at the Malapoa Kawenu sand (a coastal area in Port Vila) was calling out for something to transform their lives.

Kenneth-Watson points to this dream as inspiring her to focus on women's political leadership. She also considered other pressing gender issues, such as violence against women and women's economic empowerment were being addressed through other channels, but that political participation was neglected (Denney and McLaren 2016: 6). She challenged herself to understand what she had to do to achieve her vision for change. Kenneth-Watson was critical in shaping the strategic direction of the reform, convening the initial coalition ('the TSM taskforce'), mobilising political support, and coordinating the activities of the reform team.

## Ralph Regenvanu

Ralph Regenvanu was a key supporter and instrumental in the TSM reform as a Member of Parliament, a political operator, and member of the lobbying group for the reform. At the time of the reform, his political party, Graon and Jastis (Land and Justice) Party, was in coalition government and held the balance of power. He was the

Minister of Lands and had successfully led the land reform process. He supported Kenneth-Watson and Prime Minister Moana Carcasses in the reform process and advised the taskforce to have all the technical documents ready, so that when a window of opportunity presented itself, he would use it to table the bill and be passed by Parliament. Ralph is also the son of prominent retired politician Sethy Regenvanu and Kenneth-Watson's cousin.

### **Moana Carcasses Kalosil**

Moana Carcasses Kalosil was Prime Minister at the time of the TSM reform and represented the Vanuatu Green Party. He was a keen supporter for women's increased political participation and helped negotiate within Cabinet to secure political support for the submission and endorsement of the revisions to the Municipality Act.

### **Howard Van Trease**

Howard Van Trease was a technical expert from the University of the South Pacific and brought specialised knowledge and skills related to laws of Vanuatu, policy development and implementation to the TSM taskforce. He and his team did research on all the applicable laws, provided data analysis, conducted research and offered expertise in designing effective policies to address the gender inequality challenge.

### **Martin James Tete**

Martin James Tete was the former Principal Electoral Officer at the National Electoral Office for many years before becoming the chairman of the Vanuatu Electoral Office. He has been part of the many developments and changes to the many election legislations and has been an integral part of Vanuatu's electoral process since independence. His role was to ensure that the reform was technically feasible and administratively possible under the electoral Laws of Vanuatu.

### **Angeline Glenda Dovo**

Angeline Glenda Dovo was the legal drafter brought onboard from the State Law Office to draft the changes to the Municipal Act. Her role was to ensure the reforms were technically sound and constitutional. She drew on other technical experts as needed. Along the process, she also played a challenge function, testing whether the proposed reforms were constitutional and in alignment with other laws of Vanuatu.

These players together constituted the TSM Committee (also known as the TSM Taskforce) and provided the technical oversight ensuring that the technical papers were completed to help drive the TSM reform.

Forming and maintaining a diverse and committed coalition can be challenging as you are bringing together individuals and organisations with different perspectives, interests, and priorities, requiring effective communication, negotiation, and alignment of goals. Building support for the reform involved navigating a range of players and

as a result, Kenneth-Watson drew together a number of internal coalitions and working groups (formal and informal). These are summarised below:

The Women in Shared Decision-Making (WISDM) Committee was the initial group working with Kenneth-Watson who would help advocate, raise awareness and discussions in public forums about improving women's political representation. This Committee was key in getting the profile of women's political participation on the agenda in Vanuatu.

In addition, a lobbying group comprised of key government officials was instrumental in negotiating within the government and within their own political parties, given the coalition government, and networks to gain the support of their allies to approve the reform. Most of these lobbying group were Members of Parliament and political advisers within the political parties that were members of the coalition government at the time. They were vital allies for successful legislative reform.

# The Reform Experience

## Learning from Previous Reform attempts

There had been previous efforts to improve women's political participation and representation in Vanuatu. In 2003, an amendment to the People's Representation Act was proposed by the Electoral Commission to enable representation of women in Parliament by reserving 30% of seats (Lynch, 2007). This recommendation was not acted upon, at least in part due to political instability (Lynch, 2007).

In 2006, the Department of Women's Affairs, together with strong support from civil society organisations such as VNCW, Vanuatu Women's Council (VWC), Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association (VRDTCA) and the Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (VANGO) prepared a policy paper proposing the adoption of TSMs at national, provincial and municipal levels and submitted this to the Council of Ministers. This proposal was rejected and the corresponding feedback from the government was that it would require significant revision to the constitution and therefore the proposal

should be revised and resubmitted in a more feasible format that aligns with the laws of Vanuatu. Due to a series of Cabinet reshuffles and changes in government, compounded with leadership changes in the Department of Women, no consistent follow-up action was taken on revising or resubmitting the proposal. It is acknowledged that while this proposal failed, it provided foundational work on which Kenneth-Watson drew in designing the new TSM proposal.

## Having Vision and 'Just Start'

When Kenneth-Watson took the role of Director of the Department of Women's Affairs in 2009, she did not have any background on the DWA or its key focus. The main question she asked herself when taking the role was "what is it that I wanted to deliver... this is the role of a leader which is having a plan and a vision to deliver" (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023). She recalls within the first month of taking the role, she was visited by Sethy Regenvanu, a former senior politician and Kenneth-Watson's uncle, who came



to congratulate her appointment but then challenged her on the same question: 'what is your role and your agenda for DWA?'. Sethy Regenvanu had been Minister of Lands and was involved in establishing the Department of Women's Affairs in 1980 and so had a vested interest in seeing the institution deliver results. Kenneth-Watson credits the resulting conversation as insightful, as Sethy Regenvanu helped her look across the DWA objectives and work areas and they identified women's participation in political leadership as one of the areas facing longstanding major challenges, having benefited from civil society advocacy and the most ripe for change. A few months later, Sethy Regenvanu helped convene a meeting with Angeline Dovo from the State Law Office and Kalkot Mataskelekel (former President of Vanuatu). At that meeting it was confirmed that the constitution supported the intention of providing special privileges for women in politics and therefore helped identify for Dorosday possible options for action. This key meeting solidified Kenneth-Watson's determination to pursue the reform, knowing that there was no need to amend the constitution.

Kenneth-Watson also credits her spirituality and religion as critical in driving her self-belief in being the right person appointed for the role and also in shaping her vision for change. She recalls prior to taking the role, she went for her usual morning walk and was guided spiritually to take a different longer walking path that ended at the Department of Women's Affairs, which she felt was a positive sign reaffirming that she was meant to lead in this role.

These initial conversations and support platforms helped clarify the vision for Kenneth-Watson which she now reflects as "the greatest starting point for the reform is understanding what you want to achieve" (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023).

### **Identifying the Path to Reform**

While the DWA was involved in the 2006 efforts to get reserved seats for women, the majority of this work had been driven by civil society and supportive individuals who had advocated and raised awareness on this issue. Women's organisations such as VNCW, VWC and VRDTCA had been active in Vanuatu since the country's ratification of the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and had also attended the Beijing Platform for Action discussions, providing updates on the country's progress, challenges, and actions taken to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination against women. Alongside government officials, women's civil society groups had also prepared reports which highlighted steps to be taken to align national legislation, policies, and practices to achieve gender equality. These interventions were supported by regional and international actors such as Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Pacific Community (SPC). UNDP, in particular, had been actively supporting TSM reform through technical support and advocacy workshops (Clark and Rodrigues, 2009). As such civil society had been the most active player in these early stages in

campaigning and pushing for measures such as TSM for women at all levels, in particular continuing efforts on a reform targeting the People's Representation Act.

By 2009, however, women's civil society groups in Vanuatu were fragmented, due to legal issues within VNCW and other challenges between civil society organisations (Denney and McLaren 2016: 6). As such, Kenneth-Watson felt women's civil society was not in a conducive position to lead the TSM reform. In addition, she felt the reform should be led and driven by government "civil society have done their part, I felt it was the government's turn to address this issue and make something happen" (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023). Moreover, Kenneth-Watson realised that "ultimately the decision on the reform would be made by male parliamentarians, not by women's organisations, and so she needed a reform coalition ... that could influence them" (Denney and McLaren 2016: 6).

Kenneth-Watson also used international support to the DWA to build a case for the best way of pursuing increased women's political participation, with TSMs emerging as the best modality. In 2010, a report on the Gender Profile of Political Parties and Elections in Vanuatu by the Department of Women's Affairs (commissioned by AusAID) highlighted the barriers and lack of options for women's participation in political parties and recommended TSMs as a potential strategy for addressing the poor levels of female political participation. Coincidentally, the AusAID-funded Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) was at that time exploring possible areas of support to expand its

Vanuatu program. A representative from the Suva office, Lionel Gibson, held a number of discussions with Kenneth-Watson and was credited as an important sounding board for ideas and options and played the role of an 'intermediary' to facilitate access to funding support and connections with other agencies which could support Kenneth-Watson (Interview with Nelly Willy, 5 May 2023).

Thereafter, PLP contributed funding for RRRT to run workshops under its Legislative Lobbying Project which provided information to communities about their constitution and laws, and within this they focused on the possibility of reserved seats for women under the Peoples Representation Act. Kenneth-Watson notes that these workshops and meetings focused on legislative lobbying and strengthening leadership enabled the initial conversations on issues of increasing women's political representation and exploring TSMs as a means to allocate reserved seats for women in elected roles (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023). Furthermore, with PLP support Kenneth-Watson was able to engage and lobby with Shefa Provincial council to adopt a resolution to increase women's representation on the Council. Shefa province is where Kenneth-Watson's office was located and was geographically easily accessible for her to advocate within. In late 2010, Shefa Provincial council endorsed this and allocated reserved seats for women. This outcome was a good example of starting small, where there were good odds of success, and it also demonstrated to Kenneth-Watson the growing appetite for addressing the lack of women's political representation.

In 2011, Ralph Regenvanu was appointed as Minister for Justice and Social Affairs. Regenvanu has long been known for his advocacy on legislating for increased participation for women in politics (Rosseau, 2008). For example, in 2010, when he founded the Graon and Jastis Party, he ensured that dedicated representation for women was part of the party policy. Regenvanu is also Kenneth-Watson's cousin. On taking on his new role, he pledged support to reform the Customary Lands Tribunal system, women's land-owning rights and governance. Kenneth-Watson felt that the time was now right, as there was a window to squeeze through the reform on women's political participation because she could leverage Regenvanu's broader reform policies from a justice angle and also leverage his political capital, as a close family connection to push the TSMs through. These familial connections are critical in small island states in helping mobilise action and navigate change through customary norms.

### **Building a Coalition**

The first step was to identify and link up with a group of key individuals who could help advocate for, raise awareness of and put on the agenda in public forums the issue of improving women's political representation. This group would also help Kenneth-Watson brainstorm on possible avenues and opportunities to push TSMs through. One key person Kenneth-Watson began working with was Howard Van Trease, an academic from the University of the South Pacific (USP) who she had collaborated with in the past on research and writing on legal and land issues in Vanuatu. As such,

she recalls seeking him out specifically as she felt she needed advice and guidance on how to technically approach this issue. Van Trease met with Kenneth-Watson regularly to help identify and map out technical options to implement TSMs within the constitution.

Other key people that she connected with included key representative such as the Senior Policy Analyst in the Ministry of the Prime Minister and chair of the Gender Advisory Group, key DWA staff, the Director General at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, committee members from the Action for CEDAW Today under VANGO, a representative from the State Law Office and the PACMAS (Pacific Media Assistance Scheme) Program team leader. This group would unofficially be referred to as her Women in Shared Decision Making (WISDM) committee, however they seldom met jointly as Kenneth-Watson acted as an interlocutor meeting with each of the group member individually to coordinate efforts on the reform.

The first formal gathering of this WISDM committee was with the support of PLP where they were able to come together at an Adaptive Leadership Workshop and Forum in Brisbane, Australia in 2012. This event provided training on conceptual tools on adaptive leadership and created a space to assess the appropriateness of further lobbying for TSMs (Rousseau and Kenneth-Watson, 2018). The Forum introduced Kenneth-Watson to ideas around identifying wider stakeholders relevant to reform, collective action, understanding the rules of the game and political context

and understanding how to build networks capable of making change happen (Denney and McLaren, 2016: 6). Upon their return to Vanuatu and with increased understanding and momentum, the coalition worked on refining the policy submission on TSMs. The revised submission, however, would require the right timing to get approved. As Ralph Regenvanu explained: “[you have] got to have things ready, technically ready and policy ready... then wait for the political opportunity or window ready to go” (Interview with Ralph Regenvanu, 9 May 2023).

### Getting Political Buy In

This opportunity came in 2013 with another change in Government and Cabinet reshuffle. Moana Carcasses was appointed as Prime Minister and Ralph Regenvanu was appointed Minister for Lands, Geology, Mines, Energy and Water Resources. Both had publicly been sympathetic towards the issue of women’s political participation, so Kenneth-Watson felt she had good allies within government.

Early in his leadership, Prime Minister Carcasses convened a Council of Ministers in Torba province as part of efforts within his new government to connect with people at a community level. Part of the agenda was to consult directly and hear submissions from people in the community. Kenneth-Watson took this opportunity to push forward the TSM report. She had previously helped prepare a paper on ‘Life of women in Torba province’ which spoke to the challenges that women face on a daily basis. Through her networks with the Women’s Centre National Coordinator, they identified

a woman working at the Torba Women’s Centre to attend the Council of Ministers Meeting and read this paper. The paper provoked strong emotional reactions from the attending MPs, including the Prime Minister, who could see their wives, mothers, daughters reflected in the story of hardship. Following this the Prime Minister stated that they must prioritise “giving reserved seats for women at any level” (Interview with Moana Carcasses, 8 May 2023).

Following that meeting, the door had been opened for the submission for TSMs to be presented to the Council of Ministers. After much discussion with the WISDM committee and with guidance from Ralph Regenvanu, it was decided the reform should not target TSM reform at all electoral levels but rather focus on the Municipal level first. As Kenneth-Watson recalls “Women have to walk before they run” (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023). Reform at that level was considered easier, as they had good support from people in Municipal centres and people could relate to the concept of women’s political representation. Amending the Municipal Act was also easier than targeting reform on the People’s Representation Act at the national level (which had been tried previously), which would require amending the National Electoral Act and, in turn, Constitutional amendment, which was not politically feasible. Approaching TSMs through amending the Municipal Act was seen to be a way to drive the reform through a less controversial, technical approach, rather than through more politicised work on the People’s Representation Act.

At this point, a smaller and much more technically-focused group then evolved from the WISDM committee to help revise the Municipal Act and prepare it for submission – this was the TSM Committee. Kenneth-Watson closely collaborated with the Parliamentary Counsel and Attorney General's Office to help develop the revised submission. To do this, she approached Ralph Regenvanu who then counselled her to seek help with the technical aspects of the revision. Thereafter, she requested formal assistance from the Statistics Office and the Electoral office and dedicated staff were provided to assist her (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 4 May 2023). Kenneth-Watson refers to the TSM Committee as the start of the 'real coalition' (Rosseau and Kenneth -Watson, 2018). Kenneth-Watson then mobilised key political allies and committed individuals to help lobby and drive the TSM reform within government – particularly Ralph Regenvanu and Prime Minister Carcasses.

A proposal for time-bound TSMs reserving 30% of seats in Municipal Councils was prepared and submitted to the Council of Ministers on 29 May 2013. Upon first submission the amendments to the Municipal Act were rejected, as some MPs were still against TSMs for women. Following this, Prime Minister Carcasses then held a series of one-on-one meetings with MPs who had blocked the submission to undertake a series of political advocacy discussions, negotiations and compromises to ensure he secured their support for the TSMs (Interview with Moana Carcasses, 8 May 2023).

The proposed amendments to the Act were then resubmitted to the Council of Minister two-weeks later and finally gained the required approval numbers (Prime Minister Carcasses' Cabinet plus 1 vote from the opposition). Following this, the State Law Office then updated the Municipalities Amendment Act to include TSM measures and this was subsequently adopted in October 2013, putting in place 30% of reserved seats in municipal parliaments for women for a period of 16 years.



# Impact of the Reform

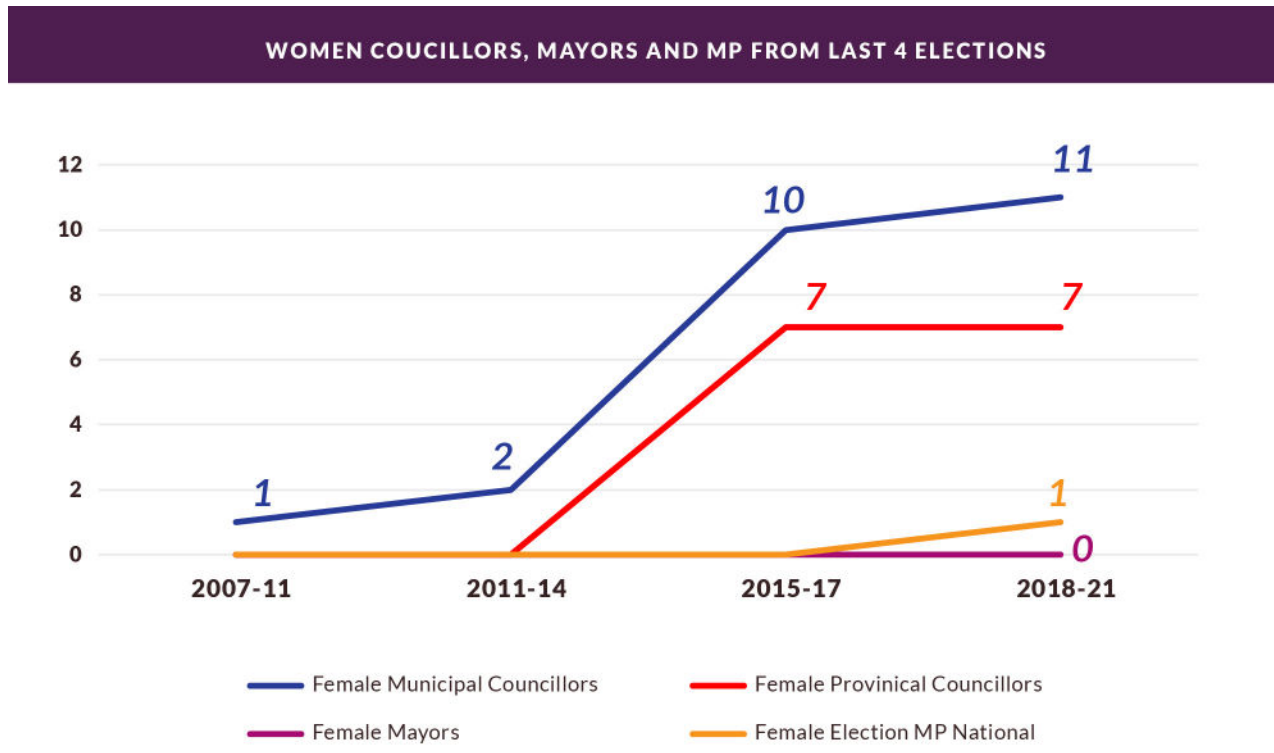
*Following the adoption of the Municipalities Amendment Act, an upcoming election for the 2014 Port Vila Municipal Council had the TSM committee scrambling to ensure the necessary logistics to operationalise the new legislation.*

There were some teething issues with legislation as during the election, it was challenged as unconstitutional as people voted twice using separate ballot papers for those running in open seats (white ballots) and those running in reserved seats (pink ballots). The results from this first election were maintained however these issues meant the Act was amended again one year later to address the technicalities. The revision then saw a smoother implementation in the following election held in Luganville in 2015 (Rosseau and Kenneth-Watson, 2018).

The adopted legislation established 30% of seats in municipal councils for women over the next four electoral terms. The positive changes resulting from the reform have been significant. Women's representation in municipal councils saw a remarkable increase, amplifying their voices in crucial decision-making processes. From 2011 to 2014, only two women were elected at the municipal

level, however since the TSM was legislated, 17 women were elected in the 2015 to 2017 period at municipal and provincial levels. From 2018 to 2021 a total of 21 women were elected following the municipal council elections. Provincial level representation has remained stable with women mainly elected in Shefa municipality, which has allocated seats for women. At a national level, elections held in 2012, 2016 and 2020 did not see any women gaining sufficient votes to be elected to parliament until a snap election called in 2022 finally saw one woman from Efate Rural Constituency gain a seat. This is the most difficult space to achieve reform, as politics – particularly at higher levels – continues to be seen as a man's game and cultural norms still act as barriers to women's representation. This gender gap is also perpetuated by women's lack of finance and necessary resources to contest incumbent seats, as compared to male candidates (UN Women, 2022).

The below graph highlights elected numbers for women in Vanuatu over the last 4 elections. This shift not only challenged traditional gender roles but also fostered a more inclusive and diverse political landscape.



The TSM reform became a catalyst for broader societal discussions and actions on gender equity. In 2019, a 'Vot Woman' campaign march delivered a petition to Parliament signed by 328 community and civil society leaders, calling for a TSM securing 50% of seats for women in national Parliament (Baker, 2019). At the time of writing, amendments to the Electoral Act have been listed to be tabled in the Parliament to permanently reserve seats for women at the municipal level however there did not appear to be any reserved seats for women at National or Provincial levels. In some places, women's political participation has expanded to other roles. For instance, in 2020, Jenny Tasale was elected as Deputy Mayor of the capital, Port Vila.

Moreover, anecdotal feedback indicates that women who have been elected have driven change on important and previously overlooked issues at the community level, such as improving garbage collection in communities and conditions for female vendors ('mamas') selling in the municipal marketplace. Again in Port Vila municipality, a female councillor, Leimara Malachai, was elected as Deputy Mayor in 2016 and was instrumental in resolving the council's inherited debt, which stood at Vatu 96 million (US \$783,000). She was also elected as Chairlady of the Port Vila Market House Working Group and the Chairlady of Finance. Bringing these two roles together, she implemented a digital revenue collection system where market vendor fees were

deposited directly to the bank (resolving collection challenges), resulting in the municipality debt being paid off in four months. Also in Port Vila municipality, a female councillor was elected to the role of Chairlady for Environment and led an initiative to protect Water Zones, negotiating with the government and the utility service provider to fence the water zone to ensure its protection. These initiatives demonstrate the tangible improvements that women's political leadership has been able to achieve through their representation in municipal councils. This was a deliberate strategy on the part of Kenneth Watson - who felt that if people could see the visible benefits of women in politics then support for them would grow. Speaking of their experiences as female Councillors, Leimara Malachai and Marie Kalkoa explained: "former Lord Mayor Ulrich Sumptoh ... has a gender heart and all five of us women councillors at the time worked very well with him. ... This is proof that it [women in Municipal Councils] works" (DailyPost Vanuatu, 2019).

Despite these positive impacts, change has been hard and not always linear. The recent Port Vila Municipal election held in 2022, has shown a reversion, with fewer women successful in this municipality. Five women were elected but only through reserved seats whereas in previous municipal elections following the introduction of TSMs, women had secured both reserved and some open seats. Anecdotal feedback suggests that the reversion may be due to key players influencing the Vanuatu national electoral processes through cash 'donations' and

handouts to support male candidates, as well as due to critics who argue that the TSMs provide preferential treatment to women and are undemocratic.

Interviews with female parliamentarians and councillors revealed the challenges that women continue to face. Women who have been elected have at times been ridiculed openly by their male counterparts within council meeting chambers where most decisions are made. Their male counterparts discriminate against them because they are seen to have come into the council in a 'cheap way.' Such attitudes have been demoralising for female candidates (Interview with Dorosday Kenneth-Watson, 5 May 2023; Interview with Anthea Toka, 5 May 2023; Interview with Jenny Tasale, 8th May 2023; Interview with Nelly Willy, 5 May 2023; Interview with Kathy Solomon, 8 May 2023; Interview with Wilson Toa, 9 May 2023).

Shifting cultural perceptions of TSMs is difficult as even some women councillors remain unconvinced of the TSM approach to improving women's political participation, feeling that it creates a perception of women as weaker and needing help to match their male counterparts. Jenny Tasale, a current Municipal Councillor stated: "Men need to respect us as equals and as such women should earn their place equally as men" (Interview with Jenny Tasale, 8 May 2023). Anthea Toka, another current Municipal Councillor, had also not previously supported the idea of the reserved seat, but having been elected through a reserved seat says that she now sees the value of the TSMs in enabling the

contributions that women have made to the discussions and decisions of the council (Interview with Anthea Toka, 5 May 2023). There have also been criticisms of the lack of support for women Councillors, both before and after elections, which means they have not always been equipped to carry out their roles effectively (Interview with Nelly Willy 5th May 2023).

Stigma against women in political office and *kastom* cultural barriers remain key challenges to shifting norms towards women's political participation in Vanuatu. This deters women from standing for election, as well as voters from electing women. This also speaks to the limits of policy reforms and the need for ongoing efforts to ensure behavioural and attitudinal changes which can embed reform.

Despite these limitations and the hard road ahead, however, the TSMs ushered in new political opportunities for women in Vanuatu, in a context in which women's political participation had been virtually non-existent. This has led to increases (albeit non-linear) in women's seats in Municipal Councils. There have been some increases in women's seats at the Provincial and national levels which could be attributable to the gradually shifting climate for women in politics however the results of the recent national election have shown how entrenched political and *kastom* barriers continue to be strong barriers for reform. Beyond seats alone, the reform has opened up debate on women's political participation and gender equity more broadly.

In addition, efforts are afoot to make reserved seats in Municipal Councils permanent under new changes to the Electoral Act. These changes bode well for the future of women in Vanuatu politics.

# Ways of Working and Relevance of Development Entrepreneurship

*The TSM reform story, especially the role played by Kenneth-Watson, is a testament to her determination and advocacy in promoting gender equality and women's representation in politics in Vanuatu.*

Her unwavering commitment and politically strategic approach were key to achieving the TSM reform. Throughout her journey, she has shown resilience, empathy, and visionary thinking, inspiring others to join the cause and work towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

This inspiration and leadership helped form and sustain the WISDM committee and later the Temporary Special Measures (TSM) Taskforce, consisting of senior public servants and politicians - although, these coalition members often worked one-on-one with Kenneth-Watson, rather than as a more organised collaborative. These small but dedicated coalitions played a crucial role in driving change in Vanuatu, distinct from broad-based

civil society activism. The reform involved an elite-led coalition that did not actively engage civil society organisations due to divisions and diminished capacity among some groups. The TSM story serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative impact that a small number of passionate individuals can have in driving positive change for women's rights and empowerment, particularly where they are well-positioned to use their power and networks to achieve change. As a result, there is a growing shift in people's perceptions and attitudes towards women in politics as well as some tangible improvements in women's political representation. These small wins in women's political participation, albeit at a municipal level, is slowly challenging the notion that



politics is exclusively a male domain and has encouraged women to enter the political arena to help facilitate a more inclusive and gender-balanced approach to politics and policymaking.

Many of the ways of working bear strong similarities with the model of development entrepreneurship, as set out below (see summary table in Annex 1).

### **Strategic question 1: Which reform will improve outcomes?**

#### **Political Feasibility**

Kenneth-Watson was acutely aware of the political landscape and the importance of navigating through her existing environment. She carefully assessed the feasibility of her reforms, taking into account the political environment and chose the right time and right individuals to make it happen. She also assessed together with her WISDM committee the level at which the TSMs should be targeted, noting that the culture and appetite for reserved seats was difficult to achieve at all electoral levels. Lastly, she opted to pursue the reform through a technical revision of the Municipal Act, rather than targeting the broader and more politically sensitive People's Representation Act. These decisions demonstrate Kenneth-Watson's pragmatic approach to finding a reform pathway that was politically possible.

#### **Impact**

The impact of the TSM legislation has not only been visible in terms of increased women in Councils and Parliament but has also

been instrumental in provoking debate for scaling up women's political representation at provincial and national levels. The efforts of Kenneth-Watson were driven by a deep commitment to making a tangible and lasting impact and to challenging the status quo. Women who have been elected in Municipal Councils have spoken on the need to maintain reserved seats for women as this is critical to sustain a cultural change for women's representation.

#### **Sustainability**

Kenneth-Watson worked diligently to ensure that her interventions would endure long after their initial implementation. By integrating the reform into a legislative framework, she aimed to create lasting and transformative practices that would continue to benefit Vanuatu over time. It was also important that the reform was led by a local coalition within government to ensure local buy in and sustainability. The current legislative policy proposals being developed at the time of this case study demonstrates commitment to embed this as a permanent process.

### **Strategic question 2: How will the reform be identified and introduced?**

#### **Just Start**

Kenneth-Watson embarked on her development journey with determination and a vision for change. Despite limited resources, she took the first step, utilising what she had and leveraging her existing knowledge and connections. Her religious beliefs fuelled her actions and she took on the challenge of making change in a difficult

context for women's participation in politics. She used her network of close contacts and family relationships within government to get things moving.

### **Small Bets and Learning by Doing**

Rather than getting caught up in extensive analysis and planning, Kenneth-Watson adopted a practical approach. She consulted with people on her ideas and built different coalition groups to help take the issue forward. She learned from unsuccessful earlier attempts by civil society groups to get TSMs passed and factored these into her planning and also from her own small experiment with the Shefa Provincial council. Engaging with various international groups and leveraging support and technical advice allowed her to progress the reform through hands-on experience.

### **Expect and Exploit Surprises**

Kenneth-Watson recognized that the future was unpredictable, and instead of fearing uncertainty, she embraced it. She remained vigilant for unexpected opportunities and turning points, so when there was a change in government with a supportive Prime Minister, she was able to push the reform through. By adapting her plans and actions to leverage favourable circumstances, Kenneth-Watson maximized the chances for successful reform.

### **Build Coalitions and Networks**

Kenneth-Watson understood the power of collaboration and actively sought to build coalitions and networks. She recognized that by connecting with like-minded individuals and tapping into collective wisdom, she could reduce uncertainty and generate innovative solutions. Her initial WISDM committee

played a key role in preparing the environment to introduce TSMs, however the second TSM committee provided the technical nous to complete the work. Through collaboration within and outside of government, Kenneth-Watson fostered a supportive ecosystem for her ideas to flourish. Kenneth-Watson's approach to coalitions was unique in that she often worked one-on-one with coalition members, rather than bringing all members together. Indeed, some of these individuals did not even know they were considered part of a coalition. Again, this demonstrated astute use of networks and political capital by Kenneth-Watson.

### **Future Can Be Influenced With Action**

By taking deliberate and intentional action, Kenneth-Watson worked towards influencing the pathway of the reform issue. Her determination, combined with her unwavering commitment to her vision, positioned her as a catalyst for meaningful change.

## **Strategic question 3: Who will do it?**

### **Grit**

Throughout her journey, Kenneth-Watson demonstrated unwavering grit and resilience. She faced numerous challenges and setbacks but remained steadfast in her pursuit of change. Her perseverance in the face of adversity propelled her forward and inspired others to join her on her mission. Her continued work post-election has continued momentum in supporting women candidates through mentoring and advising them.

### Autonomy

While she valued collaboration and sought support from others, Kenneth-Watson understood the importance of personal responsibility. This empowered her to make independent decisions, take risks, and chart her own course towards achieving her goals. In some ways she also felt that keeping this reform government-centred and led, allowed her to work within her leadership and authority circles to keep it moving despite the risk of being seen as 'playing politics' and being non-consultative by not engaging civil society and others outside of government.

### Confidence

Kenneth-Watson exuded confidence in her abilities and her vision. Her ability to sell her vision to close contacts helped attract supporters and collaborators. Kenneth-Watson's confidence allowed her to overcome obstacles, make bold decisions, and inspire trust in others.

### Humility

Despite her confidence, Kenneth-Watson remained humble and open to learning from others. She recognized that she did not have all the answers and actively sought input and feedback. Kenneth-Watson continued to grow, adapt, and refine her approach, leading to greater impact and success. She maintained her networks of coalitions and technical working groups and lobbyists to help make the change she could not do alone.

The success of the coalition-based reform in Vanuatu highlights the importance of locally-led approaches, the power of individual reform leaders involving and drawing on key stakeholders, and considering the cultural and political context in achieving gender equity reforms. It also demonstrates the potential relevance of the development entrepreneurship model outside of the Philippines, as the 12 principles are readily apparent in the TSM reform. The principles of political feasibility, use of coalitions and networks, just starting and expecting and exploiting surprises are particularly well demonstrated. In the Vanuatu context, the influence of kinship networks and the role of faith in shaping how these principles played out is notable. The TSM case study might add one further principle to these 12, which is 'try something new'. As Kenneth-Watson explains in her personal note below, she felt strongly that to achieve change, you must be willing to try new things that have not been tried before, in addition to learning from past experiences. This combination of taking account of and learning from what has come before, while being willing to 'just start' and try new approaches was critical to the success of the TSM reform in Vanuatu.

# A Personal Note from Dorosday Kenneth-Watson

A lot of information has been provided already on how the policy reform came about in this document, including its relevance to development entrepreneurship. I will elaborate briefly on few of my personal reflections on the process of the reform itself.

**Having a dream and knowing your purpose:** As mentioned in the report, the dream I had before being transferred to the Department of Women's Affairs left a lasting impression in my heart and gave me conviction on the purpose for my new appointment, despite having no prior knowledge on women's development or gender and development. Having faith in implementing this dream gave me also an inspirational saying in pursuing this reform agenda, "If you want to have something you have never had, you have to do something you have never done".

**Having a vision:** My vision was to start the change agenda small but that its impact would lead to introducing these changes at the higher levels of Government. It would be led by the Government through the Department of Women's Affairs, because it is the right thing for the Government to do for its female population, as well as to socialise the concept of gender equality generally for the country, as the TSMs were introduced at the time we were writing the first National Gender Equality Policy for Vanuatu for 2015 - 2019.

This change would also be introduced at a level that women could easily understand politics generally and the issues they could easily discuss confidently. It would create an opportunity for both men and women to confidently discuss and offer solutions together to development issues for a better Vanuatu, as envisaged in the National Priority Action Agenda for Vanuatu, 2000 - 2015.

Learning from experience: Knowing who you are and understanding the context in which to introduce change allows you to develop clear plans to implement them. I came to the Department of Women's Affairs after being the first female Director of the male-dominated Departments of Fisheries, Agriculture and Rural Development for more than a decade. This also gave me confidence of introducing change – because I have been visible, walked and experienced this change agenda. It also helped me to question the status quo and innovate strategies to implement the change after the several failed submissions of introducing women into political leadership. Introducing this change from within Government was not a popular strategy at that time and would be deemed as “one playing politics.” This helped drive my determination and commitment to my agenda despite all odds and challenges within the Department and from partners as well.

Building Coalitions: Building coalitions for change is not easy and especially mobilising, motivating and managing people to support your agenda. I have found that having a plan but spending time in discussing and negotiating with people you know and respect on the purpose and the outcomes envisaged in the plan and in particular their roles in the overall plan allowed buy in from all those who were interested in being part of the coalition.

Having the two groups, the WISDM and TSM Taskforce was a strategy I saw best in introducing the agenda at the time in socialising the concept of TSM for women in politics. This helped improve understanding within the greater population by the WISDM Coalition, while the TSM Taskforce allowed the legislation to be approved by the Council of Ministers and Parliament.

**H.E. Dorosday Kenneth-Watson**



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# List of Interviews

NAME	POSITION	DATE
<b>Dorosday Kenneth-Watson</b>	Reform Leader, former Director of Women's Affairs, Vanuatu	4 May 2023
<b>Anthea Toka</b>	Current Municipal Councillor	5 May 2023
<b>Ralph Regenvanu</b>	Minister of Climate Change, Vanuatu	9 May 2023
<b>Moanna Carcasses Kalosil</b>	Former Prime Minister and President of Green Federation Pati	8 May 2023
<b>Jenny Tasale</b>	Current Municipal Councillor	8 May 2023
<b>Jennifer Kalpokas Doan</b>	Executive Director, Balance of Power Program	5 May 2023
<b>Nelly Willy</b>	Former Pacific Leadership Program Representative, Vanuatu	5 May 2023
<b>Wilson Toa</b>	Director, Balance of Power Program	9 May 2023
<b>Kathy Solomon</b>	Oxfam Inclusion Program Manager	8 May 2023
<b>Seman Dalesa</b>	Acting Director, Department of Women Affairs, Vanuatu	9 May 2023
<b>Gary Tavoia</b>	Acting Electoral Commissioner, Vanuatu	10 May 2023
<b>Rara Soro</b>	Consultant	8 May 2023
<b>Leith Veremaito</b>	Acting Director General, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Vanuatu	10 May 2023

# Annex: Development Entrepreneurship Principles

## Strategic question 1: Which reform will improve outcomes?

### Impact

The impact of the TSM legislation has not only been visible in the short term but instrumental in provoking debate for scaling up at provincial and national levels. The efforts of Kenneth-Watson were driven by a deep commitment to making a tangible and lasting impact and to challenging the status quo.

### Sustainability

Kenneth-Watson worked diligently to ensure that her interventions would endure long after their initial implementation. By integrating the reform into a legislative framework, she aimed to create lasting and transformative practices that would continue to benefit Vanuatu over time. It was also important that the reform was led by a local coalition within government to ensure local buy in and sustainability.

### Political feasibility

Kenneth-Watson was acutely aware of the political landscape and the importance of navigating existing conditions. She carefully assessed the feasibility of her reforms, taking into account the political environment and chose the right time and right individuals to make it happen.

## Strategic question 2: How will the reform be identified and introduced?

*Use the five principles of entrepreneurial logic*

### Just start

Kenneth-Watson embarked on her development journey with determination and a vision for change. Despite limited resources, she took the first step, utilising what she had and leveraging her existing knowledge and connections. Her religious belief fuelled her actions and she took on the challenge of making change in a difficult context for women's participation in politics.

### **Small bets and learning by doing**

Rather than getting caught up in extensive analysis and planning, Kenneth-Watson adopted a practical approach. She consulted with people on her ideas and built different coalition groups to help take the issue forward. She learned from unsuccessful earlier attempts by civil society groups to get the reform passed and factored these into her planning. Engaging with various international groups and leveraging support and technical advice allowed her to progress the reform through hands-on experience. When roadblocks appeared – such as the rejection by the Council of Ministers to consider the TSM reform, she and her networks were able to recalibrate and find alternative routes.

### **Expect and exploit surprises**

Kenneth-Watson recognized that the future was unpredictable, and instead of fearing uncertainty, she embraced it. She remained vigilant for unexpected opportunities and turning points, so when there was a change in government with a supportive Prime Minister, she was able to push the reform through. By adapting her plans and actions to leverage favourable circumstances, Kenneth-Watson maximized the chances for successful reform.

### **Build coalitions and networks**

Kenneth-Watson understood the power of collaboration and actively sought to build coalitions and networks. She recognized that by connecting with like-minded individuals and tapping into collective wisdom, she could reduce uncertainty and generate innovative solutions. Her initial WISDM committee provided a key role in preparing the environment however the second TSM group provided the technical nous to complete the work. Through collaboration within and outside of government, Kenneth-Watson fostered a supportive ecosystem for her ideas to flourish.

### **Future can be influenced with action**

By taking deliberate and intentional action, Kenneth-Watson worked towards influencing the pathway of the reform issue. Her determination, combined with her unwavering commitment to her vision, positioned her as a catalyst for meaningful change.

## **Strategic question 3: Who will do it?**

*Leaders who exhibit four behaviours*

### **Grit**

Throughout her journey, Kenneth-Watson demonstrated unwavering grit and resilience. She faced numerous challenges and setbacks but remained steadfast in her pursuit of change. Her perseverance in the face of adversity propelled her forward and inspired others to join her on her mission.



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**Autonomy**

While she valued collaboration and sought support from others, Kenneth-Watson understood the importance of personal responsibility. This empowered her to make independent decisions, take risks, and chart her own course towards achieving her goals.

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**Confidence**

Kenneth-Watson exuded confidence in her abilities and her vision. Her ability to sell her vision to close key contacts helped attract supporters and collaborators. Kenneth-Watson's confidence allowed her to overcome obstacles, make bold decisions, and inspire trust in others.

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**Humility**

Despite her confidence, Kenneth-Watson remained humble and open to learning from others. She recognized that she didn't have all the answers and actively sought input and feedback. Kenneth-Watson's humility enabled her to continuously grow, adapt, and refine her approach, leading to greater impact and success.

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