

REPUBLIC OF VANUATU



MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

**The Vanuatu National
IDENTITY CARD
POLICY**

VNIC, Providing assured Identity

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
GLOSSARY	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1. INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Identity as a Human Right	8
1.2 Determination of Legal Identity	8
1.3 National Identification System	9
1.4 Establishment of NIDS for Vanuatu	10
2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT	10
3. RATIONAL FOR POLICY	11
3.1 Economic Savings	12
3.2 Convenience and Ease of Doing Business	12
3.3 Improved Governance	13
3.4 Support for Welfare and Social Protection of the Most Vulnerable	13
4. THE POLICY	14
4.1 Guiding Principles	14
4.2 Policy Vision	15
4.3 Policy Goal	15
4.4 Strategic Objectives of the Policy	15
4.5 Policy Elements	15
5. NATIONAL ID CARD POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	19
5.1 Legislative Framework	20
5.2 Institutional Framework	21
5.3 Public Education Program	22

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	22
7. ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND RELATED POLICIES	22
7.1 National sustainable Development Plan 2015 – 2030	22
7.2 National Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy	23
8. DESCRIPTION OF VANUATU NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD (VNIC)	24
9. THE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD	24
9.1 Card Features	24
9.2 Security Features	25
9.3 Information on Card	26
9.4 Front of the Card	26
9.5 Back of the Card	26
9.6 National Identification Number (NIN)	26
9.7 Sample of the National Identity Card	27
9.8 Ownership of Card	27
9.9 Validity and Expiration of Card	27
9.10 Charges and Payments for the National ID card	27
10. USAGE OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD	28
10.1 Identification	28
10.2 Other Government and Social Services	29
11. GOVERNING LAW AND REGULATIONS	29
11.1 The Civil Status Act	29
11.2 Eligibility for Possession of the National Identity Card	30
11.3 Individual’s Obligations under the Law	31
11.4 Application for a National ID card and its Issuance	31
12. USE OF CARD BY THE INDIVIDUAL	32

12.1	General Use by the Individual	32
12.2	Mandatory Use of Vanuatu National Identification Card (VNIC)	32
12.3	Use of Personal Information in the National Registry Database – Register VIZ	33
12.4	Card Misuse and Grounds for Cancellation	34
12.5	Safeguarding the National ID card	36
12.6	Loss of card	37
12.7	The National ID card and Protection of Individual Privacy	37
12.8	Limitations and Restrictions	38
13.	GENERAL ISSUES	38
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	40
	APPENDIX 1 – NIDS AND NIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	41

Introduction

In 2014 the Government set up a Bio-Voter Registration System Committee to

1. Advise it on how best to strengthen the Vanuatu Voter Registration System and to
2. Harmonize various identification schemes and the plethora of Identity Cards being issued both by public and private sector institutions in Vanuatu.
3. The Committee recommended the adoption of a general multipurpose card which would help manage several applications and Services that are all dependent on the same individual's identity being first affirmed.
4. It is this concept of a Universal Identification Infrastructure that has led to the implementation of a National Civil Registration System (NCRS) which has a number of important components:
 - a. The National Vital Registration or Central Vital Registry Repository and
 - b. The National Identification Card.
5. Accordingly this Card Policy focuses on
 - a. The National Identity Card to be issued as a component of the National Birth Registration.
 - b. It sets out the legal framework,
 - c. The conditions for its issuance,
 - d. Its features,
 - e. Use and replacement.
6. The Policy also sets out the basis for ensuring the sustainable use of the infrastructure supporting the card,

- a. Its functionality and applications with a view to eliminating or reducing the number of cards issued in Vanuatu and
- b. Enhance the concept of shared services infrastructure.
- c. Therefore, the provisions of the Card policy should be read in conjunction with the Civil Status Act Cap 61, in particular, the specific provisions on each aspect of the Vanuatu National ID Card (VNIC).
- d. The Policy is also designed to further indigenize the card sector and foster the development of a wholly indigenous identity management sector in Vanuatu.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The concept of a National ID for Vanuatu has been discussed since the late 1990's and its introduction was one of the recommendations made in 2014 by the Bio-Voter Registration System Committee (BVRSC).
2. That is, each person from birth should be issued with a unique number, which would be used when transacting business.
3. Over the years the concept has evolved into a national identification number (NIN). The NIN would provide for
 - a. A unique, reliable, verifiable and secure way of authenticating an individual's identity and
 - b. The establishment of a system with securer authorized access and
 - c. The issuance of an identity card to all Vanuatu citizens and
4. Further, it is important to note that there is no comprehensive governing legislation which establishes and regulates a national identification system.
 - a. Existing legislation, such as those governing the activities of
 - i. the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) department,
 - ii. Electoral Office of Vanuatu,
 - iii. Tax Administration,

- iv. Passport Immigration and
- v. Citizenship Office,
- b. Speak to identity management as it relates to the specific functions of ‘its parent’ Agency.

Rational for the Policy

5. The Vanuatu Government is therefore seeking to establish a National Identification Card (NIC), which will see the institution of a unique, reliable and secure method of authenticating an individual’s identity. (*Voter System attributes/qualities*)
6. Each person registered at birth under the National Civil Registration System (NCRS) will be issued with a National Identification Number (NIN), which will be their unique identifier in the system.
7. Information captured through birth registration will automatically be assigned a unique number, which will be used as a NIN and will be stored in a secure National Civil Registration System – Register-VIZ.
8. The use of the NIN as the primary key will enable interconnectivity of the NBR database and all records within existing Government of Vanuatu databases.
9. Therefore, the development and implementation of a dedicated National Identification System will require modification to existing databases in order to accommodate the use of the NIN in this way.
10. The implementation of a NIC is guided by the vision of the ‘Vanuatu 2030 The People’s Plan’, which aims to create and achieve a Stable, Sustainable and Prosperous Vanuatu within the next fifteen years.

11. The establishment of NIC will contribute to the achievement of key “Vanuatu 2030 People’s Plan’ goals, by having an inclusive society which upholds human dignity through effective
 - a. Social protection,
 - b. Security and safety,
 - c. Effective governance,
 - d. An enabling business environment,
 - e. A technology-enabled society and
 - f. Ensuring all people have access to government services and economic opportunities throughout Vanuatu.

Policy Vision

“Vanuatu National Identification Card through the National Identification System (NIDS) is the primary source of verification and authentic identity assurance for every citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu”.

Policy Goal

“To facilitate the establishment of a National Identification System that supports secure, reliable and robust identity verification and authentication of citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu by 2030”.

3 Main Strategic Objectives

1. To provide the basis for a robust governance framework, including legal and institutional arrangements, for the issuance of a lifetime unique and secure national identification number and a national identification card to each citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu.
2. To facilitate the implementation of simplified procedures through which citizens may have access to an array of benefits and services, including social, economic and security programmes.

3. To support e-government and e-business for all Citizen to Government (C2G), Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizens (G2C).

Monitoring & Evaluation

1. Alignment with NSDP (2015 – 2030) – The People’s Plan
2. The OMIA shall have overall responsibility for oversight and implementation of the M&E system for the NIDS policy.
3. An Annual Progress report shall be compiled each year by the CRVS Office.
4. An evaluation of the policy shall be conducted five (5) years after implementation of the policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Identity as a Human Right

Article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) establishes that “everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.” The right to a legal identity is therefore a fundamental human right, where the State is obliged to enable each person to exercise his or her right to a name.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were endorsed at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, contains a target on providing legal identity for all, including birth registration (target 16.9). The target is related to Goal 16 which aims to: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”. The inclusion of target 16.9 means that the provision of legal documentation is being recognized and addressed as a global development issue.

Determination of Legal Identity

A person’s legal identity is generally obtained through the process of civil registration, which grants the person a name and nationality, or in other cases, through the assignment of unique and personal identification variables, for example, an identity number and/or biometric data (Harbitz and Axt, 2011). Having a legal identity is increasingly important for any person who interacts with the public

sector and society in general. When persons are undocumented, they are oftentimes denied opportunities and possibilities to exercise their civil and social rights.

Critical to the establishment of a legal identity, is the relationship between civil registration, which is normally embedded in legislation and civil identification (ID), which allows the persons registered to identify themselves within predetermined parameters.

Usually, in the case of Vanuatu, the citizen is assigned an ID number at birth, or on the first instance of birth registration. Unique ID numbers are critical for reducing fraud and preventing duplicate entries into the identification system. Generally, the unique identity number assigned to each registration (numerical code) enables it to be monitored, controlled and linked to the registered individual's personal and biometric data.

An ID card containing personal and/or biometric data is normally issued for identity proofing. For the purpose for which the identification system was built, the National ID system has been built to include not only the citizens, but also foreign nationals who have become permanent residents.

National Identification System

Some countries struggle with two types of national identity problems, namely, having no standard means of identity for citizens, or more than one ID card for different purposes. Having multiple citizen ID systems creates conflicts among organizations and duplication of efforts in data collection and maintenance by different organizations, which leads to an inefficient use of government's resources. Divergent systems make it difficult to share data and track services obtained by citizens. Citizens are also inconvenienced by having to use more than one type of ID to verify their identities.

National identification systems (NIDS) have been increasing in recent years as part of a concerted drive to find common identifiers for populations around the world. This is being driven by, inter alia,

1. Electronic government,
2. Rising rates of identity theft,
3. National security concerns,
4. Immigration control and
5. The need for social inclusion.

NIDS are used by some governments to officially establish the identity of their citizens and to assist public sector agencies in identifying and verifying the identities of citizens who are availing themselves of government services, or undertaking public transactions.

Some countries consider the system to be useful, primarily as a means of identity authentication and verification, while others view the system as beneficial in reducing bureaucracy and delays in the processing of documents and effecting transactions with government agencies, thus ensuring greater efficiency in the delivery of services by the public sector. Achieving a universal method of

identification makes the day-to-day lives of citizens simpler in their interaction with both the public and private sectors.

The NIDS is normally supported by a robust information and communications technology (ICT) platform and clear institutional arrangements, which require governments to function in an integrated manner, so that service provision and implementation are efficient and useful to the end user. Some NIDS are also supported by strong data privacy and e-transaction laws, as it is fundamental to protect the rights of individuals who are participants in this process.

Establishment of NIDS for Vanuatu

The Government of Vanuatu is seeking to establish a NIDS, which will see the institution of a unique, reliable and secure method of authenticating an individual's identity. Each person registered under the CRS will be issued with a National Identification Number (NIN), which will be their unique identifier in the system. Information captured through registration will be stored in a secure database, which is the 'Register-Viz'. The use of a NIN as the primary key will enable interconnectivity of the NIDS database and all records within existing government databases, as provided for under appropriate legislation.

Critical to the establishment of a NIDS, is the development of a robust policy and legal framework, an institutional framework to operationalise the policy and a technological framework in which the NIDS will be embodied.

The implementation of a NIDS is guided by the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 – 2030, Vanuatu People's Plan, which aims to have the country achieve its vision for a stable, sustainable, and prosperous Vanuatu by 2030.

The National Identity Card Policy is designed to provide information on the objectives, legal framework, rules, guidelines and principles which form the Card System adopted for the Biometric Registration System (BRS) and the National Identity Card. It includes the features of the National Identity Card, how the card may be obtained and or issued to an individual, how the card may be used, conditions under which it will be replaced and or withdrawn, usage parameters, operating context, wrong/inappropriate usage, and citizen's rights. It is important for all card recipients to understand the guidelines provided in this policy document.

In view of the fact that the National Identity Card is part of the Government's programme of transformation based on the E-Government platform (defined as the use of digital technologies to transform government operations in order to improve effectiveness, efficiency and service delivery within the government), it is important to clearly document the governing policy.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document provides in a simplified manner, information on the framework governing eligibility, registration for the National Identity Card, issuance and usage of the National ID Card by the cardholder. It also provides references against which any card that purports to be a Vanuatu National Identity Card may be measured. Care has been taken to ensure that in highlighting some of the parameters for ascertaining whether a card is a National ID Card, the integrity and security of the National ID Card is not compromised. This document is for information and enlightenment on the Card policy purposes only.

In view of the different policies and objectives of different countries on their national identity card schemes, and given the Vanuatu context, Government, through the Biometric Registration System Committee (BRSC) and the CRVS Committee have adopted a harmonized approach towards implanting a system of national identity management with a clear ID card policy as articulated in this document.

According to Privacy International, as of 1996, possession of identity cards which must be acquired when a person reaches a prescribed age was compulsory in about 100 countries, though what constitutes "compulsory" varies from country to country. The penalty for non-possession is usually a fine, but in some cases it may result in detention until identity is established. On the other hand, quite a number of countries have voluntary identity card schemes. In others, identity documents of different types and functionalities are issued to achieve varying objectives and requirements.

In some countries the possession of a National Identity Card is compulsory while in others it may be voluntary. In Vanuatu, the Civil Status (Registration) Act of 1988 [CAP61] is currently under process of being reviewed for amendment to making it compulsory to register for and be issued a National Birth Registration Certificate and a National ID Card especially for the later, if a person is aged sixteen (16) years and above. This is to enable all eligible voters by aged 18 years, to have been registered and obtained a National ID card.

3. RATIONAL FOR POLICY

The Vanuatu Government is seeking to establish a National Identification System (NIDS) which will see the institution of a unique, reliable and secure method of authenticating an individual's identity. At present, Vanuatu does not have a dedicated 'national ID database' that can reliably verify the identity of its citizens, apart from the National Civil Registry System (NCRS). There are a number of identity systems being utilized by various public sector entities. These systems are designed to meet the objectives of the respective organizations for identification of its clients. Some identity systems are enabled by legislation, while others are designed to facilitate delivery of services and social benefits by a particular Ministry or Agency. Given the diversity of these systems, they are not interconnected or inter-related and provide limited scope for data sharing and authentication of personal identity.

A NIDS will have immediate and longer term societal benefit for every Ni-Vanuatu, as the process of establishing, assuring and verifying an individual's identity for the purpose of affording them access

to governmental and private sector services will be streamlined and simplified. Citizens and persons ordinarily resident could simplify the documentation they need to have on their person and present for identification purposes. A NIDS will also simplify business transactions for the private sector and support financial institutions in managing secure transactions, by authenticating users and generating roll back transactions. Therefore, it will contribute to the growth and development of e-government and e-commerce and increase the use of electronic financial transactions.

A robust and accurate electronic national identity framework is recognized as an essential step in the evolution of public sector modernization. Such modernization is key to improving efficiency and competitiveness within the country.

The benefits of implementing a NIDS are explained below, under the categories of economic savings, convenience and ease of doing business, improved governance and expansion in welfare and social protection for the most vulnerable.

Economic Savings

There are a number of common areas where a NIDS will generate return on investment for stakeholders, both in the short and longer term, primarily in the area of cost avoidance, including:

- 3.1.1** Simplifying the means of establishing identity, while increasing its accuracy and integrity;
- 3.1.2** Streamlining current business processes, thereby eliminating redundancy and duplication of effort;
- 3.1.3** Increased efficiency in the delivery of government and private sector services;
- 3.1.4** Increased accuracy and precision in deciding eligibility for services;
- 3.1.5** Data sharing and reconciliation of identity between stakeholders;
- 3.1.6** Improved accuracy and precision of identity, reducing errors and opportunities for fraud;
- 3.1.7** Timely updates of life events (marriage, divorce, death, etc.) to stakeholders;
- 3.1.8** Enabling the clean-up of existing databases (fill in gaps and missing information and help resolve inconsistencies in the civil registry); and
- 3.1.9** Gained efficiencies through establishing consistency in service delivery.

Convenience and Ease of Doing Business

There are several benefits of a NIDS that could accrue to citizens and persons ordinarily resident, namely:

- 3.1.10** Convenience – minimize the time and frequency of in-person interaction;
- 3.1.11** Single identity enrolment that subsequently supports registration in multiple government and private sector programmes and services;
- 3.1.12** A more consistent, efficient and streamlined experience when interacting with government agencies;

- 3.1.13** Better accuracy and efficiency in the delivery of benefits and services;
- 3.1.14** Enable and/or better support the use of online services, such as online application and pre-registration in both the government and private sector; and
- 3.1.15** Reduction in opportunities for identity fraud and theft.

Direct benefits to the private sector include:

- 3.1.16** Reduced duplication of effort in establishing, verifying and managing identity;
- 3.1.17** Streamlining of employment eligibility for potential employees;
- 3.1.18** Reduction in opportunities for fraud/abuse; and
- 3.1.19** Supporting the “know-your-customer” requirements for banks and other businesses.

Improved Governance

NIDS will provide a standard method of authentication and verification of an individual’s identity across agencies and systems. The use of NIDS will support the streamlining of current business processes and enable a more efficient, comprehensive, fair and cost-effective delivery of Government services and social benefit programmes. It will also enhance the Government’s ability to implement a coherent e-government strategy and support ‘joined up’ government. Comprehensive electronic, real time data capture of all vital life events would better inform national planning and the completeness and quality of data.

A NIDS would also support the improved ability of Government to better identify persons as voters or potential voters. The integration of a biometrically verifiable identity would help to strengthen immigration, border control, public safety and national security.

Support for Welfare and Social Protection of the Most Vulnerable

The National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) outlines a framework and defines goals for a just and inclusive society that would effectively be supported by a responsive and capable institutions that capture all individuals requiring state assistance, adequately provide for their basic needs, operate with efficiency and deliver a high quality of service. A NIDS can allow the Government to more fairly, efficiently and equitably deliver services by better reaching underserved populations. NIDS would also increase service application rates among urban and rural households. One of the common reasons that some people are denied access to certain social services and private services is that they do not have the required documents such as a Tax Registration Number (TRN), passport or birth certificate. The establishment of a verifiable identity through NIDS will more effectively support identification of potential beneficiaries and determination of benefit eligibility, thus helping to ensure that social benefits are fairly and equitably administered.

A NIDS has the potential to optimize education and training for students at all levels of the education system. The unique identifier would allow for the tracking of students, their performance and programmes implemented by the government for their welfare. For example, it would allow for better targeting for the planning and delivery of educational programmes to all categories of

students, distribution of books, identification of teachers/educators and sharing of data with other entities.

4. THE POLICY

Guiding Principles

Consistent with the Charter of Rights, the guiding principles underpinning the NIDS Policy are:

- 4.1.1 **Legality:** NIDS will be supported by an appropriate legal and regulatory framework to govern its establishment and operations.
- 4.1.2 **Purpose Specification:** NIDS will specify the purposes for which personal data is collected and the subsequent use, limited to the fulfilment of those purposes.
- 4.1.3 **Security:** Personal data stored in NIDS shall be protected by security safeguards against risks such as loss, unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification or disclosure of data.
- 4.1.4 **Robustness:** NIDS will provide unique and verifiable identity over the lifecycle, with safeguards against tampering and identity theft.
- 4.1.5 **Integrity:** Personal data held within the NIDS will be reliable, verifiable, accurate, and complete and kept up-to-date.
- 4.1.6 **Confidentiality and Respect for Human Rights:** The operation of the NIDS shall observe the highest ethical standards. Information provided to the NIDS will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, and the rights and privacy of citizens protected by appropriate legislation governing protocols for information sharing and data protection.
- 4.1.7 **Consent:** Data collected for NIDS will be obtained by lawful and fair means and with the knowledge and irrevocable consent of the data subject or legal custodian.
- 4.1.8 **Interoperability:** The NIDS platform will be built to enable interface with other systems within the context of predefined standards and legislation.
- 4.1.9 **Partnership:** Multi-sectoral partnerships will be critical to the successful implementation of the NIDS, which relies heavily on the cooperation of the public sector, private sector and civil society in its utilization and uptake.
- 4.1.10 **Transparency and Accountability:** The successful development and effective administration of the NIDS require the optimal allocation of financial, organization and

human resources. This is best achieved in an environment of transparency and accountability, which is developed through good governance.

- 4.1.11 Participation:** The NIDS is committed to supporting activities which will uphold the rights of all to participate fully in exercising their responsibilities and obligations as citizens and residents of Vanuatu and having equitable access to available resources.

Policy Vision

‘Vanuatu National Identification Card through the National Identification System (NIDS) is the primary source of verification and authentic identity assurance for every citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu’.

Policy Goal

“To facilitate the establishment of a National Identification System that supports secure, reliable and robust identity verification and authentication of citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu by 2030”.

Strategic Objectives of the Policy

- 4.1.12** To provide the basis for a robust governance framework, including legal and institutional arrangements, for the issuance of a lifetime unique and secure national identification number and a national identification card to each citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu.
- 4.1.13** To facilitate the implementation of simplified procedures through which citizens may have access to an array of benefits and services, including social, economic and security programmes.
- 4.1.14** To support e-government and e-business for all Citizen to Government (C2G), Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizens (G2C).

Policy Elements

4.1.15 Strategic Objective 1

To provide the basis for a robust governance framework, including legal and institutional arrangements, for the issuance of a lifetime unique and secure national identification number and a National Identification Card (NIC) to each citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu.

4.1.15.1 Assignment of a National Identification Number and Issuance of a National Identification Card

Government shall establish a National Identification System which shall involve the:

- i. Introduction of new legislation and regulations and the consequential amendments of other existing legislation and regulations to give effect to the implementation of the NIDS.
- ii. Generation and assignment of a secure and unique National Identification Number (NIN) to each citizen of Vanuatu, including anyone who has obtained citizenship by registration or naturalization under the Vanuatu Citizenship Act, as well as any person who is ordinarily resident in Vanuatu, upon registration of those individuals. The NIN shall be a computer generated random nine-digit number and bear no attributes or identity of the person to whom it is assigned. The NIN, once issued to a person for the duration of his/her life, shall not be re-issued to any other person and shall be the primary key to link records across databases operated by Government entities. The NIN shall be deactivated upon the death of the individual, or the renunciation or revocation of citizenship.
- iii. Issuance of a national identification card consisting of a unique NIN, core personal data and biometric data to a registered person. The national identification card may be used by the registered person for the purposes of verifying their identity, conducting business transactions and when accessing the services of any public entity. The card shall be valid for a specified period of five (5) years as stipulated by the legislation, after which it must be renewed by the individual.

Government shall require a citizen and person ordinarily resident aged 16 and over, to apply and register for a national identification card on his/her own behalf, while a parent or legal guardian shall make the application for a NIN and identification card for a child under the age of 16.

For any adult citizen incapacitated by disability, the application for a national identification card must be made by a person legally responsible for that person's affairs. For any adult citizen incarcerated in a penal institution or resident in an infirmary, psychiatric hospital, the application must be made by the person in charge of the administration of the institution.

4.1.15.2 Establishment of a National Civil and Biometric Database

In order to support the NIDS, Government shall establish a comprehensive National Civil and Biometric Database (NCBD) which shall contain information on personal identity and biometric data for citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu. The Government shall provide for through the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), the protection, security and

privacy of the identity information of registered persons stored in the NCBD, and through the legislation establishing the NIDS.

The NCBD shall therefore:

- i. Provide a secure and reliable platform for obtaining, maintaining and preserving identity information;
- ii. Store identity data collected about nationals and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu, as specified in the legislation;
- iii. Enable the identification, verification and authentication of citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu by the public and private sectors; and
- iv. Allow for the generation of identification cards containing information specified by the legislation.

Government shall ensure that only information as specified in legislation are collected and stored in the NCBD. Security safeguards that are in keeping with international best practices shall be implemented to ensure that information stored in the NCBD is secured against loss, damage, unauthorized use, disclosure and access.

The information stored in the NCBD shall only be used for:

- i. Provision of the national identification card to a registered person;
- ii. Verification of the identity of a registered person; and
- iii. Provision of information and data to a source authorized by legislation establishing the NIDS.

There shall be no disclosure of information contained in the NCBD about a registered person to a third party or public entity, unless so specified explicitly under the NIDS governing legislation.

Government is currently taking steps to ensure the protection and safety of data through the establishment and amendment of relevant Acts such the *Cybercrimes Act*, *Data Protection Bill*, *Electronic Transactions Act No. 24 of 2000* and *E-Business Act No.25 of 2000*. The *Cybercrimes Act* to include provisions for computer-related fraud or forgery, use of computers for malicious communication and unauthorized disclosure of investigation. The *Data Protection Bill* to regulate the use of personal information compiled on Ni-Vanuatu. The Bill is to protect the privacy of individuals in relation to personal data and the regulation of the collection, processing, storage, use and disclosure of certain information relating to individuals.

The *Electronic Transaction Act* governs electronic transactions and related matters, including legal recognition of and requirements for electronic records, formation and validity of electronic contracts as well as other communication of electronic records, electronic signatures, encryption and data protection as well as obligations and liability of intermediaries and e-commerce service providers. *E-Business Act* aims to “provide a robust and sustainable environment for the

development and growth of electronic business in or that is associated with Vanuatu and to regulate such electronic business” (section 2 (1) of the E-Business Act).

4.1.16 Establishment of a National Biometric Registration System Committee (BRSC)

In implementing this Policy, the Minister of Internal Affairs shall be responsible for establishment of the National Biometric Registration System Committee (BRSC) and the nomination of members to the committee as required under the Civil Status (Registration) Act. The BRSC shall perform the functions in pursuance to the Civil Status (Registration) Act.

4.1.17 Strategic Objective 2:

To facilitate the implementation of simplified procedures through which citizens may have access to an array of benefits and services, including social, economic and security programmes.

4.1.17.1 Improvement in Governance and Management of National Programs

Government shall facilitate the utilisation of the NIDS by the public sector to reduce costs and improve efficiency in the delivery of national, social, economic and security programmes to citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu within the context of relevant legislation. Through the use of the NIN, Government will be able to uniquely identify beneficiaries, resulting in more equitable and efficient administration of social services.

In this regard, the Government shall:

- i. Establish an operational framework, protocols and infrastructure for interoperability of the databases of Government entities;
- ii. Develop the methodology and platform for integrating and upgrading existing identification systems in public sector entities;
- iii. Require the use of the NIN by each individual when accessing the services of public sector entities; and
- iv. Ensure that personal information is shared and disclosed in an authorized manner, within the context of relevant legislation.

4.1.18 Strategic Objective 3

To support e-government and e-business for all Citizen to Government (C2G), Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizen (G2C) services.

4.1.18.1 Facilitation of e-Government and e-Business

Government shall facilitate ease of doing business by offering a fit for purpose e-government identity solution through:

- 4.2 Establishment of a secure and reliable electronic platform which is accessible to authorized public and private sector entities to enable the authentication of an individual's identity and data sharing within the context of relevant legislation;
- 4.3 Development of the operational framework and protocols (including standards and technical specifications), that will guide electronic transactions and data sharing across government and with relevant private sector entities, within the context of relevant legislation; and
- 4.4 Provision of timely verification and authentication of an individual's identity in keeping with the relevant legislation.

5. NATIONAL ID CARD POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the NIDS shall be spearheaded by the Office of the Minister of Internal Affairs (OMIA), with support from key public sector entities. The CRVS office shall be the Vanuatu National Identification Agency (VNIA).

The following steps have been identified as part of the NIDS Implementation Plan:

- i. Complete and disseminate the NIDS Policy as a Consultation Paper;
- ii. **Implement a Public Education and awareness Programme;**
- iii. Review and Circulate NIDS Legislation;
- iv. **Formalization and recognition of the CRVS Department as the Vanuatu National Identification Agency;**
- v. **Establish a modern Identity Management System;**
- vi. Complete setting up of the facilities to host the Identity Management System and the centralized NIDS database;
- vii. Develop competence and expertise in the use and management of the NIDS Identity Management System;
- viii. Complete preparations for the deployment of the NIDS Identity Management System;
- ix. Conduct pilot testing of the NIDS Identity Management System;

- x. Implement interoperability/inter-connectedness across the NIDS ecosystem; and
- xi. Effect full roll-out of NIDS.

Funding is being negotiated with the relevant government institution to finance the NIDS Implementation Plan. Enrolment of citizens commenced in July 2017, with all the population registered under the Civil Registration System.

Legislative Framework

The NIDS shall require an appropriate legal and regulatory framework to support its establishment and operation. The creation of this framework will be underpinned by careful review of several pieces of related legislation, which will require amendment in order to ensure the recognition and use of the national identification card and the NIN, alongside existing identification programmes, as well as, lawful sharing of personal, biometric and demographic information among relevant public entities.

A Consultancy for the Provision of a Legal Framework to support the NIDS Project shall be developed in drafting notes for the legislation to give effect to the NIDS. The amendments to the relevant Act(s) shall provide for the following, inter alia:

- Registration of citizens and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu;
- Generation and assignment of a NIN;
- Issuing of Identification cards;
- Establishment of a National Biometric Registration Database;
- Establishment of a National Biometric Registration System Committee;
- Data storage and management;
- Data sharing;
- Sanctions for illegal use of information;
- Protection of an individual's right to privacy; and
- Institutional arrangements.

The provisions of the relevant amended Acts shall apply to all citizens of Vanuatu and persons ordinarily resident in Vanuatu.

5.1.1 Amendment of Laws and related Regulations

The main pieces of legislation that will require review and amendment include, inter alia:

1. Civil Status (Registration) Act [Cap 61],
2. Marriage Act [Cap 60],
3. Immigration Act No.22 of 2005,

4. Citizenship Act [Cap112],
5. The Representation of the People Act [Cap 146]
6. Customs Act No. 15 of 2003
7. E-Business Act No. 25 of 2000
8. Electronic Transactions Act No. 24 of 2000
9. Road Traffic (Control) Act N. 23 of 2005
10. Land Reform Act No. 23 of 2000

The amendments are being proposed in order to facilitate recognition and use of the national identification card and the NIN alongside existing identification programmes and lawful sharing of personal, biometric and demographic information among relevant public entities.

Institutional Framework

5.1.2 Vanuatu National Identification Agency (VNIA)

The CRVS office shall have the responsibility for civil registration and civil identification functions. In order to facilitate this formal recognition, the CRVS office shall be placed under the purview of the OMIA. VNIA shall perform all functions carried out by the CRVS, in addition to civil identification functions, such as the registration of vital events and registration of all eligible persons, issuing of the NIN and national identification card and collection of related information that is to be contained in the National Civil Registration Database (NCRD).

5.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Facilitating Entities

Facilitating entities are existing Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) whose resources such as physical facilities, human resources, technical expertise and specialized equipment, will be leveraged to execute NIDS business processes. This shall be executed through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) within the context of relevant legislation. In varying degrees, some of these entities shall also have the authority to access certain NIDS data fields in order to verify records in their database and shall be able to upload updated records into the NIDS database, for example, the acquisition of citizenship through naturalization. Capacity building of facilitating entities shall be undertaken to ensure that each organization is NIDS ready. The main facilitating entities identified are the OGCIO, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Education.

Table 1 presents an indicative overview of the roles and responsibilities of facilitating entities with respect to implementation of the NIDS.

Agency	Roles and Responsibilities
Office of Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO)	e-Government shall support system controlled generation as well as the management and hosting of the NCBDB
Passport and Immigration and Citizenship	PIC shall provide information for persons who satisfy the conditions for citizenship

Ministry of Internal Affairs	Through the department of labour, issues work permits to non-Ni Vanuatu. MoIA shall provide the information for persons who satisfy the conditions for work permit.
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Public Education Program

A Public Education Programme shall be developed and implemented at the earliest stage in the policy implementation process. The programme will be broad based, multi-level and tailored to meet specific communication requirements as the implementation of the NIDS progresses. For example, initially, the programme will build awareness, sensitize and inform stakeholders, including public sector employees about the NIDS. Thereafter, the programme will encourage enrolment in the system.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is a key management tool for tracking the achievement of outputs, outcomes and impact of policy implementation. In this regard, the M&E framework shall be developed to facilitate continuous assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the NIDS Policy.

Broadly, the M&E framework will include:

- 6.1 Development and agreement of key performance (output and outcome) indicators;
- 6.2 Baseline data on indicators;
- 6.3 Data collection, analysis and reporting guidelines; and
- 6.4 Impact evaluation.

An M&E framework will be elaborated to complement the NIDS Implementation Plan. In implementing the monitoring framework, an incremental approach will be used, that is, in the first phase, a minimum set of core indicators will be defined, guided by the assessment of information availability. The set of indicators can be expanded, if it is deemed necessary, as it becomes clear where to invest to fill information gaps and enhance monitoring capacities.

The OMIA shall have overall responsibility for oversight and implementation of the M&E system for the NIDS policy. An Annual Progress report shall be compiled each year by the CRVS Office. An evaluation of the policy shall be conducted five (5) years after implementation of the policy.

7. ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND RELATED POLICIES

National sustainable Development Plan 2015 – 2030

The Vanuatu National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) – Vanuatu 2030, The People’s Plan aims to achieve the country’s national vision of a stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu by 2030.

The Plan aims to transform the country to one which affords its citizens a high quality of life founded on culture, traditional knowledge and Christian principles, and builds on Vanuatu’s development journey since independence through the support of a responsive and capable state institutions delivering quality public services, including health and education, to all citizens. Vanuatu 2030 – The People’s Plan has fifteen strategic goals and one hundred and sixty nine outcomes for the country’s development.

A NIDS is expected to improve efficiency in establishing and verifying identity, thereby improving business processes and service delivery, enhance the Government’s ability to implement a coherent e-government strategy, support ‘joined up’ government. The establishment of a verifiable identity through a NIDS will more effectively support identification of potential beneficiaries and determination of benefit eligibility, thus helping to ensure that social benefits are fairly and equitably administered.

The NIDS policy therefore directly supports national goals and outcomes that express the vision of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) – Vanuatu 2030, The People’s Plan, namely through the following three main development pillars:

NSDP Development Pillars (2016 -2030)	National Goal	National Outcome
Society	To ensure we maintain a vibrant cultural identity underpinning a peaceful, just and inclusive society that is supported by responsive and capable institutions, delivering quality services to all citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Healthy and Stable Population • Quality Education and Training for all • Effective Social Protection • Effective Governance
Environment	To ensure a pristine natural environment on land and at sea that continues to serve our food, cultural, economic and ecological needs, and enhance resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change and natural disasters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Urban and Rural Development
Economy	To ensure we have a stable economy based on equitable, sustainable growth that creates jobs and income earning opportunities accessible to all people in rural and urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Enabling Business environment for all • A Technology Enabled Society • Stable and Equitable growth

National Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy

The development of the National Identification System (NIDS) aligns itself to the expressed commitment of the Vanuatu Government through the ICT Policy to maximise the contribution, efficiency and effectiveness of information and communication technologies in achieving the National Vision of “A Just, Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu”, thereby empowering and benefiting every citizen and resident of Vanuatu.

The VNIC Policy taps on the creative existing collaboration and action of various public and private entities, academia, civil society and the public in general by OGCIO in setting up a platform for multi-

stakeholder and multi-sector coordination and collaboration. This will ensure that the ICT development will extend much further than the Government's actions alone could reach.

Interconnectivity of database among government entities will significantly increase the value, effectiveness and efficiency of government service initiatives in schools in particular and for individual stakeholders due to synergies and cost savings achieved through joint efforts. This is also true for Vanuatu citizens and residents in general, will see radical expansion on the use of ICT. ICTs will transform government services and public administration, as well as supercharge advance in all areas related to the socio-economic development.

8. DESCRIPTION OF VANUATU NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD (VNIC)

The Vanuatu National Identity Card (VNIC) is a based general purpose card (GPC) designed for identity verification and authentication. All citizens 16 years and older as well as all legal (alien) residents who have been in the country for two (2) years and have been registered are required to obtain a Vanuatu National Identity Card. The Card is the property of the Government of Vanuatu and may be withdrawn or withheld from an individual or issuance to an individual in accordance with the stipulated regulations and applicable law.

The VNIC is a physical token, a symbol representing the universal legal identification infrastructure of the Republic of Vanuatu, issued on the basis of the National Birth Registry Database – 'Register-Viz'. It contains a unique National Identification Number (NIN) which is derived from the official Birth Registration Certificate.

9. THE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD

Card Features

The National identity card is a specially designed card specifically for Vanuatu. It has an array of features which mark it out as a truly Vanuatu National Identity Card. The features and the overall design concept, including the various visible and hidden security features to safeguard against fraud and improper use, conform to the relevant international standards on card design and security. The card has both physical and electronic security features which were specially chosen to meet the extra demand for durability and security based on our local experience as a people.

The Card has a machine-readable zone (MRZ). In this context, the Card has taken into account future plans (including the proposed Bio-Voter Registration System) and for other purposes.

Though some of the features of the card are visible to the naked eye, some are not. These other features can only be seen or read with appropriate instruments. The reason for this is obvious, the several special features are intended to enhance its integrity by making it difficult and expensive if not impossible to forge, duplicate, fake or imitate it.

Security Features

The objective of the regime of security features for the Vanuatu National identity Card is to make it difficult if not impossible for it to be obtained and or used wrongly or fraudulently. An identity Card can be obtained and or used wrongly or fraudulently if it is easy to fraudulently obtain it, can be easily falsified, counterfeited, personalized, or the materials used in making it can be fraudulently obtained and used to easily produce genuine documents.

The security features selected for the design of the National identity card involves a combination of methods, processes, materials and technologies to make it difficult to copy, use and or obtain wrongly and include:

Those features that will be visible to the eyes, including physical features that can be observed by the human hands. The features that can be seen only with the aid of some special equipment or procedure;

Those security features that are based on a set of preselected software and encryption technologies to support the use of the card for multiple applications (at a later stage) and a certification authority system

Some of the security features will be put on the Card body as part of the pre-printed features while others will be put as part of the personalization process. The most important security features will come with the MRZ. The security features on the card body will include:

1. National colour of the flag printing
2. Vanuatu National emblem
3. Laser printing and engraving;
4. UV printing;
5. Micro text;
6. Card holder's portrait;

The policy on the card design is to ensure very limited use of proprietary technology or features so that the National Biometric Registration System Committee and the National CRVS committee are not unnecessarily constrained in the exercise of their discretion on the source of the card material, security features, source of supply and or manufacture, simplify the card personalization process and ensure smooth and effective general card management.

All security features will be high-end, both on the surface and will conform to the relevant ISO, ICAO and IEEE standards especially with respect to interfaces, durability, functionality and applications.

Information on Card

Part of the security arrangement for the VNIC includes the number and type of information that is contained on the face and back of the card. The card design has been carefully undertaken including the selection of the security features.

The VNIC will contain key information that will be utilized to meet the functions that the card is expected to perform, that is, adequate information on the face of it to enable satisfactory confirmation of the identity of the card holder.

It is understood that because the card will be used by a number of government and non-government systems within the country, and in compliance with standard and best global practice the card will contain information detailed in following two subsequent sections.

Front of the Card

The front of the card has the following information; National ID Number, Family Name, Other Name, Date of birth, Gender, Place of residence, card holder's portrait, MRZ and the Expiry date.

Back of the Card

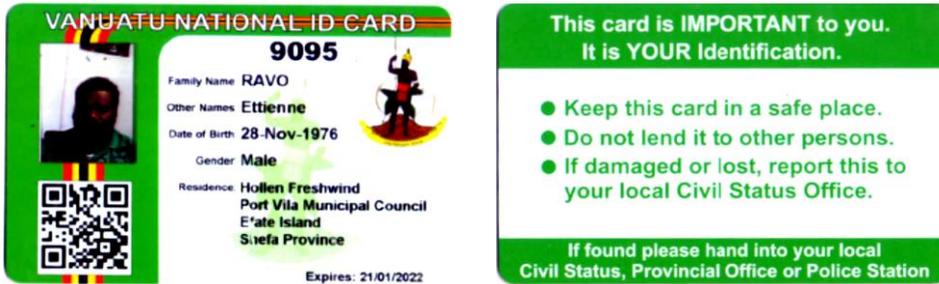
The back of the card has information in relation to its safe keeping measures and reporting procedures in the case of its misplacement or lost, card protection measures and local authorities to return lost cards if found.

National Identification Number (NIN)

The National Identification Number (NIN) is one of the most important information on the Card. The Civil Status (Registration) Act provides for any person in respect of whom an entry is made in the National Civil Registration System (NCRS) to be identified using unique and unambiguous features including the biometrics. The NIN is assigned to an individual during the first instance of the individual's birth registration. The NIN is in minimum a four (4) digit and a maximum of nine (9) number assigned to a registered person and by which the individual will be identified for life. Once issued to an individual, the same number will never be reassigned even after the person to whom it was assigned is dead.

Sample of the National Identity Card

The National ID card is depicted as below:



Ownership of Card

The National ID card remains the property of the Vanuatu Government. Any attempt to alter the information contained on the card in whatever way or form or to use the ID card in an unauthorized manner is a punishable offence.

When lost or misplaced, the cardholder should immediately notify the nearest CRVS office or Provincial CRVS Office or Police Station. Any Card that is found should be handed in to the nearest CRVS office. This information is very important and it is printed on the reverse side of the National ID card.

Validity and Expiration of Card

For Ni-Vanuatu, the ID card is valid for 5 years. It may be deactivated immediately when it expires.

For foreigners, the ID Cards will be valid for as long as their residence status qualifies or for 5 years, whichever is shorter.

The ID cards must be up to date, legible and free from stickers or any other form of defacement. Any defacement renders the card illegal for any use. The National ID Card is issued to a specific person and is not transferable.

Any update of information requiring the issuance of another ID card will be determined at the point of acceptance of the update information and immediately done by the CRVS office.

Charges and Payments for the National ID card

CRVS office will provide all Ni-Vanuatu with an ID card free of charge in the first instance. The CRVS office will provide all eligible Non-Ni Vanuatu with an ID card at a nominal cost per issued period, as specified under the Civil Status (Registration) Act.

Replacement of an ID card will attract a surcharge as per the Civil Status (Registration) Act.

All payments for ID cards will be made via Vanuatu Government Cashier only or through a specified government Financial Service Bureau (FSB).

10. USAGE OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD

The purpose of the Vanuatu National ID Cards is not to restrict citizens on movement within the country as this is in contrary to the National Constitution which guarantees the freedom of movement as a fundamental right of the individual. The National ID Card will be served for the following purposes.

Identification

The national identity card is a card designed to enable citizens and legal resident to prove their identity in Vanuatu. Therefore it is required that all eligible cardholders produce their National ID Card on demand by any law enforcement agent.

Furthermore, the possession of the National ID card by every citizen and legal resident will also serve to:

- 10.1.1** Facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of government services and access to social amenities and benefits under the Vanuatu E-Government platform;
- 10.1.2** Enhance the work of law enforcement and other security agencies in the maintenance of law and order.
- 10.1.3** The Vanuatu National ID Card which will also serve as prove of legal age for alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking, especially underage alcohol consumption. The Liquor Licensing Act (Cap 52) stipulates that alcohol may not be legally consumed by or sold to people who are less than 18 years of age.
- 10.1.4** Provide a means of identification (online/offline) in embassies, banks, credit bureau, at higher institution, for professional examinations, at airports, seaports, during elections (Municipal, Provincial and National elections) international labour mobility through the Australian Seasonal Workers Programs (SWP) and New Zealand Regional Seasonal Employment (RSE) programs and the issuance of other security documents, hospitals and for government related transactions.

There are three main ways in which the card can be used for identity;

1. Visual inspection

The card is given at a point of service. The service provider can check that the card is valid in the first place and then confirms the card belongs to the bearer by visual inspection of the photo and biodata.

2. Match on card

The card is provided at a point of service. The card is inserted into a card reader/acceptance device (CAD) the biometric reader and the device checks that the biometrics in the card matches the sample individual biometric provided by the individual at the point of service.

3. Real-time database check

The card is provided at a point of service. The card is inserted into the card reader/acceptance device (CAD) and the individual's information on the card is then used to identify the individual's record in the NID and to provide information on the individual that is not in card.

The National Identity Card will be used to promote economic activities through the facilitation of consumer and other financial transactions such as:

- a) Facilitate 'Know Your Customer' (KYC), financial and banking transactions, including credit bureau and consumer credit businesses; and
- b) Facilitate efforts at achieving 'financial inclusion' (*individuals and businesses have access to useful and affordable financial products and services that meet their needs – transactions, payments, savings, credit and insurance etc.*) in the Vanuatu economy.

Other Government and Social Services

The multi-functional nature of the VNIC means that other services can be safely incorporated into it. The result is that Vanuatu citizens will be required to carry fewer cards while at the same time having easier access to a wide range of services. These include, in particular, obtaining of drivers' license, opening of bank accounts, obtaining an International travel passport, dealing in land transactions and other such transactions requiring identity verification especially as provided for in the Civil Status (Registration) Act.

11. GOVERNING LAW AND REGULATIONS

The Civil Status Act

The Civil Status Act provides for the establishment of the Bio-Voter Registration System Committee (BVRSC) and CRVS Committee. Both committees are empowered by the Civil Status Act to register persons eligible for registration, and it is empowered to *issue the National Identity Cards or the VNIC.*

In specific terms therefore, according to the Civil Status Act, the BVRSC and CRVS Committee will be responsible for:

- 11.1.1** Set up, operation and management of the National Birth Registry Database
- 11.1.2** Harmonization and integration of all existing identification schemes;
- 11.1.3** Registration of all citizens and legal residents and assignment of unique National Identification Number or card (NIN/VNIC) to each registered person;
- 11.1.4** Issuance of Vanuatu National Identity Card (VNIC);
- 11.1.5** The provision of identity verification and authentication services and other related matters.

Eligibility for Possession of the National Identity Card

Only duly registered persons can expect to be issued a VNIC since successful registration is a condition precedent. Eligibility for the possession of a Vanuatu National Identity Card is therefore based first and foremost on the fact that an individual is eligible to be registered.

Eligibility for registration is provided for under the Civil Status Act (registrable persons) and it states that only those who are 16 years and above can be issued a VNIC. It also provides for the registration of all legal residents.

Under the Civil Status (Registration) Act, the CRVS is also empowered to carry out registration of births and deaths and other related vital events such as adoption, marriages and divorces. Accordingly the CRVS Committee shall collaborate with the Ministry of Health through all health facilities to obtain and document births so as to ensure full registration and proper issuance of VNIC to qualifying citizens and also use the record of deaths to update active and inactive VNICs.

The CRVS office shall provide the VNIC free of charge to all citizens. However legal foreign residents, who are eligible, shall pay a nominal fee for their Cards, as stipulated under the Civil Status (Registration) Act. It is recommended that the card be carried at all times by the cardholders; it would enable a card holder easily assert his/her identity.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is restated here that an individual becomes entitled to an ID card from the day he/she turns 16 years old. Foreigners become entitled immediately when their age and residence status qualifies them. However, a person at birth is required by the Act for birth registration and to obtain his/her unique National Identification Number (NIN) and subsequently is qualified to be issued a VNIC at the age of 16.

The ID card is issued to an individual after successful registration in the Birth Registration System and the Bio-Voter Registration system and assignment of a Birth Registration Number which is assigned as his/her NIN.

Individual's Obligations under the Law

It is a criminal offence for an individual:

- 11.1.6** To refuse to provide relevant information as required from an individual by the Act to the CRVS Office;
- 11.1.7** While giving information, to knowingly or recklessly make a statement or provide information to the CRVS office or any of its partners which is false in any material particular;

An individual is obliged to notify the CRVS Office immediately if the individual becomes aware of:

- 11.1.8** Any changes affecting the information recorded on about himself/herself in the National ID;
- 11.1.9** Any error the individual notices on the information recorded on himself/herself in the National ID;

The individuals are obliged by Civil Status (Registration) Act, to report every new birth and every death to the nearest CRVS office for the purpose of registration of all vital events.

Application for a National ID card and its Issuance

All eligible persons residing in Vanuatu must present themselves for registration at a designated CRVS registration center. Other Vanuatu citizens residing overseas are to apply online through the CRVS website and provide all necessary information as stated on the online application form.

All demanded demographic, biometric, and other information must be provided by the registrant at the time of data capture for processing and storage in the National ID. A neat passport portrait size of the National ID card bearer must be provided without a cap, hat or sun glasses.

All or any available 'primary source' document by which demographic information claimed can be verified must be produced for scanning by the CRVS registration officer who will indicate how verification was done and indicate so when no document is produced.

CRVS office shall thereafter (post de-duplication) assign and issue a unique VNIN to the registrant.

The individual's information in the National ID together with the assigned VNIN shall be used to produce the VNIC for the person.

The VNIC produced by CRVS Office shall be delivered by any one of the approved ways or through the registration center to the registrant.

12. USE OF CARD BY THE INDIVIDUAL

General Use by the Individual

- 12.1.1 The National ID card may be used to prove or confirm personal identity at a preference and upon the individual's consent.
- 12.1.2 The National ID card may be demanded and used with the individual's consent to verify his/her identity by financial institutions, insurance agencies, Consulates and Embassies, Airline Operators, Credit Bureaus, Consumer Credit Institutions, Educational Institutions, Government Institutions, International Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and other business enterprises (foreign and local).
- 12.1.3 The National ID card can be used by the individual by simply presenting it for physical comparison of his/her facial picture in person with the one on the card or to enable a match-on-card exercise to be conducted. He/she may additionally be required to provide his/her National Identification card where it has been requested for and obtained, nonrepudiation and indemnity to the relying party are implied.
- 12.1.4 The National ID card shall also be used by the individual impliedly when he/she conducts a commercial transaction in which his/her ID card is required from him/her either directly or indirectly.
- 12.1.5 The National ID card can be used by the individual by simply presenting it for physical comparison of his/her facial picture in person with the one on the card or to enable a match-on-card during a municipal, provincial and national voting on the election day for verification purposes and proof of voting eligibility.

Mandatory Use of Vanuatu National Identification Card (VNIC)

The Civil Status Act provides for the mandatory use of the VNIC issued and assigned to a registered individual to be presented for the following transactions:

- Application for and issuance of an international travel passport;
- Application and renewal of driving license
- Opening of an individual or personal bank account;
- Purchase of insurance policies;

- Purchase, transfer and registration of land by any individual or any transaction connected therewith subject to the provisions of the Land Use Act;
- Such transactions pertaining to individuals as may be prescribed and regulated by the VNPF Act;
- Such transactions that have social security implications (VNPF);
- Specific consumer credit transactions;
- Registration of voters;
- Payment of taxes;
- Other such relevant government services; and
- Any other transactions which the CRVS Department or the Minister responsible may so prescribe and list in the Vanuatu Government Gazette;
- Purchase of alcohol and cigarette by underage and to serve as prove of legal age for alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking.

The effective date for the commencement of the mandatory use of the VNIC (Vanuatu National ID Card) shall be specified by the CRVS Department or the Ministry of Internal affairs and a public notice shall be given.

Use of Personal Information in the National Registry Database – Register VIZ

The personal information on each registered individual in the National Registry Database – ‘RegisterVIZFour’ may be accessed and or passed on to law enforcement agencies without the consent of the individual. (CRVS Office shall adhere to the necessary requirements of a court process and observance of relevant constitutional provisions) except as provided for under specified section of the Act.

The personal information on each individual in ‘RegisterVIZFour’ may be shared with other government agencies and public bodies without the consent of the owner in view of the provisions of the Civil Status Act which empowers the CRVS to harmonize and integrate identity databases in government agencies, where an individual has sought or is seeking for a particular government agency's service and where the E-Government platform for Government-wide service delivery efficiency improvement schemes demand it.

The Civil Status Act provides safeguards and penalties for the unauthorized access and use of the personal information of an individual in the National Registry Database. Other technology based safeguards have also been put in place to ensure that the use of personal information of individuals under this situation is not abused.

Card Misuse and Grounds for Cancellation

The Civil Status Act provides the conditions under which the National ID card can be cancelled and withdrawn.

However cardholders are required to note that the National ID card is issued to an individual and should not be lent or given to any other person(s) to use. It should not be used as a form of collateral or deposited in lieu for any reason. Lending or giving of National ID card to any other person shall result in the deactivation of the card.

Any fraudulent use of the National ID card must be reported to the police or the nearest CRVS Office immediately.

It is a criminal offence to knowingly accept and or deal in a National ID card that has been deactivated or cancelled. It is also a criminal offence to replicate or tamper with the National ID card.

The Civil Senior Registrar through the CRVS Office may cancel any Vanuatu National Identity Card and take and retain possession of it in any of the following cases, if:

- 12.1.6** The holder is under 18 years of age and the parent or guardian who gave his or her consent to the issue of the National Identity Card has written to the Chief registrar withdrawing that consent
- 12.1.7** The National Identity Card was issued to the holder in the mistaken belief that the holder was, at the time of issue, a citizen
- 12.1.8** The holder has lost, been deprived of or renounced citizenship under sections 14 to 17 of the Citizenship Act [CAP 112]
- 12.1.9** 2 or more valid Vanuatu National Identity Card are in existence in respect of the holder and there is no longer any sufficient reason why that should continue to be the case
- 12.1.10** The chief registrar becomes aware of circumstances which, if they had existed immediately before the National Identity Card was issued (whether or not they did exist at that time) would have led the chief registrar to refuse to issue the National Identity Card to the applicant.
- 12.1.11** A person who has possession or control of a Vanuatu National Identity Card to which these circumstances apply must, on demand by the chief registrar, surrender the National Identity Card to the CRVS office or to the chief registrar.
- 12.1.12** The Chief registrar may also cancel any Vanuatu National Identity Card and take and retain possession of it in any of the following circumstances:

12.1.12.1 The Chief registrar issues to the holder another Vanuatu National Identity Card in substitution for the first one.

12.1.12.2 The Vanuatu National Identity Card has expired, the chief registrar may, on application by the holder, issue another Vanuatu National Identity Card to replace that National Identity Card.

12.1.12.3 The Chief registrar is of the opinion that the Vanuatu National Identity Card has been damaged or defaced as to render it unsuitable for use. The Chief registrar may, on application by the holder, issue another Vanuatu National Identity Card to replace that National Identity Card.

12.1.12.4 The Vanuatu National Identity Card has been lost or stolen:

- The status of the National Identity Card in the system shall be changed to Lost or Stolen
- If the Lost or Stolen National Identity Card is returned to the Civil Status's Office, the status of the National Identity Card in the system shall be changed to Cancelled, and the Card shall be physically cancelled.
- The Chief registrar may, on application by the holder, issue another Vanuatu National Identity Card to replace the lost or stolen National Identity Card.

12.1.13 The Chief registrar reasonably believes that particulars recorded in the National Identity Card are incorrect, the Chief registrar may, on application by the holder, issue another Vanuatu National Identity Card to replace that National Identity Card.

12.1.14 The Chief registrar reasonably believes that the Vanuatu National Identity Card has been obtained by means of any wilfully false or misleading statement. The CRVS office may, on application by the holder, issue another Vanuatu National Identity Card to replace that National Identity Card.

12.1.15 The Chief registrar reasonably believes that the Vanuatu National Identity Card is in the wrongful possession of any person other than the holder. The Chief registrar must, unless the holder has been issued with a new National Identity Card, return the National Identity Card to the holder.

When the holder of the Vanuatu National ID Card died, the CRVS office cancels the National Identity Card. The chief registrar is authorized to do so in emergency regulations made under Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Vanuatu.

A person who has possession or control of a Vanuatu National Identity Card to which these circumstances apply must, on demand by the Chief registrar, surrender the National Identity Card to the CRVS chief registrar Officer.

Various other acts which constitutes 'card misuse' and or unauthorized access and refusal to give relevant information, by National ID cardholders and or third parties are set out in the Civil Status Act including the defined offences and penalties.

Safeguarding the National ID card

The Civil Status Act makes specific provision for safeguarding the national ID card. In particular:

12.1.16 It is the responsibility of each National ID cardholder to safeguard, keep secure and preserve his/her card in good form.

12.1.17 A national ID card holder must report immediately to the CRVS Office if his/her card is lost, stolen, damaged, tampered with, or destroyed.

12.1.18 Any lost and found card must be returned to the owner or to the nearest CRVS Office immediately.

12.1.19 If a lost National ID card is not handed in within a reasonable time (two weeks), it shall be cancelled immediately.

12.1.20 The utilization of a cancelled ID card by an individual is a criminal offence.

A Vanuatu resident may request at any CRVS office for a replacement card and collection must be in person. For citizens residing overseas, request for a replacement of card can be made online through the CRVS website. Should a lost Card be found after a replacement has been requested for or issued, there would be no reversal of the process and the previous ID card remains cancelled and must either be returned to CRVS Office or destroyed by cutting into suitably small (less than 1cm) pieces before disposal.

It is a criminal offence to wilfully destroy or mutilate a National ID card.

There shall be a charge as specified under the Act for replacing all damaged and or lost cards.

Loss of card

In case of a lost National ID card, the following procedures are to be undertaken by the recipient of the lost card:

- 12.1.21** Call the CRVS Office contact centre on the telephone number provided on the back of the card or go to the nearest CRVS registration centre to lodge a report on the loss.
- 12.1.22** Report the lost card at the nearest police station.
- 12.1.23** Obtain and fill a form for 'Notification of lost/stolen cards' at the nearest CRVS office or go online through the CRVS website.

Any person who finds or comes into possession of a national ID card which does not belong to him/her shall return it without delay, either to the person to whom it is issued or to the nearest CRVS office or police station.

The National ID card and Protection of Individual Privacy

The CRVS Office has adopted a Privacy Policy which was developed to determine how to use a combination of technologies, improved processes and procedures and technological innovations to help protect the privacy of individuals. Care has been taken to institute measures which do not have to be stated here to safeguard personal information and ensure that individual privacy is enhanced and preserved.

All the provisions of the Civil Status Act have been observed and shall continue to be observed. Also all provisions of laws have been taken into account. Extant technological innovations on security in information systems have been exploited and applied to ensure the security of the Biometric Registration System (BRS), the National ID card, the implementation, operation and management of the entire system. Deliberate efforts have been made to comply with international standards and guidelines.

The system is provided with the highest possible security in order to protect, preserve and secure the personal data on each individual and thereby assure their individual privacy and protection from identity fraud. Among the features of the system are the following:

- 12.1.24** Only authorized agencies can have access to the applications and data relevant to their statutory responsibilities;
- 12.1.25** Access to other data by agencies and other third parties shall be in accordance to the BVRS and CRVS access guidelines and compliance with end user operational terms and conditions;

- 12.1.26 Agencies are forbidden from unauthorized access to another's data;
- 12.1.27 Both National ID and information on National ID cards are accorded the highest security and protected from access by unauthorized persons or bodies;
- 12.1.28 Information on National ID card are encrypted to make it impossible to decipher by unauthorized parties;
- 12.1.29 Access to National ID is only through secure private network with layers of filters and restrictive access rights and as licensed by the CRVS Office;
- 12.1.30 Only security cleared CRVS staff shall be responsible for the maintenance of the National ID and provision of information from it; and
- 12.1.31 Tough sanctions and penalties including criminal prosecution are imposed for unauthorized access in the Civil Status Act.

Limitations and Restrictions

The National ID card does not confer Vanuatu citizenship on a person. It only provides a medium for guarantying the identity of the Cardholder.

13. GENERAL ISSUES

This is the National Identity Card Policy of the BVRs and CRVS. It may be reviewed by the CRVS Department to bring it up to date with overall government policy directives and vision for economic development of the Government of Vanuatu.

It should be clearly understood that the National ID Card remains the property of the Vanuatu Government and the Government reserves the right to withdraw it from any cardholder without providing any information and or reason for its action.

By registering for and receiving a National ID Card, individuals are deemed to have accepted the conditions and terms for the issuance and use of the National ID card and for the preservation of personal information of an individual in the National Registry and for the provision of access to and use of such information for purposes of identity verification and authentication and for matters related thereto especially as set out in this Policy.

Where an individual is discovered to have obtained a National ID card under false pretences, the card would be withdrawn from him and appropriate action taken against him for the offence of misrepresentation and or false pretence as the case may be under the law.

This National ID card Policy should be read in conjunction with the National CRVS Policy and the Civil Status (Registration) Act. Where any conflict exists, the provisions of the Civil Status (Registration) Act shall prevail.

Bibliography

Civil Status (Registration) Act [Cap 61] (Vanuatu)

Harbitz, M. and Arcos Axt, I. (2011). Identification and Governance Polices, pp.13-14.

Vanuatu National ICT Policy

Appendix 1 – NIDS and NIC Implementation Plan

OUTCOMES	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS	TIMEFRAME
Strategic Objective 1: <i>To provide the basis for a robust governance framework, including legal and institutional arrangements, for the issuance of a lifetime and secure National Identification Number (NIN) and a National Identification Card (NIC) to each citizen and person ordinarily resident in Vanuatu.</i>				
1.1 A comprehensive policy framework for implementation of a NIDS and NIC	1.1.1 Complete and submit Draft NIDS and NIC Policy as a Consultation Paper	1.1.1.1 Draft NIDS and NIC Policy approved as a Policy by Council of Ministers (COM)	Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) and COM	June 2018
1.2 A robust legislative framework to govern a NIDS and NIC	1.2.1 Prepare drafting instructions	1.2.1.1 Drafting instructions prepared by September 2018	MoIA and MoJ	October 2018
	1.2.2 Develop and submit a Bill for the establishment of a NIDS	1.2.2.1 Bill for the establishment of a NIDS tabled to be debated in Parliament by November 2018	MoIA and MoJ, COM, Vanuatu Parliament	December 2018
	1.2.3 Enact legislation to establish a NIDS	1.2.3.1 Legislation for the establishment of a NIDS enacted by December 2018	MoIA and MoJ, COM, Vanuatu Parliament	December 2018
1.3 A formal institutional framework to support effective governance of a NIDS	1.3.1 Formalize all functions of NIDS through CRVS Department	1.3.1.1 All functions of NIDS are formally endorsed by MoIA to CRVS Department	MoIA and MoJ, COM	March 2019
1.4 A broad-based multi-level public education and awareness program	1.4.1 Design public education and awareness program	1.4.1.1 Public education and awareness program designed by June 2019	MoIA	June 2019
	1.4.2 Implement full-scale public education and awareness programme	1.4.2.1 Public education and awareness program implemented by August 2019	MoIA, OGCI and Media	August 2019
Strategic Objective 2: <i>To facilitate the implementation of simplified procedures through which citizens may have access to a list of benefits and services including social, economic and security programs.</i>				
2.1 Interoperability / interconnectedness across the NIDS ecosystem.	2.1.1 Implement business process review of CRVS Department and facilitating agencies.	2.1.1.1 First business process reviews conducted by September 2019	MoIA, MoH, MoE, MoJ	October 2019

	2.1.2 Establish registration centres for NIN and NIC	2.1.2.1 NID and NIC registration centres established by December 2019	MoIA, MoH, MoE, MoJ and OGCIO	December 2019
	2.1.3 Prepare Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Memorandum of Understands (MOUs)	2.1.3.1 SLAs and MOUs prepared by May 2020	MoIA, MoH, MoE, MoJ and OGCIO	June 2020
OUTCOMES	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS	TIMERAME
Strategic Objective 3: To support e-government and e-business for all citizen to Government (C2G), Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizen (G2C) services.				
3.1 A modern Identity Management System for deployment and use in Vanuatu	3.1.1 Develop and install NIDS	3.1.1.1 NIDS developed and installed by July 2020	CRVS and OGCIO	August 2020
	3.1.2 Establish data centres and backup facilities	3.1.2.1 Dedicated data centre and back-up facilities established by November 2019	CRVS and OGCIO	December 2020
	3.1.3 Undertake training and capacity building in the use and management of NIDS identity management system	3.1.3.1 Training and capacity building carried out by CRVS department staff and the facilitating agencies	CRVS, MoH, MoE, and OGCIO	September 2020
	3.1.4 Undertake final NIDS assessment and confirm acceptance of the system	3.1.4.1 Draft acceptance letter (provisional or final)	CRVS and OGCIO	October 2020
3.2 Phase 1 deployment of NIDS identity management system	3.2.1 Conduct phase 1 of the NIDS deployment with targeted population groups.	3.2.1.1 Confirm all functionalities are operated to the level of excellence requested.	CRVS and OGCIO	December 2020
3.3 Public Roll-out of the NIDS identity management system	3.3.1 Implement full roll-out of the NIDS	3.3.1.1 At least 80 percent of citizens and persons ordinarily resident enrolled and registered by end of 2021	CRVS and OGCIO	December 2021