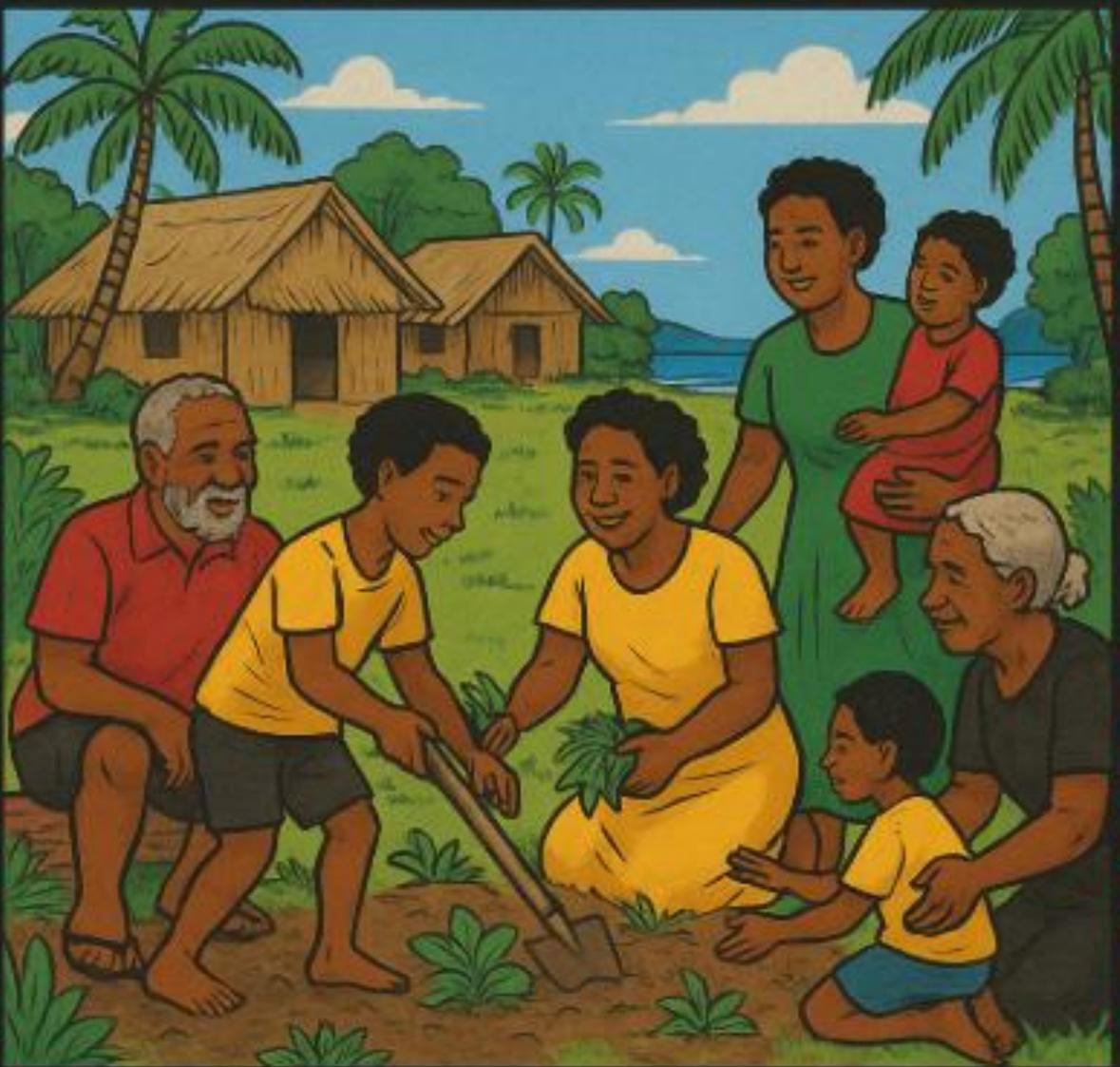




LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER IN VANUATU

A GUIDE TO HUMAN SECURITY



Looking After Each Other in Vanuatu - A Guide to Human Security

Introduction: Why This Matters for You, Me, and Our Country

In Vanuatu, our strength comes from our people—our families, our villages, and our culture. We care about the safety of our families, our health, and the future for our young people.

Human security is about more than just police. It's about making sure every **ni-Vanuatu**, from the smallest child to the oldest elder, has what they need to live well.

When we look after **each other**, we also protect **Vanuatu**.

What Human Security Means for Us?

Human Security comes under Pillar 6 in Vanuatu's National Security Strategy. Human security means that *you and I* feel safe and supported in all parts of life not just from violence but the things that really matter everyday.

It means:

- We have enough food to eat and for our families
- We can live without fear, violence and abuse
- We stay healthy and can access good health care
- We can work and support our families
- Our land, sea and environment are clean and protected
- Our rights are respected and protected by law and custom

When people in our **villages and towns** are healthy, peaceful, and supported, the whole country is secure. People are less likely to turn to conflict, crime or violence. This builds national stability, peace and resilience.

Environmental Security and Human Security in Vanuatu

Environmental security is directly linked to human security. Our communities rely on the environment for food, water, shelter, and livelihoods. When the environment is damaged—through climate change, natural disasters, rising sea levels, or resource overuse—it threatens our ability to live safely.

These challenges can lead to food insecurity, forced relocation, loss of cultural sites, and conflict over scarce resources. Protecting our environment means protecting our people. Strong environmental governance, disaster preparedness, and sustainable practices are essential to safeguard both the land and the well-being of every ni-Vanuatu. Biosecurity is critical at this point as it can prevent our country from evasive species, pests and diseases such as the Rhinoceros beetles.

Economic Security and Human Security

Economic security is a key part of human security. When individuals and families have stable incomes, access to jobs, and control over resources, they are better able to meet their basic needs like food, education, health care, and housing. When there are not enough jobs or fair opportunities, people can struggle. Without work opportunities, people become more vulnerable to poverty, exploitation, and social unrest.

In Vanuatu, many people depend on agriculture, fishing, tourism, and small businesses. These sectors are highly sensitive to climate change, natural disasters, and global economic shifts. Limited access to markets, finance, and infrastructure can increase inequality and hardship, especially in rural areas.

Personal Security and Human Security

Personal security is one of the core pillars of human security. Personal security is about protecting people from violence, abuse, and threats — this includes being safe from domestic violence, gender-based violence, theft, assault, and harmful traditional practices. When people live in fear or are harmed in their homes or communities, their sense of worth, health, and ability to participate in society are weakened. In such instances, our health systems must be fully equipped with resources, human resources and technical capabilities to effectively respond to pandemics, emergencies and disasters whenever they arise.

In many parts of Vanuatu, cultural values and custom play a powerful role in guiding behaviour and resolving conflict. While custom can promote peace and respect, it must work alongside national laws to ensure everyone's rights are protected especially women, children, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.

Political Security and Human Security

Political security is an important part of human security because it helps keep things fair, stable, and peaceful. In a politically security and stable environment, there is economic growth. Political security is about making sure everyone feels safe and free to take part in the political life in Vanuatu. This means people can vote, share their opinions, feel involved in decision-making, and can speak up if leaders aren't doing their job, without fear or discrimination.

How Vanuatu Is Doing Today

Vanuatu is prospering, growing and improving, and that is something we can all be proud of. But we still face challenges that affect our families, communities and our way of life.

Challenges affecting you, me and our security

Let's look at three problems that affect people across Vanuatu today — and what we can do about them *together*.

Our Health and Well-being

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) is classified by the National Security Council as Vanuatu's main KILLER.

Our people are the heart of our national strength. But today, NCDs like heart disease, diabetes, and strokes are rising fast. These weaken our workforce, reduce productivity, and put pressure on our health system.

- NCD is no longer a disease that only affects the elderly, it starts now from young people to the elderly.
- NCDs now cause **more than 1 in 3 deaths** in Vanuatu.
- They are often linked to our diets, our habits, and our lifestyles.



If we do not act now, many of us could get sick too early, and our families and economy will suffer. A sick population reduces our capacity to respond to disasters, and other challenges.

When you and I look after our health, we build a stronger Vanuatu. Healthy lifestyle, healthy eating and regular exercise can contribute to our wellbeing.

Ending Violence in Our Families

Many women, girls—and sometimes men and boys—face violence in their homes. Violence weakens families, spreads fear and breaks trust.



National Impact: When violence is common, law enforcement is stretched, children grow up traumatised, and communities lose their sense of safety. This weakens our ability to stick together in good times and bad times.

Violence brings pain, fear, and silence into our homes. It also causes problems for our whole community, like:

- Poor mental health
- Absence from work or school

- Sickness or unwanted pregnancies

But what can *you and I* can do?

- Respect one and other
- Speak out when we see abuse
- Support our sisters, mothers, daughters, brothers and survivors with compassion
- Teach respect and equality in our homes, churches, schools and workplaces
- Solve problems through dialogue and respect, not violence
- Work with chiefs, pastors and leaders to uphold the law and to promote peace

The Future of Our Young People

Vanuatu has a fast-growing youth population—full of ideas, and potential. But too many lack pathways to education, jobs, self-esteem, self-confidence and purpose. This can lead to frustration, lack of skills, low education levels, abuse of alcohol or drugs, crime, violence, broken families, and trouble in our towns. More and more young people are leaving the islands to find work.



Together, we can help by:

- Motivating and bringing back self-esteem and self-confidence to our youth
- Creating more job readiness training and learning opportunities
- Encouraging local investment in job creation, especially in agriculture, fishing, tourism, services and industry
- Expand safe migration and employment pathways including overseas labour programs
- Offering community service, sports activities or training through community groups
- Respecting youth voices and including them in village national plans

If we invest in our youth, we are building the future of Vanuatu—with hope, respect and dignity not anger.

Why Human Security Is National Security

The security of Vanuatu is linked to our wellbeing. If you and I do not feel safe, then Vanuatu is not secure. When families are strong, youth are engaged, women are safe, and health systems function. When these are in place, the nation is better equipped to respond to internal and external threats.

A country is not safe and secure because of police or border officers. It is strong because it has:

- Healthy and capable citizens
- Educated and employed youth
- Peaceful and law-abiding communities
- Strong institutions rooted in custom and law
- Unity in facing and responding to global, regional and local risks — from pandemics to natural disasters to cyber threats.

This is why human security is also national security. Our defence system is based on people and not just power.

What All of Us Can Do

Every person in Vanuatu has a role to play. It starts in our homes, our villages, our schools, our churches and our workplaces.

You and Me Can...	By Doing This...
Care for our health	Eat better, stay active, and visit the doctor regularly
Stop violence	Speak up, protect others, promote non-violent solutions
Support youth	Offer skills training, mentorship, job support and create safe spaces for them to learn
Work with others	Join community groups, churches, women’s groups, youth groups, sports groups, NGOs and local leaders to bring about change
Honour custom and law	Use both to uphold fairness, justice and respect
Build economic security	Support local businesses, share opportunities and help others earn a living
Take part in decisions	Share your voice and listen to others with respect
Promote political stability	Vote responsibly, support fair and honest leadership without corruption

Let’s Build a Safer Vanuatu Together

We are part of a culture that respects and knows how to take care of people. We have the wisdom of our elders, the energy of our youth and the care of our families. These are national assets.

Human security starts with all of us - at home, in the community and in the choices we make every day.