

## **Damian Farrell**

**Australian Volunteer for International Development (AVID)  
Managed by Australian Red Cross**

My name is Damian Farrell, I am an Australian volunteer working with the Disability Desk within the Ministry of Justice and Community Services in Port Vila, Vanuatu. My family and I have been living here for nearly four years now.

The Disability Desk plays an integral role in ensuring that people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups can enjoy the same human rights as the rest of society. The experience of working in Vanuatu has been wonderful, moving and at times challenging. It feels great to know that as a volunteer I can make a positive impact on the lives and communities of those I work with.

My background has been working in the Community Services sector for more than 20 years and it is a fantastic experience to have the opportunity to continue to learn something new every day. Following Tropical Cyclone Pam in March 2015, the Disability Desk has been very busy helping out with Disaster Risk Response activities. Now we are also supporting communities to manage resources such as food and water as the influence of the El Nino phenomenon begins to bite.



**Figure 1: Leitangi Solomon, Mylee and Damian after speaking at the Climate Change Panel Discussion on building a resilient Vanuatu October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015.**



Figure 2: Talking with communities in Epi Island following TC Pam in march 2015

The Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program is funded and delivered by the Australian Government in partnership with the Australian Red Cross, Australian Volunteers International and Scope Global. The program is a central and valued part of Australia's aid program. Australian volunteers are highly-skilled people selected to help developing countries achieve their sustainable development goals. For more information about the program, please visit: <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/avid/pages/avid.aspx>