

Challenge Account Vanuatu
Constitution Building
Lini Highway
PO Box 192
Port Vila, Vanuatu
Tel: (678) 26918 / 26415
Fax: (678) 26419

Email: mcavanuatu@vanuatu.gov.vu



Compte de Défi de Millénaire Vanuatu
Bâtiment de Constitution
Lini Route
BP 192
Port Vila, Vanuatu
Tel: (678) 26918 / 26415
Fax: (678) 26419
Email: mcavanuatu@vanuatu.gov.vu

Reducing Poverty through Improved Infrastructure

Community Consultations:

EFATE COMMUNITIES AWARENESS CONSULTATION MEETINGS

MELE VILLAGE

FEBRUARY 5, 2007

3:00 PM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present:

Delegation Members:

MCA Program Management Unit

Lennox Vuti, Program Director
Tony Amos Sewen, Economic Analyst
Allen Faerua, Infrastructure Analyst
Catherine Malosu, Environment and Social Impact Officer

Shefa Provincial Council

Michel Kalorai, Provincial Planner
Stanley John, Assistant Physical Planner
Councillor and Chairman of Shefa Development Committee
Councillor and Chairman of Shefa Finance Committee
Kalmairei, Councillor, North Efate
Kaltu, Area Secretary for North Efate

Members of the Community: *(Please see list attached)*

Person Acting as Chairman: Shefa Provincial Planner

Person Acting as Secretary: Environment and Social Impact Officer

Proceedings:

The meeting commenced at 3:00 pm

Councillor and Chairman of the Shefa Finance Committee, Councillor Sope conveyed a word of welcome to the visiting delegation. He further offered an opening prayer prior to commencement of presentation by members of delegation.

I. Introduction

The Chairman thanked everyone, especially members of the Mele village community for attending the awareness consultation meeting. He introduced individual members of the delegation, consisting of staffs from the MCA Program Management Unit and Shefa Provincial Council. The delegation has just convened a consultation meeting with Pang pang village. Awareness consultation meetings have already been convened with all other villages around Efate. Mele village remains the only village left to be consulted.

He briefly presented a brief history on the idea to establish an Efate Ring Road project. In 2004 to 2005, a letter from communities around Efate was submitted to the Shefa Provincial Council proposing for an up-grade to be undertaken for the Efate Ring Road. The idea has remained intact and has persevered through out the years.

II. Purpose of Awareness Consultation Meeting

The chairman handed over to the MCA Program Director, Mr. Vuti, to make a presentation on the purpose of convening such an awareness meeting.

Mr. Vuti was grateful and thanked the company and support from the team of the Shefa Provincial Council to accompany MCA Vanuatu to commence and complete the awareness raising activity around Efate.

He raised questions to community members whether or not news has been received regarding the MCA program. This consultation meeting is an opportunity to provide correct information based on news received from secondary sources. A second main reason is to seek community consensus and feedback on the Efate Ring Road project. The MCA team that is currently present in the meeting is here to respond to questions and queries.

Mr. Vuti reminded everyone that there will be an up-coming visit by a team of members of the US Congress between Feb 12 and 16 2007. A second visit of two other members of the US Congress will take place on first week of March 2007. They will be visiting all villages around Efate and consult with members of the communities.

III. History of the MCA Program

Mr. Vuti continued to provide a brief on the history of the MCA program. President Bush of the United States of America made a declaration in Mexico, 2001 for the need to reduce Poverty around the world. The US Government then established Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) as the administrative arm to action this declaration by overseeing the overall management of the MCA program. Vanuatu, together with 15 other countries were selected as eligible for MCC funding. The funding allocation for Vanuatu is 65.7 Million USD and which has to be spent within the remaining four (4) years, until 2011 when the compact is completed.

He emphasized the impossibilities of misusing the funds due to stringent agreements that are currently in force and governing the management of MCC funds, hence, the ensuring no misuse of funds.

IV. Proposed Sub-projects under the MCA Program

Mr. Vuti provided a brief on the nature of sub-projects to receive financial assistance. Overall, there are 12 sub-projects. 8 road projects which will be implemented on Tanna, Efate, Malekula, Ambae, Santo and Malo; 2 wharfs to be built on Lamén Bay and Lolong, 1 airport up-grading on South West Malekula, 6 bridges to be built on South Santo, 29 creek crossings to be built on Ambae and 5 warehouses to be built on Lamén Bay (Epi) , Lolong (Pentecost), South West Bay (Malekula), Nanuku (Malo) and Lolowai (Ambae).

Another sub-project involves the purchasing of 35 pieces of equipments to be supplied to PWD as a component of institutional strengthening. The equipments are listed as follows;

1. 2 Bulldozers
2. 2 loaders
3. 2 Vibrating Rollers
4. 1 Rubber Tired Roller
5. 2 Grader
6. 3 Dump Trucks
7. 1 Water Cart
8. 1 Mobile Crusher
9. 1 Bitumen Sprayer
10. 1 Aggregate Spreader
11. 2 Crane Trucks

V. Proposed Efate Ring Road

The value of the Ring Road project is 20.3 Million USD alone and which makes up almost 50% of the total budget of the MCA program. It is going to be the first project to commence since it is the biggest. The pre-qualification documents for a Design-Build Contractor have already been processed. Another 3 whole months is required for the short listed bidders to prepare and submit their bids.

In order to facilitate and fast track completion of the Efate Ring Road, the MCA Office is proposing to have 5 teams of workers to be stationed on 5 selected areas around Efate island and working simultaneously.

Under certain circumstances such as road bends and road widening, it will be necessary for a road cut and felling of one or two fruit trees, respectively. It is not necessary to ask for compensation in this respect since there will be long term benefits to the program.

With respect to Quarry, the Department of Public Works has an inventory of Quarry sources, including their quantity and quality around Efate. The department will facilitate the process in assisting the Land Owner to negotiate with the Design Build Contractor on preferred fee for extraction. This is a direct benefit to the Land Owner.

There will be road furniture installed such as road signs to aid with road safety.

There is absolute transparency in the overall MCA program. The website address www.governmentofvanuatu.gov.vu contains all information including agreements, minutes of meetings, budgets for the sub-projects.

Mr. Vuti pointed out that there have been constant phone calls received by overseas residents, particularly Australians requesting the MCA office's anticipation on when the Efate Ring Road will be built since they have purchased land on the northern part of Efate to begin their investment.

The road is a catalyst for further investment and developments on North Efate. He advised the community that a few months before the road is built, it is important for the communities to start planning and establishing their own businesses to utilize and take advantage of the infrastructure. The communities themselves should be direct beneficiaries.

VI. Discussions on Proposed Efate Ring Road

The chairman invited questions and comments in support of what has been presented so far.

A community Representative, Saki, requested the possibility of widening the bridge which Colle River runs through. This is due to intense flooding by Colle River which normally happens during heavy rain. The question was noted by the team, however, it is subject to further discussions with the MCC for the possibility.

Community Representative 2 said that he had been listening to the Radio and requires further knowledge on the commencement of the Efate Ring Road project. He is particularly concerned about the approach to up-grade the road at Khlem's Hill, particularly with regards to any cutting that will be involved. In response, Allen made a recommendation about displacing the road further inland due to the instability at the edge of the road. The Engineers will attempt to cut the fill further down in order to reduce the steepness of the road.

Community Representative 3 congratulated the team for their efforts in implementing the MCA program. He questioned the approach for the Vanuatu Government to increase budget to 100%. Mr. Vuti responded in saying that the MCA program will be implemented until 2011 and during this period, the PWD with its increase budget will maintain other infrastructure projects in the country.

Lennox further mentioned that the entire MCA program will terminate in April 2011. One (1) year prior to the end date of the MCA Program, all new up-graded roads will go through a Deflects Liability period. The Design and Build Company will not be paid full amount of contract payment until the Deflect Liability period is over in order to ensure the company's commitment to do further up-grading if a problem on the road infrastructure is identified.

Community Representative 4 enquired about the need for compensation. In response, Lennox stressed the importance of seeking community understanding to claim no compensation. There should be general acceptance of resource loss such as felling of trees if the need arises and no compensation should be claimed. Overall, the US Government is not responsible for providing funds for compensation. Likewise, any disturbance of civil works will result in immediate termination of the overall MCA Program.

Member of Parliament Roro Sambo conveyed his congratulations to the MCA program. He questioned if there were enquiries made about whether or not Vanuatu's access to MCC funding was politically motivated. He also questioned if there will be leftover funds for the Efate project budget. In response, Lennox clarified that access to the MCC funding was purely based on MCC selection criteria. MCC, including other consultants undertook necessary assessments towards the due diligence of the MCA program in order to determine, amongst others, the proposed financing of the program. From these assessments, there is some doubt that there will be any leftover funds.

Chief Dick Poilapa sought reassurance on whether or not the potential contractor will have the necessary expertise. He also questioned whether feeder roads are also included under the MCA program for up-grading. In response, Lennox mentioned that the Due Diligence study did not include feeder roads in the analysis, hence, no determination of costs of the activity including the direct benefits and impacts they will have on the Agriculture and Tourism Sector. An additional assessment will have to address this area, as necessary.

Reassurance was made that the potential construction companies are world experts and they have been thoroughly checked according to their credibility, references and international reputation.

Community Representative 5 questioned why Shefa Provincial Council did not incorporate feeder roads into the MCA program. Michel stressed the Shefa Provincial Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with PWD to maintain and fix feeder roads around Efate. Currently, there is only 1 million vatu allocated for this activity, however, it is more targeted on purchasing of fuel for the use of machinery. The provincial council does not own machinery at the moment, only PWD. The use of machinery largely depends on PWD's time schedule to do road maintenance works around Efate, and in which case Shefa Provincial Council would use the opportunity to propose for certain feeder road maintenance works to be done at the same time.

At this stage, road up-grade will begin at the bottom of Khlems Hill and continue northwards. The exclusion of Mele feeder road up-grade would imply the need to submit a GIP project profile to DESP.

Allen further added that there were very intense discussions held amongst the PWD engineers over the types of equipments to purchase under the MCA program. The selection of equipments is based on accessibility to maintenance services and suitability for use on the materials locally available. Within years, after the life of the program, the equipments should be used for maintaining feeder roads.

A community representative 6 sought reassurance on the use of equipments on Efate prior to other islands. Lennox supported the need for PWD to maintain feeder roads, however, the Director PWD needs to be present in the meeting to provide reassurance on the use of equipments to main feeder roads at the end of MCA program.

Community representative 7 queried about logistics for hiring human labor, acquiring sand and quarry. Lennox responded and emphasized there will be logistics for recruiting labor but it will be entirely the construction company's responsibility. There will be visits made to the villages to

collect names of interested people who will assist during the period of works or likewise, there will be notices advertised on Daily Post for interested people to apply.

Allen further emphasized the difficulties of acquiring quarry locally and not from overseas as it caters for capacity that is immediately available for maintenance. In terms of labor hire, he stressed that there will be a lot of intense labor required for the road construction works.

Community Representative 8 questioned why the proposed road up-grading for the Efate ring road will commence at the bottom of Khlems Hill and northwards, considering that the allocation for the sub-project sounds comfortably high and there is expected to be some funds leftover to do other road works or maintain feeder roads. Lennox fears that the proposed Efate Ring Road project allocation is quite small and there would be a need to increase. Factually, road construction is of a high expenditure.

Community Representative 9 questioned whether the road will be built on the existing alignment or will there be a need for extensions. Moreover, what will be the steps taken to address closeness of buildings close to the existing road. Allen explained that roads on steep gradients will be 9 meters wide versus 10 meters wide for roads on gentle or flat gradients. All road works will also include drainage. A road Act is currently in the process of being enacted in National Parliament. The design of the Efate Ring Road, including all other road sub-projects are adopting the road specifications as contained in the Road Act. The proposed road reserve for all sub-projects is 15 meters. World Bank guidelines, including requirements for resettlement, are going to be applied although attempts will be made to avoid resettlement costs, particularly considering the costs for maintenance.

MP Roro Sambo provided feedback and reiterated on the issue of educating the public on road safety measures. Environmentalists are mindful of the safeguard of people. Catherine supported in saying that all issues of concern will be built into the design of the road. The Environment and Social Assessment consultant will raise awareness to all communities and advice the Design and Build contractor. An Environmental Management Plan will be developed and will incorporate all issues, including their various management approaches.

Lennox emphasized that this awareness consultation meeting is considered to be an initial visit, particularly to introduce the MCA program.

A women representative questioned the benefits of the MCA program, as it seems that the MCA program will be more beneficial to the villages around Efate compared to Mele. Furthermore, she asked whether there is possibility for the MCA program to provide financial assistance to up-grade feeder roads. Lennox stressed that there will be communal and island benefits generated from the MCA program. Other development partners will assist in other areas of benefits.

A community representative thanked the delegation for their visit to Mele village to introduce the MCA program. He questioned the possibility of using the waste soil to bury the soccer field of the Mele village. Lennox was happy to hear an approach for reusing waste items from the construction and reassured that there should be a possibility.

A community representative pointed out that there will be environmental problems associated with quarry extraction, hence, it is expected that there should be management procedures in mitigate any possible problems. Catherine further supported that Environmental Management Plans will incorporate these issues.

Another woman representative supported that there are definitely benefits of the MCA program, particularly within the Tourism Sector such as the potential increase in number of tourists into the country. She questioned if there will be any up-grading for the road heading towards devil's point. The mele villagers depend highly on this road for access to collecting firewood. In response, Lennox only confirmed for sealing to be done on access road to Hideaway Island. Such request will have to be discussed with MCC for a decision to be made, however, a positive response can not be promised at this stage.

A community representative stressed that preference for a road design should be similar to that of the road to Teouma. Lennox reassured that the Efate Ring road will be built to that standard.

Michel provided some closing remarks and asked continued support and cooperation from the community of Mele.

Councillor Sope, spoke on behalf of the two chiefs, councilors and village representatives. He thanked the delegation for good presentations and emphasized that such project has been a long-time dream for the people of Mele, especially Efate.

Lennox concluded the meeting. He mentioned that this is the last but the longest meeting held compared to the other consultation meetings held around Efate. It is an impression that the longer time spent is an indication of the Mele people's interest in the MCA program initiative. The meeting actually progressed well. Last but not least, he thanked everyone for their patience.

The Area Secretary of North Efate offered a closing prayer.

Meeting was closed at 5:55 pm

Attachment 1: List of Meeting Participants

Name	Position Long Vilej (Jif, Pastor, Youth etc)	Nem Blong Vilej o Eria
Sope	Councillor	Mele
Roro Sambo	Member of Parliament	“
Joseph Kalowia		“
Maliu		“
Kamilo Taea		“
K. Poilapa		“
Kalmansong Miso		“
Kalopoto Bangalulu		“
Gaston Rakom		“
Samuel Mansale		“
Lulu Mansale		“
Sano Anatu		“
Dick Poilapa		“
K. Saki Bob		“
Michel Matautavy		“
Jim		“
Roro Sope		“
Malakaua	Elder	“
Abela Mansale		“
Tafaki		“
Ben Kaltanak	Pastor	“
Sera Malas		“
Tourei Vatoko		“
Leitabang Malas		“
Flora Kaltanak		“
Taripakoa	Elder	“
Leisipelo Chilia		“
Totani Matautava		“
Leitauara Matautava		“
Chapilay Kalapau		“
Simson Poilapa		“
Luanawota	Elder	“
Jimmy Lulu		“
Amon Tom		“
Philemon Mansale		“
Bai Masauvakalo		“
Marago Mansale		“
Daniel Mansale		“
Mansale	Elder	“
Neroman Netef		“
Victor Malas		“
Popet Malas		“
Charley Malasikoto		“

Kaljipanga Tavara		“
Lucy Mariki		“
Semesa Sigia		“
Noel Tastuki		“
Kalogota Langa		“
Kalopoi Mansale		“
Kaltaloa Matautava		“
Manaurie Sarapera		“
Kataloa Vatoko		“
Bole Matautava		“
Remy Serveux		“
Kaloaru Kalowolsota		“
Stanley Numalo		“
Jonathan Mansale		“
Mahit Chilia		“
Joseph Anatu		“
Maliu Awis		“
Bako Soromon		“
Toimaau	Elder	“
Philip Aslarue		“