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## **Reducing Poverty through Improved Infrastructure**

### **Community Consultations:**

#### **EFATE COMMUNITIES AWARENESS CONSULTATION MEETINGS**

#### **PANG PANG VILLAGE**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2007**

**10:00 AM**

#### **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

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 10:00 am.

The chief of Pang pang village, Chief David conveyed a word of welcome to the visiting delegation.

Councillor Kalmaire offered opening prayer prior to commence presentation by delegation members

## **I. Introduction**

The Chairman thanked everyone, especially members of the Pang pang village community for attending the awareness consultation meeting. He introduced individual members of the delegation, consisting of staffs of the MCA Program Management Unit and Shefa Provincial Council. He briefly emphasized the size of the MCA program and the amount of support that has been received from communities being consulted around Efate Island, including the level of benefits to be generated, particularly for market producers and sellers.

## **II. Purpose of Awareness Consultation Meeting**

The chairman handed over to the MCA Program Director, Lennox. Vuti, to present to the meeting the purpose of convening such an awareness meeting.

Lennox apologized for the amount time elapsed on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007, in order to be able to meet with members of the Pangpang village community members due to numerous questions raised by previously visited communities.

In the same note, he pointed out that MCC requires equal representation of men and women in these particular community meetings.

He raised questions to community members whether or not news has been received regarding the MCA program and that to date, news will be from secondary sources instead. He also mentioned that politicians will tend to provide different news and perspectives on the program. This forms one main reason for the visit in order to provide authentic information regarding the overall MCA program and the staffs involved in collaboratively implementing the program. A second main reason is to seek community views and thoughts on the Efate Ring Road project in terms of benefits and impacts. The MCA team that is currently present in the meeting is here to respond to questions and queries.

## **III. History of the MCA Program**

Lennox 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 qualified for MCC funding which amounts to 65.7 Million USD. To date, four (4) disbursements of the funds have already been received, which will also cater for the period until June 2007. 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**

Lennox 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 Loltong, 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) , Loltong (Pentecost), South West Bay (Malekula), Nanuku (Malo) and Lolowai (Ambae).

#### **V. Proposed Efate Ring Road**

The up-grading of the Efate Ring Road will follow the existing road alignment and complete bitumen sealing. 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.

In terms of obtaining quarry permits, the Land Owner will negotiate with the Design Build contractor for an agreed quarry fee. The Department of Public Works will facilitate the agreement process to arrive at a fee that is appropriate, particular to the Land Owner. The reason being is that the Land Owner can be cheated by the D&B Contractor if not properly advised.

Lennox 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.

At this point, Chief David provided his remarks to the presentation.

#### **VI. Discussions on Proposed Efate Ring Road**

Chief David felt comfortable and assured the team that the people are clearer on the scope of the MCA program as compared previously, upon receiving secondary sources of information.

Minister Sope Jem conveyed a word of thanks and appreciation on the clarifications received on the MCA program. He declared that the MCA program has a vision. The program will have an enormous positive impact in terms of aiding sick patients and pregnant women for a comfortable and lesser painful ride to the hospital or clinic.

Kerson Sif, an elderly community representative asked when the road up-grade will commence. Mr. Vuti responded that the agreements will be signed in July. The actual civil works will commence in August or September 2007.

Freddy B provided support on what was being presented and emphasized that there is a vision in the proposed project. The current state of the road is a hindrance for vehicle owners who have bank loans. The vehicles performance rate have greatly declined over the years with the state of the road to the point where a case scenario such the phasing out of the transport business leaves no financial reserves in order to continue with bank repayments as they have been exhausted from continuous maintenance.

Lennox agreed and noted the issue. He further continued explaining the types of furniture that will be included as part of the road up-grade such as speed pumps and signs, indicating the proximity of the speed pumps.

Allen made a presentation on the type of road that will be built for the Efate Ring Road which is a complete bitumen seal consisting of drainage. The road will be 9 to 10 meters wide, depending on the relief; 9 meters on hills and 10 meters on flat land.

There is a Road Act that is currently in the process of being enacted in National Parliament. The design of the Efate Ring Road is adopting the road specifications as contained in the Road Act. The Act makes provisions of identifying which parties are allowed to set up speed pumps and includes penalties for stealing or abusing road furniture. It is also mandatory for a National Road Authority to be established to effectively enforce the Road Act.

Lennox stressed the disrespectful attitude of removing road furniture. A clear example was the removal of road reflectors installed through the Japanese funded road project. He further advised and emphasized the importance of road maintenance and management.

The Area Secretary of North Efate queried on where would be the up-loading and un-loading of cargo and whether or not this will be on the main wharf on Port Vila Harbor. It could probably be at the former site of the Manganese Mine which is Forari. Lennox was not too very sure of the response to the question and noted that the MCA program Management Unit will take note of the query.

There was further emphasis made on the issue relating to compensation. Communities have to understand and envision that there is no need to request compensation for displacement or loss of a resource such as trees. The Government of America kindly provided funds for the MCA program, therefore, it is quite inappropriate to be asking for additional funds for compensation.

## **VII. Up-coming Visit by members of the US Congress**

Lennox 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 be on first week of March. I

## **VIII. Concluding Remarks**

Chief David provided a brief account of his experience as a transport driver since 1975. He encountered problems with early birth deliveries and heightening of level of illness due to the poor condition of the road. He positively emphasized that the benefits of the program are great and are long term.

A representative of the women present in the meeting gave her positive remark in support of the project in terms of up-grading the current state of the Efate Ring Road to a better condition.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by conveying words of encouragement. He emphasized the importance of working together in order to feel ownership of the project.

The Area Secretary of North Efate offered a closing prayer.

Meeting was closed at 11:45 am

**Attachment 1: List of Meeting Participants**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position Long Vilej (Jif, Pastor, Youth etc)</b>	<b>Nem Blong Vilej o Eria</b>
C. David	Chief	Pang Pang
Tom		“
J. William	Gardener	“
Saimon Veat	Gardener	“
Freddy B	Council of Chief	“
Mait	Gardener	“
Kaltong	“	“
Belep	“	“
Philip Jonathan	Council of Chief	“
Kerson Sif	Gardener	“
Sammy Simon	“	“
Edien Kalmelu	“	“
Maikel Erick	“	“
Leimas George	“	“
Jackson G	“	“
Minister Sope J	Minister of SDA Church	“
Donald David	Gardener	“
Helena Donald	“	“
George Kaltong	“	“
Oliva Simon	“	“
Bruce Moses	“	“
Charley A	“	“
Phillip Edien	“	“
Andrew Joel	“	“
Hendry Joel	“	“
Kaltap Kalses	“	“
Angela Gedion	“	“
Line	“	“
Lina B	“	“
Magaret Donald	“	“
Ross David	“	“
Eric Jimmy		“