

# Vanuatu Markets Profiles



Partners to Improve Markets (PIM)

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Vanuatu is a country made up of over 80 different islands, with a small and dispersed population of 230,000 speaking more than 100 local languages as well as French, English and Bislama. Vanuatu is divided into six provinces, each with its own elected provincial government. The provinces are divided into municipalities, with municipal council boundaries usually aligning with individual islands, and these have local government responsibilities. At the village level a customary governance system exist under the authority of local chiefs.

Port Vila on the island of Efate and Luganville in the island of Espiritu Santo are the largest towns, with populations of around 38,000 and 12,000 respectively. It is estimated that 65% of the population relies on subsistence agriculture, with a wide variety of fruit and vegetables being produced year-round on the fertile volcanic soils. However, as elsewhere in Melanesia, the need to raise money to pay school fees has created a need to convert primary produce into cash, and markets are the main vehicle for achieving this.

Some market trade in seafood occurs but this is limited by the fact that commercial fishing licenses have largely been sold offshore. However, most Ni-Vanuatu households fish for their own consumption, and this has placed pressure on near-shore fish resources. The main commercial trade within produce markets is in crabs, which are strung together and sold live in bundles. Some markets also sell livestock or meat (pigs, goats and chickens, some beef), however some of the larger markets discourage the sale of uncooked fish or meat because of the problems of maintaining good hygiene.

Cooked food is a feature of all main markets in Vanuatu catering for local residents, tourists and market vendors. Local authorities actively encourage safe food handling practices in the markets.

Lack of transport infrastructure is a significant obstacle to transporting produce to the main markets. Freight services are provided by several sea transport companies, but scheduling is unreliable due to weather and other conditions, so that fresh produce may deteriorate before it can be collected. Air transport is sometimes available but this depends on the left over capacity of aircraft once the needs of passengers are met, and freight is often refused. The price of goods in local markets can be as little as 25% of the price in the larger urban markets reflecting the high cost of transport.

The population dispersal throughout Vanuatu results in a situation where markets outside the two main centres are small, providing very limited opportunities for converting primary produce into cash. This has fuelled a significant movement of the population into the main urban centres. Most local centres contain roadside markets or market houses, usually operating Monday to midday Saturday. Some local markets are located within family housing blocks or adjacent to Nakamals (men's meeting places found in most villages, or kava houses in urban centres). Most of the smaller markets are managed by the customary land owners, whereas the larger markets are run by local government authorities. A particular feature of Vanuatu markets is that many of them are run by women.

## Markets in Port Vila

Port Vila has the most spectacular market in Melanesia, arising from its waterfront location and grand architectural features. The buildings were funded by the French Government. This is also one of the best managed markets, though it suffers from overcrowding so that marketing activity spills out onto adjacent footpaths and driveways. A market has been operating in this location for more than 20 years. This is a waterfront site near the harbour and at the southern end of the main business district. It is unfenced and therefore accessible to traders and customers round-the-clock, though from around 6pm to 7am it is largely used as a sleeping and goods storage area for vendors. The local municipal council manages this market and looks after maintaining the grounds. Port Vila is visited by many tourists, and the markets benefits from this trade. The produce on sale includes taro, yam, kumara, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, cucumber, beans, capsicum, bananas, mangoes, passionfruit, coconuts, hot food such as lap lap or boiled vegetables, and or other fruits. Paw paw and pineapple are common in season. There is a large cooked foods sections but uncooked meat and fish is not sold, although crabs are often available.

Close to the main produce market is a large handicraft market, separated from the main market by a tract of open space including children's playground and a raised stage for public events. Efate is the main tourist destination in Vanuatu so the artefacts sold in this market are a little more expensive than those from the outer islands markets. These markets are also well established, having operated on this site for more than 30 years. The women vendors largely manage the markets without external assistance.

Elsewhere in Port Vila there are a number of small markets in different suburbs or villages (eg Mele, Manililu, MCI road market, Fres Wota and Ohlin). These are managed by customary land owners or private land holders. The provincial council intends to provide for expansion of the Fres Wota market and has secured donor funds for this purpose, to serve this well established residential area with a population of around 5,000. Fres Wota is also notable for having a female market manager, and the market occupies a recreational area with natural shade which provides an excellent environment for an expanded facility. There are also long term plans to create a new market in the Blatinier estate, serving the needs of this rapidly growing community near the airport.

The municipal council has considered relocation of Port Vila main market because of the current overcrowding, and the fact that the site would have considerable commercial value for other purposes. However estimated turnover at the market suggests that there is no alternative use that would come anywhere near the market in terms of its contribution to the local economy, and there is every justification for retaining it on this prime site. Creating two larger satellite markets at Fres Wota and Blatinier could ease the congestions in Port Vila's main market, and provide a much more cost effective long term solution.

## Markets Outside Port Vila

***Espiritu Santo*** is the largest island in Vanuatu and part of the Sanma Province. Most of the beef in Vanuatu comes from Santo. A recent development in Santo is that a wide range of communities are now trying to grow their own rice to sell and use, to reduce the need to import rice from overseas.

Luganville is the country's northern capital. A large "market house" has been running in Luganville since 1976 and it is managed by the municipal council. The provincial government used to manage this market, but this was not seen as successful. The market consists of a large fresh produce hall, separate livestock shed and several lock up stores selling cooked foods.

Aore is the closest small island off the coast from Luganville and many villagers from Aore get boat taxis to transport their produce to the market. Many people from all over Santo and other islands to the east and north travel by transport such as taxi boats and tray top utility vehicles. There are an estimated 500 traders visiting Luganville market from time to time.

**Malekula Island** in Malampa Province has several markets which started around 1985 as small operations. In 2000 larger market houses were constructed in the two largest towns of Norsup and Lakatoro, and these are managed by the municipal council. Norsup is the largest urban centre in Vanuatu after Port Vila and Luganville, with a population of around 3,000. Lakatoro has a population of less than 1,000, but its market is now significantly larger than the Norsup market.

The Norsup market is located 8km from the airstrip. It was originally a much larger facility but half of the building has been developed as a large lecture room for the University of the South Pacific, and this is due to expand into the rest of the building necessitating a relocation of the market. Lakatoro is south of Norsup, in central east Malekula and it has more space and facilities.

People travel from all over Malekula and the outer islands to get to these two markets. Transport prices are increasing and one truck can cost up to 1,000 vatu one way. Produce includes a range of fruit and vegetables, hot food such as lap lap and boiled vegetables, flying foxes and seafood, especially crabs. Fresh meat and fish are sold in a separate building at the Malampa market in Lakatoro.

A new market is under construction at Tautu, 5km north of Lakatoro. This is a seemingly well intentioned political initiative and follows on from similar small markets being established in the same electorate at Walarano, Roy and Potinder. However, funds appear to have run out and the Tautu building is being overrun by vegetation.

Pentecost Island in Penama Province lacks a large market house or main marketing area. There used to be a market house at Lolton but this is no longer functional. People now travel to Herenhala on the northern coast to sell in a range of small markets. Community members pay local transport trucks to convey their produce to small markets sites which can include a stall outside a personal home, along the side of the main village access roads, or adjacent to nakamals.

Aute is an area between Lolton and Sara where there are several small roadside markets as well as people selling out of their own homes. The owners of the market stalls or shelters often charge a rent of 10-20 vatu per stall.

There are several small market houses around Sara. Vendors at the central Sara market house pay a fee from 500-1,000 vatu per day to the owners to use the market house, and the owners of other nearby market houses (Atangurua, Arranbaratu, Abwapunbuliva, Atuatabulu and Aviriana) also charge rent. If it is a community owned property, the money goes into community projects as decided between chiefs and other village leaders. There

are no local government islands. However many villagers find the cost of air freight is prohibitive.

In addition to the fresh produce markets, there is one private house near the main airstrip in Sara where clothes are sold. A wide range of clothing is for sale, including shirts, skirts and island dresses. These clothes are also sold at small market stalls in the Agabe Training Centre on specific days in the week and training workshops take place at Agabe, teaching young people how to sew and sell clothes at markets.

Several groups from Pentecost are currently trying to get funding to build one main large market house as it is very expensive for women and their families to pay the cost of stall rent and transport to different locations.

**Tanna Island** is the largest of five inhabited islands in Tafea Province. Lenakil is located in the western part of the island and is the largest town with a population of about 1,000 people. There is a large open market close to the main wharf which is the main market in Lenakil, as well as several small roadside markets operating under the shade of trees, at crossroads and near government offices. The buildings in the main market were funded by JICA in 2003. The main market is open on Monday and Friday each week, and is managed by the local council. As well as a small catchment area the market suffers from a dispersed settlement pattern within Lenakil itself, necessitating long walks or hired transport between different facilities.

## **Issues for Vanuatu Markets**

At a workshop involving key stakeholders it was recommended that the following issues should be addressed by stakeholders agencies working in partnership with UNIFEM, in Phase Two of the current project. These initiatives should be pursued in Port Vila as well as in markets outside the capital, eg Luganville on Santo (existing market), Norsup on Malekula as well as Pentecost Island (new markets), and Lenakil on Tanna (expanded market).

### **1. Transport Reform**

Rural producers who cannot transport their produce to the larger markets are severely disadvantaged by Vanuatu's poor freight transport infrastructure. Initiatives elsewhere in Melanesia have shown how land and sea transport can be improved through local communities working with donor agencies and other stakeholders. In Vanuatu there is potential to engage with existing sea freight companies to achieve a more regular and predictable service. However this needs to avoid creation of a transport monopoly, in the interest of keeping costs down and promoting food security.

### **2. Market Design**

There is much scope for improved design of markets through retro-fitting existing markets and applying sustainable development principles to new markets. It is particularly important to apply these principles to the development of the new Fres Wota market and (if funding is secured) for a new market on Pentecost Island and at Norsup on Malekula Island, and an expanded market at Lenakil on Tanna Island.

### **3. Fishing Industry Innovation**

The Chinese Government is investing in the establishment of a new fish processing plant in Port Vila. This will open up new opportunities for use of by-catch and value adding to fish products. Given that fresh fish is not sold in Port Vila's main market, there may be scope to establish a new fish market. Experience from the Solomon Islands shows that the handling of by-catch needs to be carefully planned.

### **4. Business Incubation**

There is a demand for training and business support so that market vendors, including young people, can initiate and grow new enterprises. Improving money management and providing savings facilities and micro-credit in markets would be relevant to this initiative, and would benefit all vendors.

### **5. Workplace Health and Safety**

As with other Melanesian markets, there is a need to promote a mutual obligation between vendors and local authorities to achieve food hygiene, improved quality of customer service, better provision and management of toilets (possibly as a business venture) and workplace safety.

### **6. New Models for Wholesaling and Accommodation**

Like the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu does not yet have a wholesaling system so that vendors are often producers, and they may stay overnight at markets until their goods are sold. New models could include collection of produce from villages by wholesalers, as well as provision of accommodation and storage facilities at markets for those vendors who do need to stay overnight.

### **7. Women Friendly Security Services**

Vanuatu markets have limited security at present but as they grow security is becoming a bigger issue. There is a demand for security services that recognise the rights of women vendors and which do not exacerbate violence, as has happened in some other parts of Melanesia.

The National Women's Council would be interested in co-ordinating these initiatives but would need capacity building support for this to be effective.

## **Key Stakeholders**

Ralf Reganvani MP, very interested in social and economic issues including markets.

Solomon Simon, Town Clerk and Malcolm Dalesa, Environmental Health Officer for Port Vila Municipal Council.

Rex Aromalo, Manager Port Vila Market

Emil Mael, Physical Planner and Austin Willett, Area Development Advisor, and Jack Barry, Shefa Provincial Council

Jerry Sampson, Senior Physical Planning Officer, and David Bough, Planning and Management Advisor, Vanuatu Department of Local Authorities

Lesline Malsungou, President and Mahfah Bough, Organisational Development Officer (VSO) for the National Council of Women

Alice Kavie and Annette Biho, market vendor's representative, Port Vila Market

Viviane Oved, Habitat for Humanity

Rebecca Kausei, Manager Fres Wota Market

Marie Ng, President of Chinese Women's Association

Peter Walker and Judith Lakavai, Wan Smol Bag NGO

Hollingsworth Garove, Sustainable Energy Consultant

Louie Noah, Tanna Fresh

Vanuata Kastam Governance Project supported by the University of Queensland (contact = Donovan Storey)

## **Key Donors**

**AusAID, NZ Aid and JICA:** these donors have funded market structures elsewhere in Melanesia and NZ Aid is reported as having agreed to fund a new market structure at Fres Wota in Port Vila. A collaborative process for the design of this structure and any other new markets would be appropriate.

**Millennium Challenge Account:** Vanuatu is the only Pacific Island country eligible for funding under this US Government funded program (a US\$1 billion account encouraging good governance). In 2006, there was a grant agreement for infrastructure upgrades on eight islands, worth US\$65.95 million. The grant aims to benefit rural agricultural producers and providers of tourist-related goods and services by reducing transportation fees.



# LUGANVILLE MARKET

Luganville market is located off Main Street (Boulevard Higginson) of Luganville on Espiritu Santo Island. The market is situated at the western end of the commercial centre on the north bank of the Sarakata river.



## Management

The management and security of Luganville market is the responsibility of Luganville Town Council. Market rules and regulations are posted on concrete uprights throughout the market. Three municipal police officers enforce the market

rules. The market opens from 7.00am until 7.00pm Monday to Saturday.

Market fees are VT600 per table. A range of fees are applied





to the use of toilet and shower facilities, varying from VT20 -VT30. A male attendant collects fees and another male is employed as a cleaner. Rubbish is deposited in cut-off 44 gallon drums for collection by Council.

## Physical Environment

The site occupies State land fronting Boulevard Higginson and backs onto the Sarakata River estuary.

Luganville market comprises four separate free standing buildings, including the fresh produce hall, fresh fish and livestock stall, cooked food kiosks and toilet block. A fifth building, operating as a CD/DVD and general grocery store is sited on the periphery of the market.

The fresh produce hall is separated from the other market buildings by a ring road that provides carriers and service vehicles access to the site as well as limited parking for customer vehicles, minibuses and taxis.



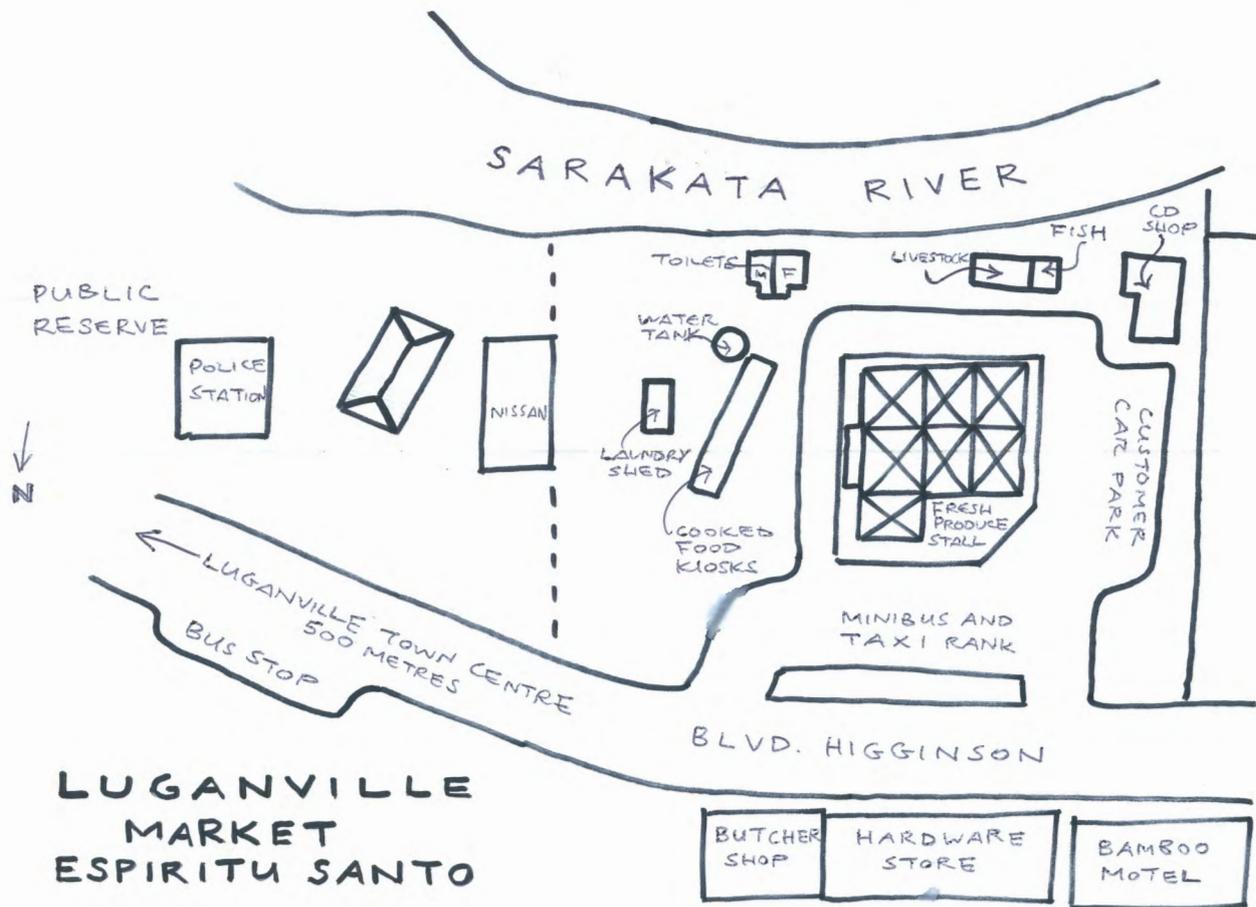
### *Fresh produce hall*

The fresh produce hall is a modern modular style building with a high pitched metal roof supported on concrete columns. The market is open walled and well ventilated. The floor of the fresh produce hall is concreted and the perimeter pathway is sealed with pavers. The concrete columns are used as notice boards by Luganville Town Council and vendors to respectively advertise market rules and private businesses. The market tables are made of concrete and generally covered with strips of vinyl floor covering.

### *Fresh fish and livestock stall*

The fresh fish and livestock stall consists of a low set timber framed building divided into two sections. The westernmost section is a fully enclosed room with a lockable flyscreen door and concrete floor. This room serves as a fresh fish stall. The remainder of the building is walled with cyclone mesh wire. This section is used as a holding pen for livestock, including pigs, poultry and goats. The building is set back from the fresh produce stall near to the riverbank to minimise dust, noise and odour nuisance. It is structurally sound and well maintained.





**LUGANVILLE  
MARKET  
ESPIRITU SANTO**

**Cooked food stalls**

A row of 10 cooked food kiosks is located on the eastern side of the market. These are separated from the fresh produce hall by a lawn area and a service road. Shuttered windows open from the kiosks onto a covered concrete verandah where diners place their orders and eat at wooden tables. The vendors supply their own cooking equipment and utensils. Each kiosk has its own makeshift table and basin serving as an outdoor sink located at the rear of the kiosk. Waste from these sinks is emptied onto the ground, where it is left to soak into the soil or to evaporate.

A separate under-cover laundry facility, comprising three stainless steel tubs set into a low concrete stand, for laundering tablecloths, is located behind the cooked food kiosks. Vendors who sleep overnight at the market also make use of these laundry facilities. Grey water from the laundry tubs currently drains onto the ground.

A rainwater storage tank with a publicly accessible tap is sited at the rear of the cooked food kiosks.





are women, and there are 70-100 present at any one time.

**Customers**

The main customers at Luganville market are residents of Luganville town and nearby villages. Local resort and restaurant owners also shop at the market for their fresh produce supplies.

**Crime and safety**

There is some concern that the incidence of pickpocketing is

**Toilet block**

The market toilet block is located at the rear of the fresh produce hall on the opposite side of the service lane. The toilet block is concrete block construction and in fair condition.

**Social Environment**

**Traders**

Traders at Luganville market include vendors from across eastern and southern Espiritu Santo and numerous off-shore islands. Many traders from the more remote districts sleep overnight at the market or stay with relatives while conducting their market activities. Around 90% of vendors

increasing at the market. Vendors have variously stated that the market is a safe venue but that one needs to be wary. Some vendors advise that there is no security at the market while others comment that the market is frequently visited by the Municipal Police Officers. A raised profile of Municipal Police Officers in the market may allay the security concerns of vendors.

Pedestrian access into the market necessitates crossing a car parking bay and negotiating taxis, mini-buses, carriers and service vehicles thereby creating potential vehicular-pedestrian conflict

**Use of space**

The market buildings are well separated from each other so that there are opportunities for future infill development





as an alternative to total redesign and redevelopment of the market site. The market aisles are wide and large food items such as coconuts, watermelons and taro are often spread out on the floor. This may represent a trip hazard for customers and vendors in some circumstances.

Cooked food vendor kiosks open onto a grassed area that has further landscaping potential for the enjoyment of market customers. Current dining at the kiosk is at tables positioned in front of kiosk windows, under shelter and looking towards the fresh produce hall.

**Health and hygiene**

Many traders sleep overnight at the market and children, accompanying their parents to the market during daylight hours, often sleep under market tables.

Grey water discharging from the laundry sinks has been allowed to pool on the southern side of the shelter. This has created potential mosquito breeding habitat.

Waste vegetable matter left littering the market site is unsightly and has potential to attract flies and other vermin.

**Participation by Women and Men**

All cooked food kiosks are currently leased to women vendors.

Fees payable for use of the womens' toilet facilities are handed to a male attendant sitting inside the mens' toilet area through an open internal window. This may be uncomfortable for women.

**Economic Environment**

The local government income from this market is around VT12M per annum. It would seem that only a small proportion of this is spent on cleaners and waste removal.

Many vendors are required to spend a considerable amount of their profits on transporting their produce to and from the market. For vendors from outlying regions there are the added costs of staying with relatives and buying food while waiting to sell their produce or waiting for return transport to their villages.





but complains that the toilet and shower facilities are not clean and that there is only one tap accessible to market vendors for cleaning their produce. She considers that the market could be improved with the addition of security lighting of the market car park and ring road. Concern is also expressed about the one frequently out-of-order public telephone in the market.

**Case study: female cooked food vendor**

This vendor pays Luganville Council VT24,000 per month to operate a cooked food kiosk at the market. Of the 10 kiosks at the market only seven were open during January 2009. The vendor purchases rice from the supermarket opposite the market but obtains additional fresh food ingredients from the market, including lemons for making

juice refreshments. Contrary to advice from other vendors, this vendor stated that the market was a secure environment and that security officers and Municipal Police Officers visited the market on a daily basis.

This vendor supplies her own cooking utensils and gas hotplate. She has decorated her table with a cloth, glasses,

**Case study: two female vegetable vendors**

These women respectively pay VT2,500 and VT5,000 to travel to the market on a daily basis from their villages. They complain that there is inadequate shade at the market for their produce and that heat affected fruits and vegetables are wasted.

The women consider the market is at times unsafe due to pickpocketing and disturbances by drunkards. Although there is a police post close to the market the women commented that they never saw police patrolling the market.

The women pay VT600 for table space, or on occasions, VT300 for a half-table.

**Case study: female watermelon and taro vendor**

This vendor pays between VT5,000 and VT6,000 to transport her produce to the market ,by truck, from Kole village in south-west Espiritu Santo. She regularly sleeps overnight at the market and considers the venue to be safe





serviettes and an arrangement of fresh flowers to make her kiosk more inviting than her competitors' kiosks.

**Case study: female vegetable vendors**

This group of eight women vendors pay VT6,000 each to travel by truck to the market with their produce. The vendors are from the same village in South Santo and travel to the markets every week. Only eight women at a time can travel with their cargo on the available transport so they take turns with other women. This way all have an opportunity to make money from selling their own garden produce. The women bring taro, bananas, leafy greens and kava to sell at the market. They are generally satisfied with the market venue but consider more shade would benefit both vendors and customers.

**Case study: female banana vendor**

This vendor pays VT2,000 to travel from Matevutu village to the market where she sells watermelons and pawpaws.

She pays VT300 for a table and VT300 for floor space to display her produce.

**Case study: female fruit vendor**

This vendor pays VT3,000 to travel from Maneksil village to the market where she sells bananas, coconuts and pawpaws. She often sleeps overnight at the market and considers that the market should assist vendors by providing more secure accommodation. The vendor complains that mosquitoes are a particular problem at the market site and that in times of heavy rain water leaks from the roof and floods the market floor spoiling any produce on the ground. She advises that the market master collects 10% of sales, thus if kava is selling for VT5,000 then the fee payable is VT500. Similarly, a quantity sold for VT1,000 attracts a fee of VT100.





## Existing Programs and Initiatives

There are no existing programs or initiatives for upgrading facilities at Luganville market.

## Challenges

- Improving vehicular pedestrian safety
- Improving waste storage collection practices
- Raising the profile of security officers and Municipal Police Officers in the marketplace
- Repairing and maintaining, where necessary, grey water drainage systems at the rear of the cooked food kiosks
- Minimising mosquito breeding habitat at the market place.

## Opportunities

- Construction of a jetty and path linking the estuary foreshore areas directly to the market

## Next steps

Transport logistics made it impossible to contact local government at the time of the field assessment, and this would need to be done if this market is selected for further project work.

## FIELDWORK CONDUCTED JANUARY 2009





# MALAMPA MARKET (LAKATORO)

Malampa Market and Recreational Park is located on the north side of Lakatoro town, on Malekula Island, Vanuatu. The market is situated on the eastern side of the main road linking Lakatoro with Norsup, opposite the school and 500 metres from the Malampa Provincial Government offices. A small row of stores, offices and a restaurant are situated immediately south of the market.





## Management

The Malampa Provincial Government funds and maintains the fresh food produce and cooked food stalls at the Malampa Market and Recreational Park .

The Republic of Vanuatu National Plan of Action for Women 2007-2011 encourages women to manage markets and promotes womens' arts and crafts. The Malampa Provincial Government Women's Plan for 2009 aims to introduce more specific policies on these matters. The market has been managed by a woman since its opening, and her responsibilities include keeping the marketplace clean and collecting table fees (which vary depending on the type of produce).

The Malampa Provincial Government has provided a meeting room and office space at the market for the Malampa Provincial Council of Women. This room is utilised by representatives of Women's Councils from Malekula, Ambryn and Paama Islands. Each Women's Council is given an annual grant by the Provincial Government and

the Women's Councils independently decide how much to contribute towards the Malampa Council of Women to fund meetings and workshops on issues affecting women. The Malampa Provincial Government further assists the Malampa Womens Council with an annual direct grant and by making accommodation and meeting venues freely available to visiting members.

The market is open daily, except on Sundays, and supports approximately 20 vendors per day, increasing to 60 vendors on Fridays, including vendors operating from small kiosks at the rear of the fresh produce hall. The cooked food kiosks are leased on a rotational basis for up to three months at a time. Consideration is being given to reducing the maximum lease period to one month to provide a greater number of women with the opportunity to earn some money. In the past the Malampa Provincial Government has provided training courses in health and hygiene for market vendors. The delivery of further training in packaging and pricing is presently being considered by the provincial Agriculture and Health departments. Vendors do not pay a fee to use the toilets.







rooms and refrigerators for processing and storing meat and fish products. The market building houses both ice making and ice crushing machines and a large chopping block for bullock meat. Beef cuts and fresh fish are purchased wholesale direct from the producers by the two men who operate the butchery and fish market under lease from the Malampa Provincial Government. The market sells beef cuts from two bullocks per week and various quantities of fish on a daily basis.

The butchery and fish market incorporates ablution facilities for the market staff. It is located 50 metres from the fresh produce hall.

### ***Fresh Produce Hall (2003)***

The Fresh Produce Hall is an open walled 'T' shaped building of concrete construction with a high pitched metal roof. The rear of the building incorporates six cooked food stalls and toilet facilities. An upper level houses the

market managers office and a meeting room utilised by the Malampa Province Council of Women. Market tables are portable wooden outdoor tables with wooden bench seats attached.

The fresh produce hall is equipped with lighting. Numerous domestic pigeons roost in the rafters.

There is an extensive area of undeveloped open land at the rear of the market which adjoins an old coconut plantation. The market buildings are set back from the road providing ample off-road, but ill-defined, parking for customers' vehicles and cargo carriers. The site is unsealed except for the area under shelter. The main market area is unfenced.

Kava sales are conducted outdoors, under the shade of a roadside billboard and large tree, on the south-west corner of the market, 50 metres from the fresh produce hall.





## Social Environment

### Traders

The traders at Lakatoro market comprise vendors from the surrounding district and nearby islands. The high cost of transport, relative to local incomes, infrequent and unreliable transport services, and limited demand for fresh produce often make it impractical for vendors to travel from outlying areas to Lakatoro on a regular basis. Many traders stay overnight at the market or with relatives, often for several days, when they come to sell their produce at Lakatoro.

Many vendors purposely come to the market early on Thursday morning to secure tables and a good marketing position for trading on Fridays.

### Customers

Locally, resident public servants create the greatest demand for market produce in Lakatoro. The Lakatoro district has a population of under 6,000 people, most of whom are subsistence farmers.



### Crime and safety

Several vendors who regularly sleep overnight at the market expressed concern about their personal safety at the market. Although the market is well lit at night and there is a security officer on site, the area surrounding the market is unlit and very dark. Women do not feel safe

venturing alone outside the market area after dark. The market is generally trouble free during the day and anyone causing any disturbance is permanently banned from the market.

### Use of space

The market is situated on a large site and has ample room for expansion. Fresh produce vendors and customers currently crowd under the limited area of available shade. The provision of additional shade would ensure greater physical comfort for vendors and their customers. Many vendors choose to sit on the floor and under the market tables where it is cooler. Vendors who overnight at the market sleep on mats they bring with them from their villages.



### Health and hygiene

Waste from the market is being dumped on vacant land at the rear of the market where it is periodically burned and left to compost. This represents a potential health risk to market vendors and customers and is likely to attract rats, flies and stray dogs to the market. Greater supervision of waste disposal and improved waste management strategies are required to minimise potential health and safety risks.

Flies have been identified as a problem by customers dining in the cooked food kiosks. Screened doors on these venues and improved food storage and food handling practices would assist in addressing this problem.





Domestic pigeons roost in the rafters of the market. This situation may create health problems for market vendors, particularly those overighting at the market, if not properly controlled.

The operators of the fish and butchery market are not equipped with safety boots, aprons, gloves or other protective clothing. Currently both operators carry out their activities barefoot, often on bloodied floors.

Large quantities of seafood, notably crabs, chitons and other molluscs, and flying foxes are sold at Malampa market. The seafood and flying foxes are often exposed to

the hot sun causing odour nuisance and attracting flies and stray dogs. Seafood left in the sun has potential to rapidly decay causing intestinal illnesses for consumers.

Many seats attached to the vendors' tables are aligned along the perimeter of the market where they are most exposed to the sun. Vendors sitting in these locations are at risk of heat exposure as they are not fully protected from the sun. Waste water from the cooked food kiosks is discharged to land at the rear of the market building creating potential mosquito breeding habitat and odour problems and attracting flies.





## Participation by Women and Men

Women account for around 95% of fresh produce vendors at Malampa market.

The majority of kava sellers at Malampa market are men, however it is not uncommon for widows to sell kava at the market to support their families.

## Economic Environment

Local government income from market fees is estimated as around VT5M per annum. It would appear that some of this is spent on the market manager's salary, but there is minimal spending on cleaning and waste removal.

School fees in Lakatoro cost VT20,000 per term (VT60,000

per year) for primary school and VT25,000 per term (VT75,000) for high school. The need to raise the money for school fees is a major motivation for selling goods at the market.

The majority of produce sold at Malampa market is locally grown. Many customers access Malampa market on foot while the vendors usually travel by truck.

There is a limited amount of money circulating in the Lakatoro community. Aside from a small public sector and a handful of private businesses wealth is largely obtained from cocoa and copra production. The income from cocoa and copra fluctuates wildly and for the most part residents on Malekula Island lead a subsistence lifestyle.

Transporting produce around Vanuatu presents many





logistical problems for vendors. Inter-island shipping services are unreliable, infrequent and costly. This situation is compounded by the lack of cold-room and other storage facilities at collection points and on board the vessels. Presently there are six vessels connecting outer islands, including the *Northern Star*, *Lady Christina*, *Crituna* and *Fresh Cargo*. The *Northern Star* is equipped with a cool-room but this is not generally available to the public and services are infrequent.

*Fresh Cargo*, a double hulled catamaran owned by New Zealander, Tony Robertson and skippered by Brett Kolkreb, is one of several small craft ferrying freight, including live chickens and flying foxes and passengers between Efate, Malekula and Espiritu Santo Island and occasionally to other outer islands. A recent request to transport a corpse from Tongoa to Imbi was refused as there was no guarantee that relatives would be waiting to receive the body.

Costs of freight vary according to the size and weight of the produce. A 2m x 3m cage of 20 live flying foxes was freighted for VT2000. More usually freight costs are VT1,000 per item. *Fresh Cargo* is capable of carrying 75 passengers and six tonnes of cargo.

*Fresh Cargo* is presently the most frequently available freight and passenger vessel travelling between the main islands, including a bi-weekly service between Port Vila and Luganville. *Fresh Cargo* is reputedly three to four times faster than earlier vessels that travelled the same route and less than half the cost of flying but schedules may be interrupted by inclement weather, rough seas and mechanical failure. Over 95% of *Fresh Cargo*'s clientele are local residents and farm producers.

Tony Robertson is planning to expand his operations in mid 2009 by introducing a refitted 20 metre, steel hulled crayfishing boat to his fleet to service the northern islands, operating out from Espiritu Santo.

Over 270 cruise ships call into Vanuatu annually, mostly docking overnight in Port Vila. While this represents a potentially huge untapped market quarantine and health regulations generally restrict the quality, quantity and types of local produce that may be taken onboard. Further, most passengers choose to remain on board during their brief stopover.

**Case study: female vegetable vendor**

This vendor sells sweet potatoes, shallots, beans, leafy greens and chillies at Malampa Provincial Market. She travels to market once a week by truck from Unua village, paying VT3500-VT6,000 depending upon the quantity of market produce she is carrying. The vendor pays VT60 per day in market fees but this is not receipted. The vendor often sleeps overnight at the market and thus spends two or more days at the market.

The vendor states that she does not always feel safe at the market, especially at night, notwithstanding the presence of a male security officer. She considers that the market could be improved by the addition of more shelter and tables, particularly on Fridays when the market is often crowded.



**Case study: female primary school teacher customer**

The primary school teacher is a regular customer at the market. She considers the prices and variety of fresh produce available to be good. The school does not provide teachers with land to establish their own gardens and therefore they must purchase their food supplies from the market or buy direct from local farmers.

The customer expresses concern about general unhygienic food handling practices by operators of the cooked food kiosks and the presence of flies in the market.





**Case study: six female peanut and mixed fruit vendors from Pinalum village**

The six women vendors each pay VT800 to travel by carrier to the market. The women come to the market early on Thursday morning in order to secure tables and a prime position for marketing on Fridays, when the number of vendors increases threefold to around 60.

The women sleep overnight at the market but feel frightened doing so and consider that a separate house would provide them with greater security and be much safer.

The women purchase their peanut supplies wholesale from farmers in southern Malekula for VT8,000 per bag and on-sell these in bundles varying in price from VT20–VT30 depending on size. Total sales typically fetch VT16,000 representing a 100% profit, less transport costs. Profits from peanut and other produce sales are spent on household items and school fees.

The women also sell cucumbers, bananas, grapefruit and lemons which they produce in their own gardens.

**Case study: six female peanut vendors from Brenwei village**

These six women vendors pay VT4,000 to travel with their produce by truck to the market. Like their fellow vendors from Pinalum village, the women come to the market early on Thursday morning in order to secure tables and a prime position for marketing on Fridays. The women all sleep overnight at the market.



The women buy peanuts wholesale from farmers for on-selling at the market. Profits from the sale of their produce were spent on household items and school fees.

**Case study: female fruit vendor from Brenwei village**

This vendor sells mangoes and beans from her own garden at the market, and on occasions, also sells woven pandanus leaf mats. The vendor pays VT800 to travel by carrier, with her produce, to the market. Like her fellow villagers the vendor buys a woven pandanus leaf mat to sleep on overnight at the market. The vendor uses her profits to pay school fees and buy food for her family. The vendor considers the market to be a good place.



**Case study: female kiosk vendor from Lambubu village**

This vendor pays VT6,000 per month to the Malampa Provincial Government to lease a cooked food kiosk at the market. The vendor supplies her own cooking utensils and leases a refrigerator for VT3,000 per month and a gas cooker for VT6,000 per month from a third party. The vendor pays a one way fare of VT500 to travel to the market by taxi or car.

The vendor cooks meals, including fish and chicken, for market customers and others but states that she found it difficult to make money due to competition from other kiosk operators. The vendor takes it in turns with other women to operate the kiosk on a two monthly turn-a-round. When not operating the kiosk the vendor sells peanuts at the market or stayed home.





If there was an opportunity to learn additional skills the vendor expressed interest in sewing and mending as the kiosk operators were not restricted from conducting other business ventures.

**Case study: female vendor of flying foxes and seafood**

This vendor sells flying foxes and strings of up to eight live crabs for VT200 each. The flying fox is sold whole and ungutted, and attract flies. Unsold flying foxes and crabs are swapped for other produce at the end of the day or taken back to the village for home consumption. The vendor also sells bags of chitons and other molluscs as well as jackfruit, cassava, taro and coconuts produced from her home gardens.

The vendor likes the market environment but expresses concern that there are too few buyers for the many crabs on sale. The operators of cooked food kiosks routinely provide fish meals but do not ordinarily cook crabs.



**Case study: male kava vendor from Preha village**

The kava vendor sells his produce for VT300 per kilogram. The price is set by the Kava Association which takes into account supply and demand and the quality of the product. Kava in Malampa province sells for VT300 whereas it fetches VT 400-VT500 per kilogram at markets in Port Vila and Luganville.

The vendor brings kava to the market twice weekly on Mondays and Fridays paying a personal fare of VT4,000

and VT300 per head of kava for marketing. He has been selling at the Malampa market for 16 years and apart from the occasional sale of copra has no other income.

The vendor has four children to support and profits are used to meet the cost of school fees. He is an elder in the Presbyterian Church and ceased drinking kava since being appointed to that position. He considers that the Kava Association could do more to support kava vendors by identifying markets, making wholesale purchases, assisting with training in business development and improved market facilities.

**Existing Programs and Initiatives**

Malampa Provincial Government is planning to develop the rear of the market site for recreational purposes by providing sheltered outdoor eating areas and playground equipment. Details of this proposed development have yet to be confirmed. Consideration is also being given to extending the area of the market presently undercover to accommodate more vendors and extend the area of shadecover.

**Challenges**

- Improving vehicular pedestrian safety
- Establishing market demand for local produce





- Improving transport for export of local market produce
- Improving waste management and waste disposal practices at the market
- Improving health and hygiene practices associated with food handling and food preparation, especially in the fish and butchery market
- Providing additional shade for market vendors

### Opportunities

- Planning for extensions to the existing market that incorporates design considerations identified by this study.
- Development of a recreation area at the rear of the existing market
- Construction of separate shelter for kava sales

- Construction of cool room storage facilities
- Delivery of training in hygienic food handling and food preparation practices
- Introduction of composting project for market waste
- Development of an organic produce market

### Next Steps

- Engagement with the Malampa Provincial Government on the design of proposed extensions to new market and improved waste management practices
- Engagement with freight companies to establish a transport schedule for collecting and shipping produce to, and between, markets

### FIELDWORK CONDUCTED JANUARY 2009







# NORSUP MARKET

Norsup market is located on the east coast of Malekula Island, in Vanuatu. The settlement of Norsup is situated 10 km north of Lakatora village in the Malampa Province. The market site has frontage onto the main coastal road and is adjacent to the shoreline.



## Management

The management and security of Norsup market is vested in the Malampa Provincial Government. There are no market rules or regulations on display at Norsup market which currently only operates from 6.00am until 4.00pm on Fridays. The Malampa Provincial Government charges vendors a small fee (100 Vatu) to sell produce.





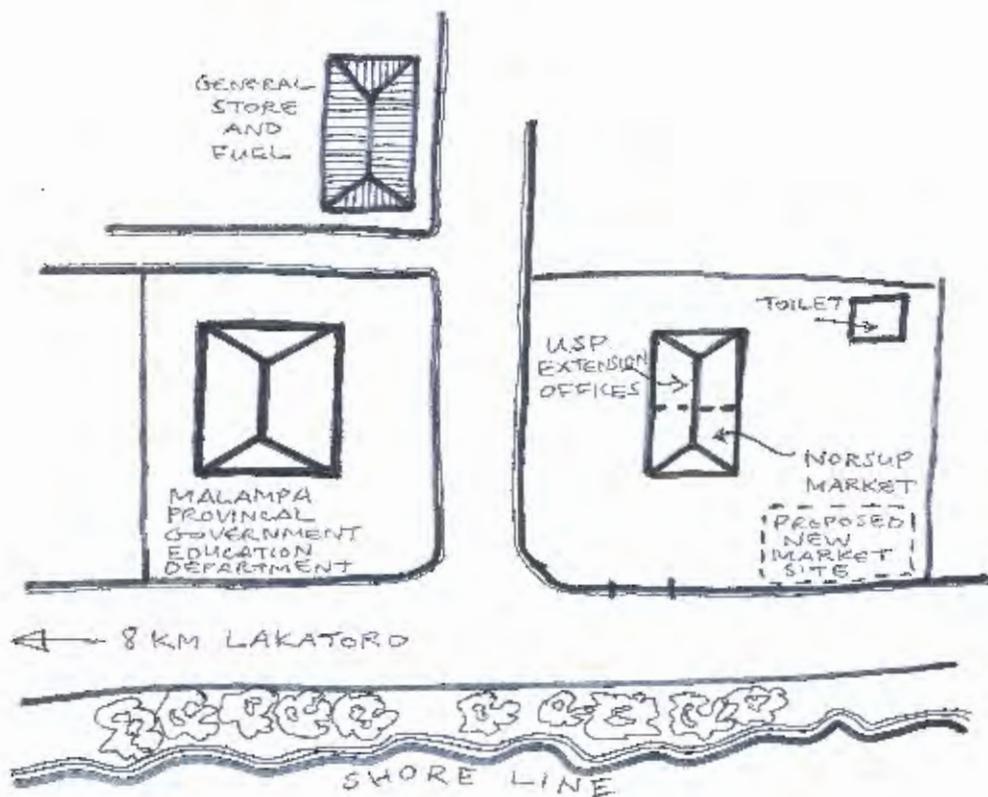
## Physical Environment

The market occupies the portico of a building that is used as an extension office of the University of the South Pacific (USP). The building has recently been jointly renovated by AusAid and the French Defence Forces. Further renovations and extensions to this building are planned by USP which will ultimately necessitate relocation of the market. It is anticipated that a new market shelter will be constructed on, or near to, the same site.

The market caters for a limited number of vendors. On most Fridays the market is seldom used by more than 10 vendors at any one time. The market infrastructure comprises a

concrete floor area of approximately 50 square metres and a small, free standing toilet block at the rear of the property. The portico, which is open on three sides, is the only shelter on the site that is otherwise clear of any trees. The site is fenced by three strand barbed wire and public access is generally restricted to market Fridays.

The market is located adjacent to the shoreline and is easily accessible by boat. Most customers and vendors however access the market by road. The market is next to the Malampa Provincial Government Education Headquarters building and diagonally opposite a small general store and fuel station.



**NORSUP MARKET  
MALEKULA**





## Social Environment

### *Traders*

The majority of the market vendors are local women from neighbouring villages. The number of vendors is small.

### *Customers*

The main consumers at Norsup market are the employees of the Malampa Provincial Government Department of Education, Norsup District Hospital and teachers and staff from a nearby school. The market also caters for people travelling between Lakatoro and settlements to the north of Norsup.

### *Crime and safety*

There are no significant safety issues associated with Norsup market.

### *Use of Space*

The site has adequate space to accommodate the small number of vendors and their produce. Ample off road parking is available on site, or nearby, for customers and vendors. The market is easily accessed from the shoreline.

### *Health and hygiene*

There are no significant health and hygiene issues associated with Norsup market. However, cooked foods and fresh seafoods may be left in the sun.

## Participation by Women and Men

The fresh produce vendors at Norsup market are all women. Customers are a mix of men and women.

## Economic Dynamics

The majority of produce sold at Norsup market is locally grown on small gardens or harvested from the sea. Norsup market is the nearest fresh produce outlet for residents living in the northern parts of Malekula Island. As most islanders live a subsistence lifestyle there is limited demand for fresh market produce.

For the majority of Malampa residents working outside the public sector, wealth is obtained from cocoa and copra production.

Many local vendors and customers travel to Norsup market on foot.





## Existing Programs and Initiatives

There is a proposal to build a new market alongside the existing building. This will occur when renovations and refurbishment of the existing building is complete.

## Challenges

- Establishing a demand for local market produce

## Opportunities

- Planning for a new market that incorporates design considerations identified by this study
- Value adding to produce

## Next Steps

- Engagement with Malampa Provincial Government on the design of the proposed new market

## FIELDWORK CONDUCTED JANUARY 2009





# PORT VILA MARKETS

The market in the centre of the Port Vila Township on Efate Island is the largest produce market in Vanuatu and it has a spectacular site design. It occupies a central position in the town's tourist hub and residential heartland of Port Vila, off the Lini Highway on the seafront of Vila Bay. It is adjacent to a supermarket. On the northern side of the market is a vacant allotment that is leased by the Iririki Resort from the customary landowners. This allotment is used by Iririki 24 hrs per day for to ferry guests across from the Resort to the town of Port Vila.

Other roadside markets offer few amenities for vendors or sellers. There are no shelters apart from large trees, muddy conditions, no stalls and no seating for the sellers. Despite these conditions, sellers are willing to sell their produce here as they can often sell their produce quickly to local residents and visitors as they pass by. Some vendors also value the fact that the roadside markets are less crowded than the main market. Examples of these markets are Mele, MCI Road Market and Fres Wota. The latter is popular because it is in an area with long established homes and it is managed by local women through the chief of the area.





## Management

The Port Vila market is open from 7.30am Monday until 12.00pm on Saturdays. Markets throughout Efate are generally closed on Sundays, although some produce is sold all week at the front of outlying villages.



waste. The Council considers that market vendors need to be educated on effective waste management practices, for example, separating recyclables.

The Council has previously tried to encourage farmers to husk coconuts at home or on the plantation before they are brought to the markets, without success. Farmers have argued that premature husking of coconuts destroys the quality of the fruit. Dry husks have in past times been collected by Council and various horticultural businesses for use in their plant nurseries. Green husks, and banana leaves, have proven unsuitable for these purposes as mulchers have been unable to process the fibrous material. Consequently, machine parts have become clogged. Repairs to mulchers have been costly and time consuming as spare components must be sourced off-shore. There is little demand for pig fodder from the market waste. Waste food from local hotels currently meet this demand. Consequently most market waste is being consigned to landfill. Council's waste disposal facility was opened in 1995 and has a projected lifespan up till 2020.

Currently 12 people including three women are employed by the Council to clean the market area after the market has closed (eg: 6.30pm – 8.00pm).. It was considered that the cleaners could do a better job, however they were under-resourced, and new wheelbarrows and a high



Management of the market by the Port Vila Municipal Council has been a cause of much criticism. In particular, waste had been allowed to accumulate causing odour and other environmental health problems, attracting flies and vermin and blocking drains. Vendors have objected to continuing to pay fees in this situation. As a result, the Council is reviewing waste management practices at the market where previously waste was deposited into a concrete storage bay, on the waterfront at the rear of the market, Council now issues vendors with a plastic garbage bag on payment of their VT450 table fee so that the vendors can collect and dispose of their own market





pressure hose would greatly assist them with their duties.

There are seven security officers on hand at all times, working in two shifts, including night time surveillance. A few traders sleep with their goods in the market overnight, some occupying the toilets, as secure storage facilities are very limited. Others leave their bags overnight at their own risk.

There is no limitation placed on the number of traders (or customers) allowed into the market.

The market women have created a Grassroots Association which is in its early stages of development. The cooked food vendors seems to be well organised and this is being actively driven by an ex-police woman, whose husband is currently a servicing police officer.



Market fees at Port Vila Market are as follows:

- Municipality Permit (which may take six months to obtain) VT 6750
- Vanuatu Government Business Licence (for six months) VT 5500
- Daily Market Fee for each table VT 450
- Daily Market Fee for larger table VT 900
- if three sellers share a table each pays VT 450
- Food cooks wear head covers (disposable) VT 150

Port Vila has a sister city relationship with Grafton, NSW, Australia. Mackay Rotary Club (Queensland, Australia) has previously donated water storage tanks to Port Vila market, recognising the cultural links arising from the history of South Sea Islanders in the local sugar industry.



Council also employs four Municipal Police Officers (all men), who report to the Environmental Health Officer, to enforce regulations relating to market activities, including the *Food Act* and associated *Food Regulations* and *Municipality Act*. On-the-spot fines of VT5,000 apply for any offences. Women are likely to be encouraged to apply for these jobs in the next recruitment phase. The Municipal Police Officers have a 'sister-city' relationship with their counterparts in Tunbea, New Caledonia and provide training to Municipal Police Officers in Luganville, Espiritu Santo.

The sale of fresh meat and fish is prohibited at the market.



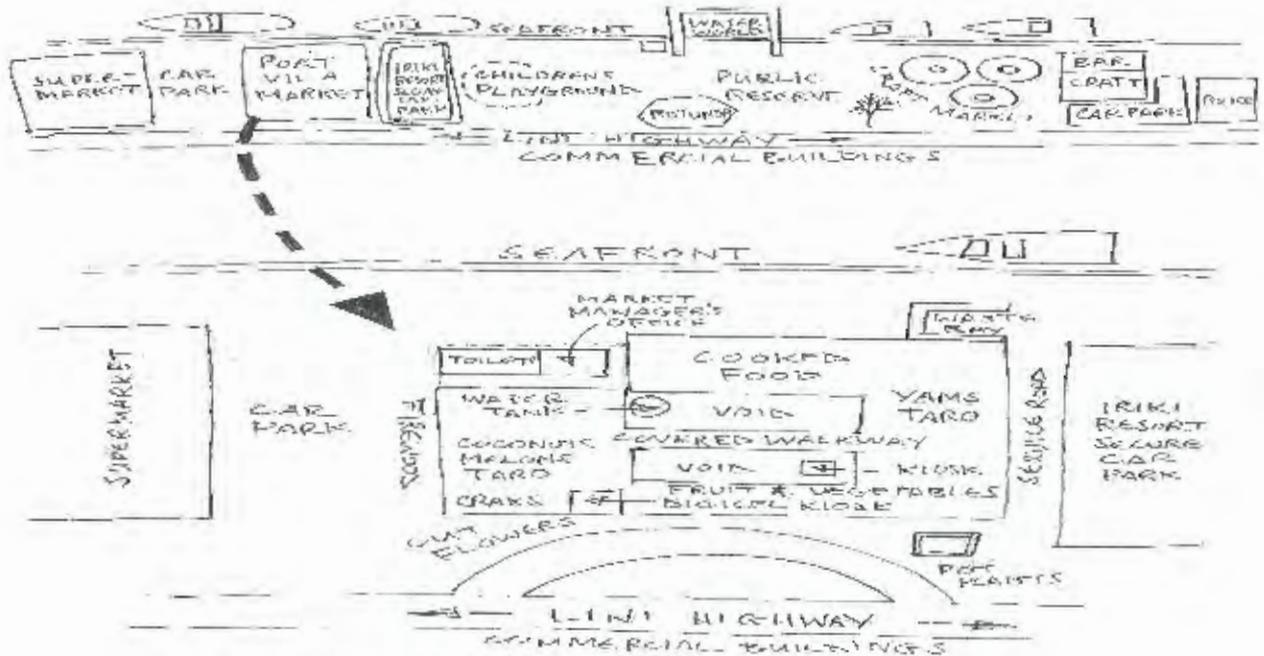


## Physical Environment

Port Vila market is a modern building with a distinctive metal roof supported by concrete columns. The building is open walled and has a concrete floor. The rear of the building incorporates a market office, public showers and toilets. The centre of the market comprises a large unroofed, paved drainage area that effectively separates the cooked food area, office and ablution blocks from the fresh produce stalls.

The Port Vila market is overcrowded. Traders are now taking up space in the aisles between stalls as well as on a paved drainage area in the centre of the market that has no overhead cover. Market activities, especially firewood and cut flower sales, spill out onto footpaths and access roads along the southern side and in the front of the market building.

Market vendors at other areas, such as Fres Wota, stated that they preferred to sell in the more uncomfortable



## PORT VILA MARKET VANUATU





suburban environments, without added amenities, because the smaller markets were not crowded like Port Vila Market.

There is a charge for the use of toilets at Port Vila market. The toilet facilities are inadequate and unsanitary. There also need to be more water taps. Water tanks, donated by Mackay (QLD) Rotary, are visible in the middle of the market but there is no hot water to clean dishes or eating utensils.

Most of the market waste can be composted and a daily collection service is supposed to exist although this is not always the practice. The containers provided to gather the waste could be managed in a more sustainable way eg: reusing the baskets made from pandanus leaves that are used to bring produce into the market.

A foreshore reserve is located on the northern side of the market. This reserve includes a children's playground and a large stage-like rotunda. At the far end of the reserve is a craft market which includes three thatched, circular buildings with open centres. A variety of locally produced and imported clothing, including sarongs and beachwear

is sold at these stalls, as well as traditional handicrafts. These stalls are all managed by women. Adjacent to these stalls are two larger corrugated iron clad shelters housing a variety of carved artefacts and several waterfront eateries. A police station is located to the immediate north of these buildings.

On the waterfront, directly opposite the children's playground is a small waterslide amusement park operated by the Council. This park includes a number of novelty floats and is popular with local young people and visitors. The waterslide is managed by three operators, including a woman, who work in shifts. Patrons of the amusement park are charged an hourly fee and the facility may be hired for private functions. Several small tourist charter boats dock along this section of the waterfront.

The Council is investigating possibilities for expanding the shelter at the market to accommodate the increasing marketing activity taking place. However there is also a possibility that the market may be relocated.

The Fres Wota market comprises a raised concrete platform sheltered by a simple corrugated iron roof. The Port Vila Municipal Council cuts the grass around the market site. The market attracts customers from across Port Vila and has a busy atmosphere. Aside from a single market hall and children's swing there are no facilities at the market.





## Social Environment

Port Vila Market is in the centre of town and is a useful place to get messages to one's family and people on the outer islands, as well as a popular place to meet up and buy a low cost meal.

### **Traders**

There are around 250 vendors at the main market. There are 20-30 vendors operating at Fres Wota market. Some women vendors at the market sell finger food to patrons of the nakamals (kava saloons) adjacent to the market.



The National Council of Women is working actively to set up grassroots women groups to have an impact on the infrastructure of markets and to develop strategies for co-operation with the Council of Chiefs – Malvatumauri. The NCW has built up good representational structures provincially and on the islands with the chiefs. The NCW members are volunteers.

### **Consumers**

The main customers at Port Vila market are local residents. The market also draws buyers from the many restaurants, resorts and hotels in the city and surrounding bayside communities who buy cut flowers as well as food produce. A large number of self-catering tourists also shop at the market.

The cooked food section of the market is popular with local and out of town residents alike, including vendors from outlying islands who may stay overnight at the Port Vila market until they have sold all their produce.

### **Crime and Safety**

Although women felt safe at night at Port Vila market they were intimidated by the ever present security staff and felt nervous complaining to them, particularly about conditions at the market.

### **Use of Space**

The market space is fully utilised and many traders now occupy the footpath and median strip adjacent to the market to display and sell their produce. The rear of the market is specifically allocated for cooked foods and includes numerous tables and benches for diners to sit at. Large produce items, such as bananas, coconuts, watermelons, taro and baskets of sweet potatoes are typically spread out on the ground in the market aisles, creating potential trip hazards for customers and vendors.





Vendors staying overnight at the market sleep on the ground, with individual family or village groups occupying separate bays created by the arrangement of market tables. *Digicel* has utilised much of the available advertising space, including pillars and kiosk walls to promote its mobile telephone services.

### **Health and Hygiene**

The Council adopts a strict hygiene approach at the market, including a requirement that cooked food vendors wear hair nets. Many vendors from outlying islands sleep overnight at the market on pandanus leaf mats rolled out alongside or underneath market tables.

Rats are a major problem in the marketplace, especially at night, and have potential to contaminate stored food, spread disease and damage infrastructure, for example, by chewing on electrical cables. Some women vendors have complained of rats running across them while they sleep.

Fire ants are also an issue. A lack of soil sterilisation of cargo transported on inter-island ferries has resulted in the spread of fire ants from Espiritu Santo to Efate. Kava, taro and yams are especially likely to bring soil into the market. The Council has implemented various methods to control the spread of fire ants.





## Participation by Women and Men

The vendors at Port Vila Market, and at other markets elsewhere on Efate Island are predominantly women. Some men accompany their wives at the market. Women dominate cooked food areas, although there are men present as well. One male cooked food vendor was previously a chef at La Lagon Resort on the Island, and left to run his own cooked food outlet at the market. All the security and market workers are men. The transport is also controlled by men.

Women are particularly concerned about:

- the cleaning and maintenance of toilets, including an additional three to four more cubicles to meet the needs of traders

- the provision of more showers for people who stay overnight
- the provision of hot water facilities
- poor waste disposal practices
- inadequate shelter at markets
- unhygienic food handling
- irregular cleaning of kitchen facilities
- infrequent and costly transport services from villages to the markets
- vermin in the markets
- inadequate and uncomfortable seating at the market





## Economic Environment

Income from market fees is around VT40M p.a. The Council reports that table fees currently only meet the cost of utilities and labour but not waste collection, which is being subsidised by rates collected from property taxes.

Vendors from Efate spend up to VT15,000 travelling to and from the market. Accordingly there appear to be opportunities to establish wholesale outlets enabling farmers to sell their produce to a town vendor. Farmers could then return to their villages to concentrate on production rather than paying VT450 in daily fees and spending further money on food and accommodation while attempting to sell their produce at the market.

Vegetable exports from Efate, Pentecost and Ambae to New Caledonia have not been successful due to disputes arising over prices. Vendors considered that they get better prices for cassava and sweet potatoes at Port Vila market. A cold room previously operating in Port Vila has closed. Currently there are no cold rooms available if accepted for storage.

### **Case study, fruit and vegetable vendor couple**

These vendors were a husband and wife team. The vendors were both farmers with a family of 6 children, three of whom

were still attending school. The vendors sold taro and sweet potatoes at the market. They paid between VT6,000 and VT20,000 to travel to the market depending upon the quantity of their cargo and the number of family members travelling with them. The vendors usually travelled into the Port Vila on Wednesday and returned to their village on Saturdays, sleeping overnight at the market.

The vendors stated that they made a VT15,000 profit in a good week but only VT6,000 when sales were slow. The vendors considered that market fees should not be collected up front but only after vendors had had the opportunity to sell some of their produce and earn some money. The vendors occasionally shared tables with friends to minimise costs. Profits were spent on school fees, rice and other grocery items and vegetables, which they purchased at the market. The vendors cleaned their produce before travelling into the market minimising waste in the transport vehicle as well as at the market, where they took responsibility for keeping their own stall area clean and tidy.

The male vendor considered that vegetable produce should be sold by weight and if villages were provided with scales, produce could be pre-packaged before being brought into the market. He also favoured the Government buying wholesale from farmers and then distributing the produce to hotels, restaurants and supermarkets. This, he said, would enable women to stay at home and care for their families and gardens and not have to travel. The vendors shared meals at the market to minimise costs.

The vendors expressed concern that there was no clinic at the market and management appeared indifferent to the needs of vendors. Several incidents were quoted where individual vendors had called for ambulance assistance for stricken vendors.

### **Case study, female cooked food vendor**

This widowed vendor, aged 64, originated from Ambae Island and has sold cooked food at the market for five years after moving to Port Vila in 2004 to live with her daughter. The vendor





starts her day at the market at 7.00am and often stay until 9.00pm–10.00pm. She is in the habit of asking her regular clients what they would like to eat rather than offering a set menu. She will then travel to other markets to source special ingredients, such as fish. The vendor states that she makes a weekly profit of VT6,000. Her expenses include VT5,000 for an annual business licence, VT970 for 5kg rice, VT4,100 for weekly gas supplies, VT1,000 per day for fresh vegetables, VT2,000-VT4,000 daily for fish, VT800 per 2kg of chicken and VT1,500 for beef steak. The cost of meals is fixed at VT350 per plate, though some customers volunteer extra as a tip.

The vendor serves 25-30 meals a day and occasionally lends other vendors up to VT1,000. This money was repayable after one week and attracted an interest rate of 100%.

The vendor complains that there are no lockable cupboards for her utensils, and that she has to share a sink with three other vendors. There is no hot water and despite the VT450 stall fee she is obliged to provide her own benches for customers to sit on and has to pay VT40 to use the market toilets. The vendor comments that vandalism is a growing problem at the market especially on weekends.

Despite her age, the vendor is determined to keep selling cooked food at the market as it enables her to support her daughter's family, gives her a level of independence and provides a social network. The vendor is assisted by her adult grandchildren and another woman.

**Case study, female Fres Wota taro seller from Pentecost**

This vendor sells taro that is sent to her by family members living on Pentecost Island. The vendor collects the produce from the Port Vila wharf on Wednesdays for selling at the





**Case study: female craft market vendor**

This vendor was born in Port Vila but raised on Pentecost Island. She now lives in Tagape Village, Efate and pays VT150 return to travel to the craft market in Lini Parade, north of the main produce market.

Prior to selling at the market this vendor has sold direct from home. It took her two years to secure a stall at the craft market where she sells a range of clothing, jewellery and basketware products, most of which she makes herself.

The vendor states that minor theft is a problem at the market notwithstanding the presence of two security officers. She maintains VT800,000 in stock at the market and initially paid VT50,000 to buy materials to commence her business. She makes VT5000 profit per day, however this may reach VT10,000-VT15,000 during the peak tourist season. The vendor opens her market stall at 7.30am and usually stays until 4.30pm. She uses her time at the market to sew and make handicrafts.

The vendor brings her own food from home or purchases meals from the market. Profits from her sales are spent on school fees for her five children and various household items.

Fres Wota market from Thursday to Saturday. Although the Fres Wota market is lacking in amenities she says she prefers selling there to Port Vila as she is able to spread her produce on the ground and customers can more easily see the quality of the vegetables. The market is also located near to a school and homes ensuring a steady stream of customers. Profits from her sales, less expenses, are remitted to her relatives on Pentecost Island.





### **Case study, Rebecca originally from Tanna**

This vendor has assumed the role of Market Manager at Fres Wota and collects fees from the vendors which are passed to the Chief for distribution among local youth organisations and community projects. The vendor sells fruit juice drinks for VT20 and servings of cooked food for VT100.

Consideration is also being given to creating a more vibrant night market at Port Vila.

UNELCO is investigating the use of biofuels on Malekula, Tanna and Espiritu Santo Islands. This project could be extended to include Efate with benefits for local primary producers and traders at Port Vila market.

## **Existing Programs and Initiatives**

Port Vila Municipal Council is currently investigating options for the composting of green waste from the market and other improved methods of waste collection.

An alternative market site, at Rainbow Gardens on the outskirts of Port Vila, is being considered by Council. This new location would improve access for customers and vendors and allow road widening to occur in the centre of town. Several inner city streets are being considered for conversion into pedestrian malls.

## **Challenges**

- Improving waste management practices, with daily collection
- Educating vendors on waste reduction and waste management
- Controlling vermin, especially rats
- Educating cleaners on appropriate cleaning management
- Identifying new market demand for fresh produce





- Acquiring land for additional markets on Efate Island
- Incorporating cold storage facilities into the main market
- Incorporating lockable cupboards for cooked food vendors' property at the market
- Repairing damaged windows at Port Vila market
- Installing more water taps and cleaning tubs in the market kitchen
- Installing additional water tanks
- Rigorous enforcement of health regulations
- Introducing sustainable environmentally friendly waste containers
- Strengthening market governance
- Raising public awareness about regulations and bylaws
- Making transparent what percentage of market revenue is being spent on strengthening the services to women at markets



## Opportunities

- Planning for a new market that incorporates design considerations identified by this project
- Establishing a wholesale outlet
- Establishing a cool room
- Recycling
- Providing temporary accommodation for vendors from outlying areas
- Use of pandanus leaf baskets for waste collection
- Design and establishment of at least two new markets – one at Mele and the other at Fres Wota or at MCI Road Market where families take turns to have a spot at the market







- Development of a night market at Fres Wota
- Encouraging cooking in different styles
- Delivery of training in food handling
- Delivery of awareness programs on micro financing
- Delivery of training in financial literacy
- Developing a Market Traders Association for Women
- Developing a Farmers Market Association for Women.

### Next Steps

- Engagement with the Council on the design of the proposed new market
- Engaging Mackay Rotary in supporting on-going sponsorship of Port Vila market
- Ascertaining the level of funding and technical expertise Grafton City Council is able to extend to Port Vila Municipal Council in developing and operating Port Vila market
- Mapping out pathways forward for the Council to respond to tensions and criticisms
- Developing partnerships between the Municipality, Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of Women and the Council of Chiefs, with donor support.

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# TAUTU MARKET

Tautu market is located 5 kilometers north of Lakatoro town, adjacent to the coastal village of Tautu, Malekula Island, Vanuatu. Tautu village has a scattered population of less than 500 people, most of whom live a subsistence lifestyle. The market and village are set back from the Lakatoro-Norsup Road. The market itself is under construction and not yet operational.





## Management

It is intended that the management of Tautu market be vested in the customary landowners. However the market is still under construction so the management regime is not yet fully in place.

## Physical Environment

Tautu market is located on customary land. The market which is under construction comprises a narrow market stall approximately 3m wide by 15m in length, consisting of a corrugated iron roof supported on timber uprights. The floor of the market is currently unpaved and the site is overgrown. Jungle vines have taken advantage of the timber uprights and are spreading across the roof of the hall. The market in its present form lacks a water supply, power, toilet facilities and waste disposal area. It is intended that Tautu market be developed as a seafood market for the local village women to retail fresh fish, clams, turtle and crabs as well as garden vegetables.

## Social Environment

### Traders

It is intended that markets vendors will be from Tautu village and nearby settlements.

### Customers

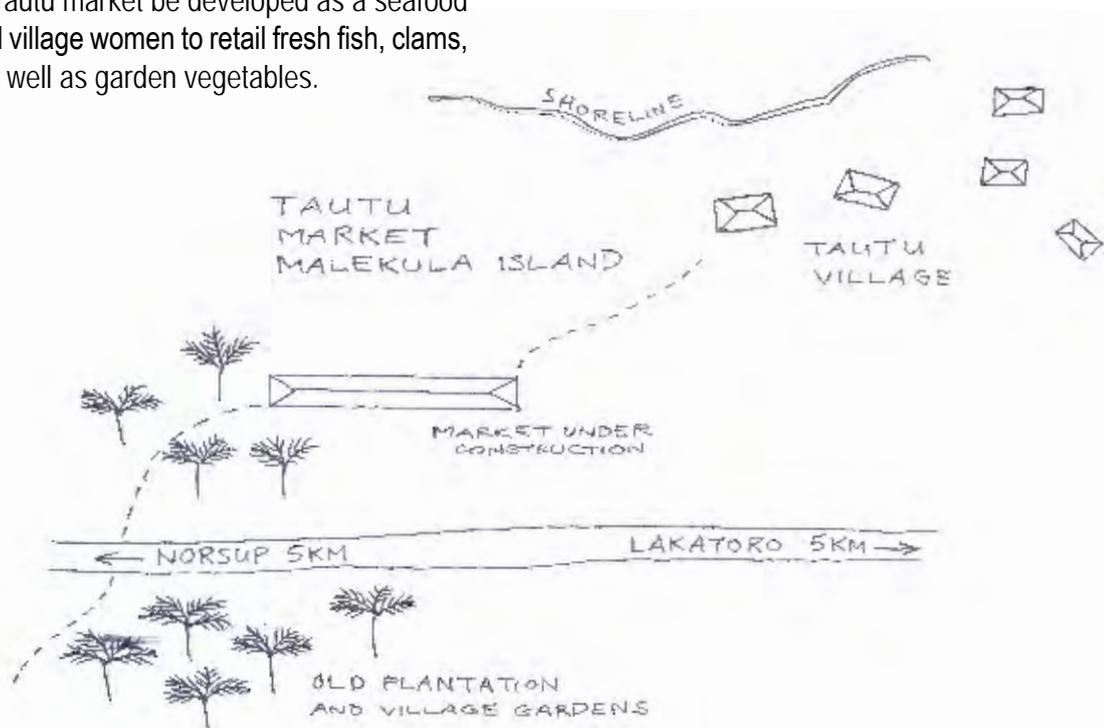
It is expected that the main customers at Tautu market will be local residents, notably from Lakatoro and Norsup settlements seeking to purchase fresh fish and other seafood products.

### Crime and safety

No significant crime or safety issues are anticipated for Tautu market.

### Use of Space

The small size of Tautu market does not compromise any adjacent land use.





### **Health and hygiene**

There are likely to be potential health and hygiene risks associated with the operation of the Tautu market, particularly in relation to the handling, processing and storage of fresh seafood products. These risks are heightened given the current absence of waste disposal, water supply and toilet facilities.

### **Participation by Women and Men**

It is anticipated that the majority of seafood vendors at Tautu will be women, especially from Tautu village.

### **Economic Environment**

Tautu market is one of four local markets initiated by Mr Donna Browney, former Minister for Agriculture, and current local member of parliament who was first elected to office in 2004. The markets were established in his constituency as a means of demonstrating his commitment to the betterment of his constituents, especially women voters. Three similar markets, at Walarano, Rory and Potinder are currently operating and are connected to tank water supplies.

Construction of Tautu market commenced in April 2008 and Mr Browney was re-elected to Parliament in September 2008. Since that period there have been no funds to complete the construction of the market, which is slowly being consumed by the jungle.

Palen Atu, Malampa Provincial Government planner advises that the provincial government was not a participant in this project

and would not have supported a market in this location. It is considered that the money used on the Tautu market could have been better directed to improving and developing facilities at the nearby Norsup market which also has the benefit of being on located on the seafront and potential for deepwater mooring facilities. Equidistant is the purpose built Malampa Butchery and Fish Market, erected in the same year, that has the advantage of cold-room storage and ice making machines. There was little likelihood that people would stop at Tautu market when a greater variety of seafoods and produce were obtainable close by.

### **Existing Programs and Initiatives**

There is currently no funding available to complete construction of Tautu market.

### **Challenges**

Educating producers and parliamentarians on the need for proper planning in the siting and design of markets.





## Opportunities

While the initial motivation for developing the market may have been admirable, this market serves as a demonstration of the need to ensure full stakeholder support in the context of assessed economic viability.

## Next Steps

Not applicable

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