

PWD, VCAP & ANEITYUM AC

RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Recommendations for PWD: Aneityum AC

- Engineer from PWD to inspect footpath and create technical plan for "climate proofing" of primary footpath Q2 2016
- Focus on specific areas of primary footpath (*not secondary paths used for gardens, etc*)
- Only certain portions of primary footpath require assistance, focus on biggest challenges- river crossings, erosion issues on major slopes, etc
- Engineers from VCAP design team recommended considering installation of aluminum bridges for certain pedestrian crossings. Acquire assistance from International TA if desired to source materials and gauge feasibility and options.
- Consider lessons learned and successes from previous PWD footpath resilience project on Futuna, which was highly successful and utilized community work contracts
- Soft measures such as vetiver grass and planting of trees to curb erosion and utilize vetiver grass nurseries in Anelcauhat & Anawamet
- Update communities & VDC's regarding status of previous PWD scoping missions relating to road
- Begin work on footpaths from Anelcauhat to Aniplatei initially due to hazards, population figures and frequency of use. Next priority areas for improving access are Aniplatei - Umej and then Anelcauhat - Anawamet.



(Above: Footpath passes over a large, steep hill in Anaowanse with severe erosion)

Primary Footpath & Pedestrian Bridges

Improving the condition and accessibility of footpaths was the highest priority for each community consulted on Aneityum (**refer to Aneityum VCAP CCA Plans*). As walking along the primary footpath that circles Aneityum is the most common method of accessing services and traveling between communities on the island. Every week, hundreds of villagers utilize the footpaths to travel between communities. As Anelcauhat is a main service center on the island, where the health dispensary, schools, airport, bank and tourism activities are based, access to this location is critical.

There are portions of the footpath that are inaccessible in rain conditions due to severe upland erosion and / or flooding of rivers and creeks. A small portion of the paths are inaccessible at high tide as well due to their proximity to the coastline and impeding tidal waves or storm surge.

Primary footpath inside of Anelcauhat area

Within the village center itself there are several small creeks and as recently as 2013, a man staying in Anelcauhat died after slipping on a makeshift bridge inside the village. At the time of his death, there was no safe pedestrian crossing available - only a fallen tree that became slippery in rainy conditions. It is believed the man who died slipped on the fallen tree while crossing the creek at night during the rain, knocked his head on the makeshift bridge and fell unconscious before drowning in the shallow water. This crossing is located behind a SDA church.

There is a very small bridge constructed out of timber that must repeatedly be repaired located near the Anelcauhat Primary School and a local pre-school. Constructing an improved crossing that is more resilient

Challenges for PWD Aneityum AC

Tourism commitments currently impact availability of some community members to fully engage in activities. Over 200+ tourist ships scheduled to visit Mystery Island in 2016. Despite the busy schedule, community members have stated that improving accessibility of footpaths is still a top priority and that community members would actively support implementation

There was a man in 2015, reportedly from Efate Island, who **pretended to be a PWD employee** and travelled to Aneityum promising to recruit community members to work on a project to construct a new vehicular road on the island. This story was publicized in the Daily Post newspaper. PWD should be aware of this before they engage community members or inform them of potential work, in case some community members are dubious or believe they are being scammed.

While every VDC and a majority of community members have expressed total support for improvements to the footpaths, a small number of individuals may express **preference or desire for the construction of vehicular roads**. This request should be met with practicality as the available VCAP budget for the creation of a vehicular road and LDCF requirements that **“incremental”** investments be made will not allow for the construction of a new accessway, but rather the strengthening or resilience building of a current one.

The Tafea Outer Islands site is spread out among 5 Area Councils on 4 islands, and there is **no available VCAP Site Coordinator located on Aneityum**. However, the Provincial Area Secretary, Mr Reuben Neriam, has expressed his support in helping VCAP delivery.

Limited shipping options or scheduled trips for Aneityum

would reduce potential for injury from small school children using this smaller bridge, which allows villagers to cross over the drainage from the swamps located in central Anelcauhat.

There is a small creek crossing near the secondary school and another along the coastline by the “Blu Wota” SDA church as well that requires minor pedestrian crossings as they can be difficult to cross at high tide or during heavy rains.

Footpath from Anelcauhat area to Aniplatei

As soon as you leave the center of Anelcauhat Village and proceed towards Aniplatei there is a large river that must be crossed. Recommended that a pedestrian crossing be constructed several hundred meters inland from the mouth of the river due to coastal

erosion / storm surge impacts at the mouth of the river. This is **biggest vulnerability on the access way as reported by Anelcauhat VDC and should be a priority item for delivery.**

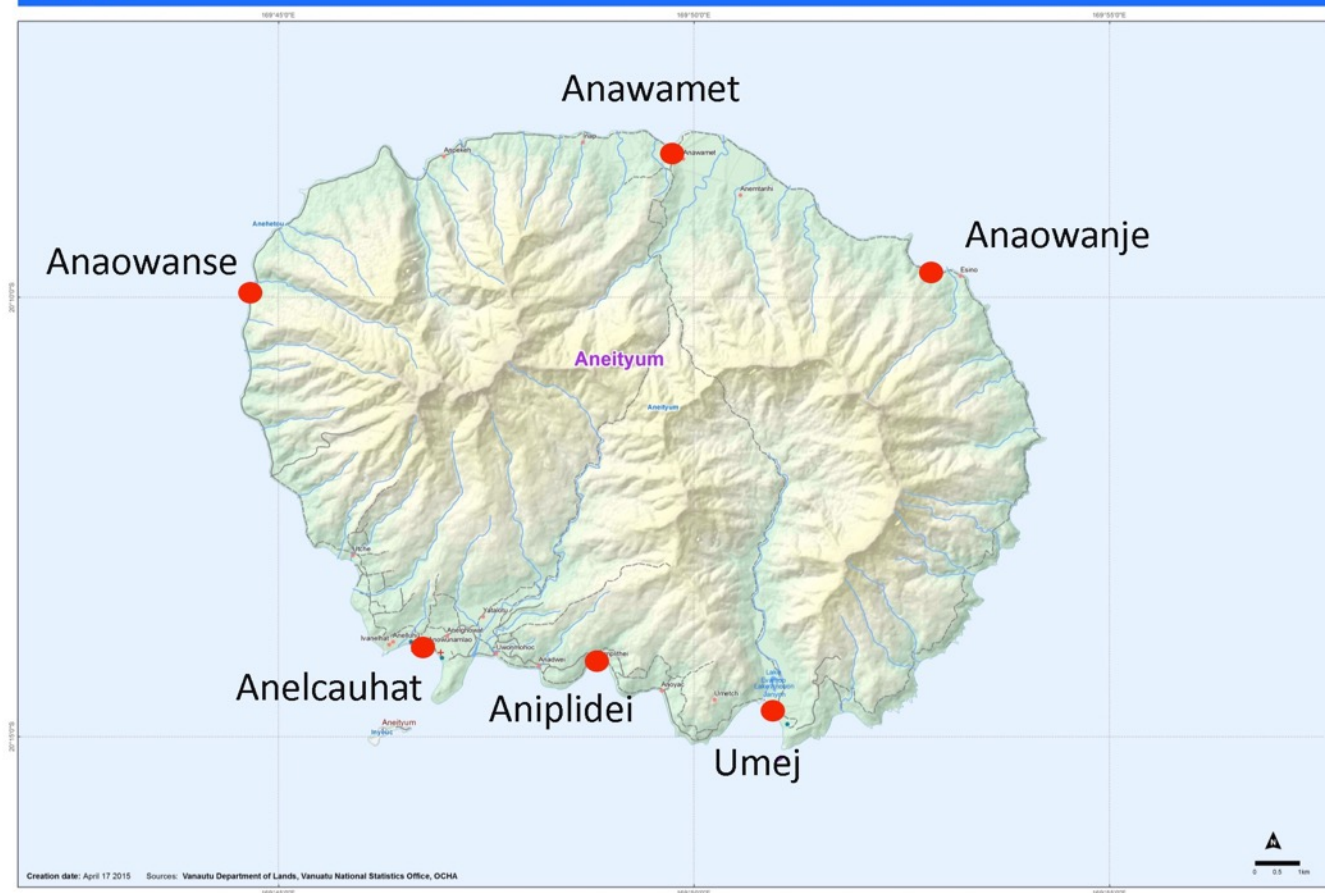


(Above: Largest river in Anelcauhat, at river mouth)

A small tributary further upstream on the main river in Anelcauhat providing access to a place called “Yatalao” that requires a small pedestrian crossing and this is the **second leading vulnerability.**

Smaller river crossings at Galilee and Aniplatei are also very dangerous in rainy conditions. An elderly man from Aneityum is believed to **have died attempting to cross one of these rivers in 2012** and was then subsequently washed out to sea. Some articles of his clothing and belongings were found near the mouth of the river but his body was never recovered.

Finally a smaller bridge near the Aneityum Tourism Project Office leading to the swamp and sub-communities living on the interior has a minor bridge that requires strengthening to improve access.



(Above: Map of Aneityum showing reference points mentioned in these results)

Footpath from Aniplatei to Umej

The **river crossing in Umej is the most dangerous and frequently cited vulnerable area** to the primary accessway as reported by communities. Community members have identified potential crossing sites located hundred of meters inland from the mouth of the river, which is especially difficult to cross during flood or high-tide events. Umej Village has 33 households and a total population of over 200 people.

The **second biggest vulnerability** cited in the Umej area is the between “Itpog” and “Ihili” where the primary footpath diverts into 2 separate passages for a brief distance. One passage is located down along the coast and villagers actually walk over 200 meters over the coral shelf reef. The footpath has been cut through living coral reef. This route is **only viable at low tide and in good conditions**. The second route passes at a higher elevation and is avoided by many villagers due to the difficult conditions where erosion and frequent use of the footpath has created a potential for **falling and having an injury**. In rainy conditions it is extremely slippery and locals prefer not to use it. **Note- there are stronger seas and tides in Umej on the eastern side of Aneityum.*

Near a place named “Ahajou”, along the eastern border of Umej Village, there is a steep part of the path close to the coastline where **two children were reportedly swept away to sea and died in 1994 while using the footpath**.

The path near Aniplatei also suffers from heavy hillside erosion and is inaccessible during rainy conditions.

Footpath from Umej to Anaowanje

Due to the population of Anaowanje being very small (less than 30 people) and the infrequent use of this segment of the footpath as compared with other portions, it is suggested to omit this portion of the footpath for improvements and focus on improving access from the Umej - Anelcauhat and Anawamet - Anelcauhat.

Footpath from Anelcauhat to Anawamet

A **large, steep hillside located near Anaowanse** consisting of a red, clay soil is the largest obstacle obstructing access to Anelcauhat. In rainy conditions, the footpath here can be very dangerous, especially for women, children and the elderly. To avoid this hillside, some villagers were scaling across a cliff with a sheer vertical face that is located approximately 20 meters above the ocean until the local chiefly council forbid locals from using this route due to the potential danger from falling. Community members request assistance in improving the building materials and design of the footpath at this dangerous area, perhaps installing stairs, drainage, railing and using soft measures such as vetiver grass to minimize erosion.

There are smaller rivers and creeks that community members report having difficulty crossing during heavy rains. However, the **main concern** emphasized by communities in Anawamet and Anaowanse was improving the **accessibility over the steep hillsides** affected by erosion.

Large portions of this footpath, aside from the large hillside near Anaowanse, are in good condition and feature sandy beaches posing no problem in accessibility to locals. As the north western side of the island is generally more arid, there is a smaller presence of rivers and creeks here, especially in the Anaowanse area.

Although Uje village (*16 households and a population of 91 people*) is considered a part of the greater Anelcauhat area, it is located an approximate 30 minute walk from the center of Anelcauhat Village. Uje Village has a **small river and creek** in the middle of this small community and **requires a safe pedestrian crossing** for villagers to have safe, reliable access to services such as local schools and the health dispensary.

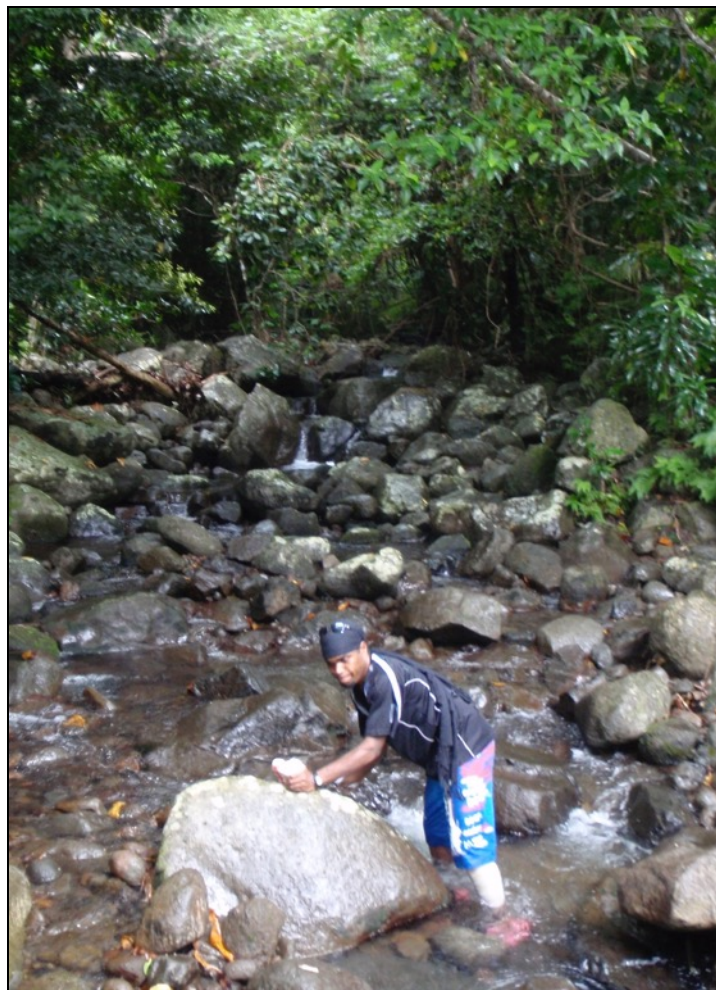
Roads & Vehicles

There are currently no operational roads on Aneityum outside of the immediate Anelcauhat / Uje village areas. There are two vehicles based in Anelcauhat that are utilized to transport timber and supplies by the Aneityum Forestry Timber Community Project on older logging roads that are in extremely poor condition.

Community members report that PWD has surveyed former logging roads on more than one occasion in the past decade to study the feasibility of building a vehicular road between Anelcauhat and Umej, but community leaders are uncertain of the outcome of these missions. Communities report that some of these missions may have been related to a possible relocation of the main airport from Mystery Island. Recommended that PWD clarify with communities if possible.

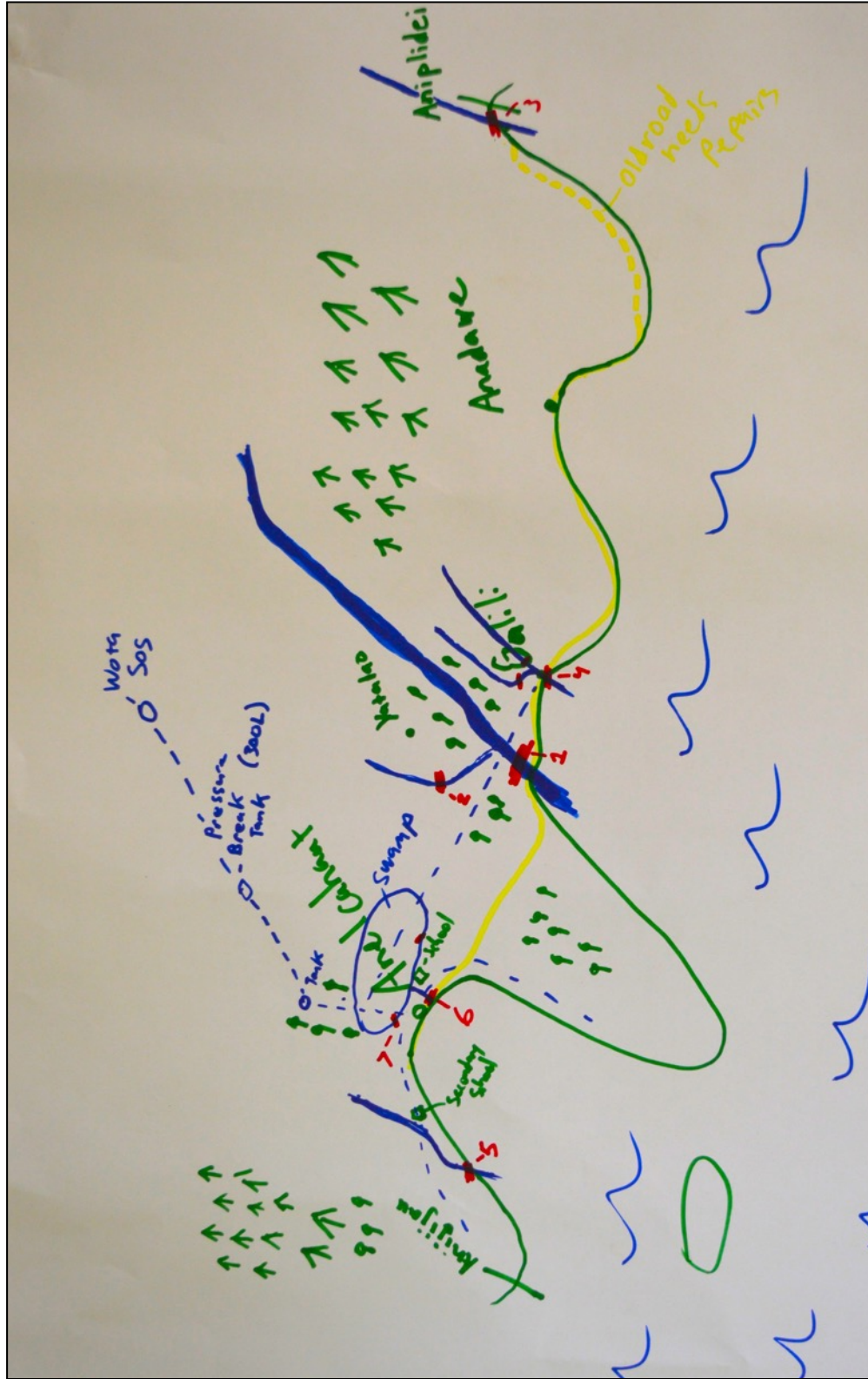
Resources Available

- Plentiful timber
- Ships can access most communities, safe passage
- Plentiful boats
- Established Village Development Committees (3) & Provincial Area Secretary



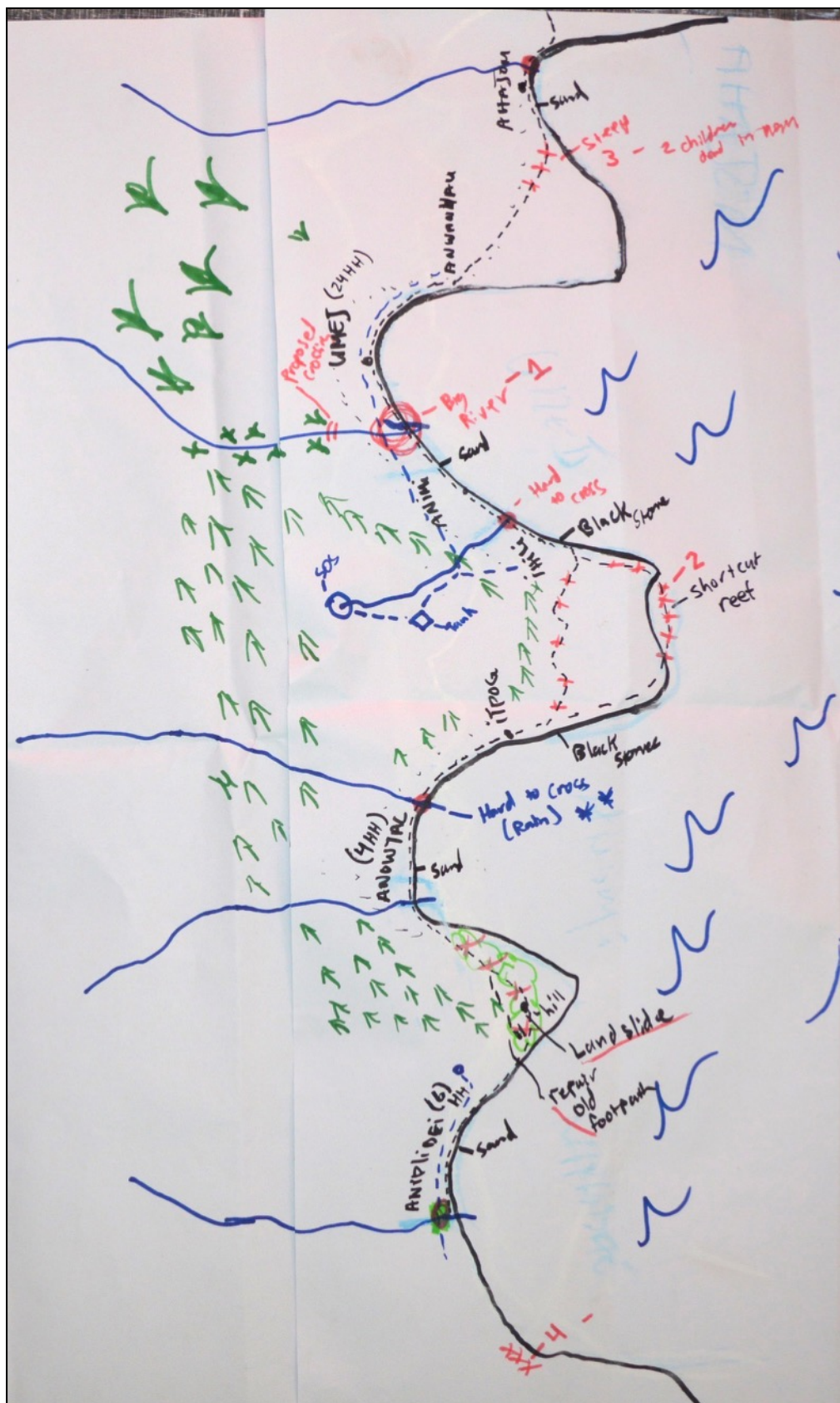
(Above: a local man crossing a creek in Uje Village, Aneityum)

Anelcauhat - Aniplidei; Community Mapping of Footpath Vulnerabilities



Community mapping exercise showing climate related vulnerabilities as indicated by community along the footpath from Anelcauhat to Aniplidei. Yellow line denotes location of primary footpath, solid blue lines denote river and creeks, dotted blue lines indicate the location of gravity feed water supply system and red marker shows the location of climate vulnerabilities, which are numbered 1 - 7 (1 indicating the biggest vulnerability and 7 the smallest vulnerability)

Aniplidei - Umej: Community Mapping of Footpath Vulnerabilities



Community mapping exercise showing climate related vulnerabilities as indicated by community along the footpath from Aniplidei to Umej. Dotted black line denotes location of primary footpath, solid blue lines denote river and creeks, dotted blue lines indicates the location of gravity feed water supply system and red marker shows the location of climate vulnerabilities, which are numbered 1 - 4 (1 indicating the biggest vulnerability and 4 the smallest vulnerability)

Anaowanje - Anawamet - Anaowanse; Community Mapping of Footpath Vulnerabilities



Community mapping exercise showing climate related vulnerabilities as indicated by community along the footpath from Anaowanje to Incedav. Dotted red line denotes location of primary footpath, dotted blue lines denote river and creeks and red circles indicate river and creek crossings