

North Erromango Area Council, Tafea Province

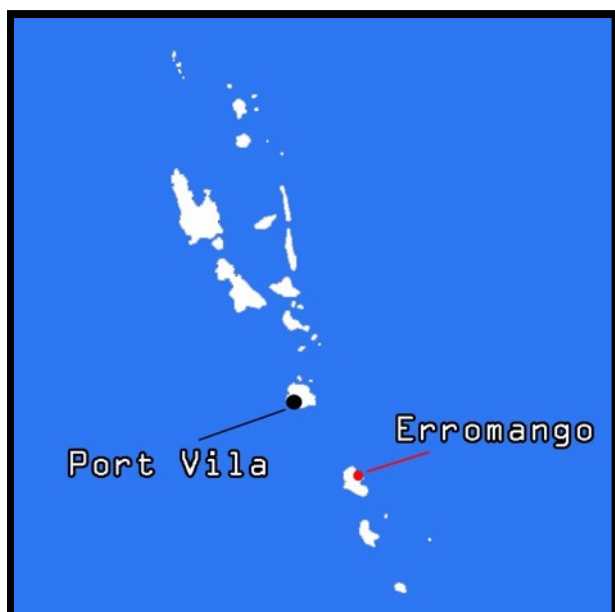


VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS - AREA COUNCIL PROFILE

Community-based vulnerability assessments conducted by Corey Huber and Jackie Dick between 06.10.15 & 13.10.15. Report produced by Corey Huber.



PHOTO: COOKS BAY, ERROMANGO



NORTH ERROMANGO AREA COUNCIL, TAFEA PROVINCE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Results elicited from communities during vulnerability assessments conducted in Ipota Village, Cooks Bay Area and Port Narvin Village in October of 2015.

This report developed with the support of the United Nations Development Program and “Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone of Vanuatu” or “VCAP”, which is implemented by the Vanuatu national government through the Ministry of Climate Change.

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1. METHODOLOGY FOR VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

The term “Vulnerability Assessment” is sometimes used interchangeably with the term “Community Profile” within Vanuatu. Both terms refer to a participatory social engagement tool that elicits information in a group setting about communities in a comprehensive, multi-sector approach. Vulnerability assessments (or community profiles) allow for community members to identify for themselves any relevant vulnerabilities using their contextual knowledge (including those posed by climate change and natural disasters), contribute valuable baseline data about the community as well as define community priorities for development in a fairly short span of time.

There have been multiple methodologies and templates utilized by various stakeholders to conduct vulnerability assessments and community profiles within Vanuatu, however, the Department of Local Authorities (DLA) is attempting to standardize this process. The DLA approved the use of the draft assessment tool and methodology used to collect the data contained within this report (version 2.3 of the “Komuniti Profael Form”). The vulnerability assessment tool utilized was designed using the pidgin language, Bislama, and is intended for use by non-technical Ni-Vanuatu facilitators (a generalist with a secondary level of education should be able to facilitate the assessment process with minimal training). The template for the assessment tool is currently in draft format and will be further refined by the DLA with the support of UNDP and other stakeholders throughout 2016.

The information contained within this report summarizes the results collected from vulnerability assessments conducted in **North Erromango Area Council in October of 2015**. These vulnerability assessments were conducted in a community meeting format that was open to the general public. Data was collected from community members through the assistance of facilitators, who led several

public meetings and encouraged active participation throughout the meetings by asking a series of questions and putting forth discussion points, as detailed in the “Komuniti Profael Form” version 2.3. The facilitators attempted to elicit data without influencing the results provided by the community. At times, the facilitator attempted to help community members arrive at a consensus or agree upon an approximate answer if there happened to be any disagreement or varying answers provided by the group.



The results from these community vulnerability assessments often consist of

estimations, provided by community members to the best of their knowledge. While the results within this report should provide relatively accurate information about a community's vulnerabilities and resources, there may contain within this report inaccuracies as reported by the communities themselves. Data within this report should be considered as approximations made by community members (*example - population figures*).

The facilitators also utilized focus groups as part of the approach in completing the vulnerability assessments, allowing for further in-depth discussions regarding vulnerabilities and more inclusivity for local youth and women who sometimes face cultural limitations or inhibitions

when expressing themselves publicly during community meetings. Focus groups utilized during this initiative included women's groups, youth groups (under the age of 25) and men's groups. Key respondent interviews were also utilized to engage community leaders, including teachers, health workers, chiefly authorities, NGO representatives and woman's group leaders.

Relevant chiefs and members of chiefly councils were informed of this community vulnerability assessment process and its potential benefits before any data was collected and permission was granted to carry out the assessments in accordance with local governance practices. Chiefly representatives participated in the community profiling initiative at all communities consulted within **North Erromango: Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin**. The provincial Area Secretary for the **North Erromango Area Council, Mr. Remi Nembil**, as well as **VCAP North Erromango Site Coordinator, Mr. Jackie Dick**, were engaged throughout the entire community vulnerability assessment process and actively facilitated sessions at community meetings.

Notice was given to communities prior to each meeting where vulnerability assessments were conducted (public announcements were made and notices were hung on community notice boards) and the entire community was encouraged to attend, including women, youth and disabled persons, etc. Meeting attendance was encouraged regardless of land ownership claims, ethnicity, education, religion or gender. **Meetings took place in Ipota (07.10.15); Cooks Bay (08.10.15) and Port Narvin (09.10.15)**. Although the entire community was encouraged to attend and participate in the vulnerability assessments, attendance was voluntary and some chose not to participate due to work or personal commitments.

Transect walks through the communities were also conducted by the facilitators before and after vulnerability assessments were completed. Photos were taken by the facilitator at these times.

This report will be shared with **Tafea Provincial Government Council and the North Erromango Area Council**, as well as the nationally implementing stakeholders and partners of "VCAP".

LOCATION & DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENTS	MALE PARTICIPANTS	FEMALE PARTICIPANTS
<u>Ipota Village</u> - Meeting conducted in local Presbyterian Church on 07.10.15 with representation from a geographic area including outlying "stations" spanning from "Ifo" to "Norah/Nalvin".	22	25
<u>Cooks Bay Area</u> - Meeting conducted in the Ilvuwalam Primary School Building (Cooks Bay Area) on 08.10.15 with representation from a geographic area including outlying "stations" called Ilvuwalam, Towit, Perusia, and Potwai. The Cooks Bay area is made up collectively of these individual small stations.	12	10
<u>Port Narvin</u> - Meeting conducted in Port Narvin Village on 09.10.15. Severe island-wide fuel shortages due to a lack of regular services by cargo ships caused the VCAP team to travel by foot over challenging terrain to be able to conduct the assessment.	15	32

2. SUMMARY OF KEY VULNERABILITIES IN NORTH ERROMANGO AC

Summary of key vulnerabilities identified by communities during vulnerability assessments. Please note that further information regarding these key vulnerabilities may require input from technical experts.

Food Security	Communities throughout North Erromango have reported moderate to severe food security issues, stemming mostly damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Pam and the ongoing El Niño induced drought conditions. Staple crops have been growing poorly with the abnormally high temperatures and a low amount of rainfall.
Footpath Maintenance	Walking along the footpaths on Erromango is the primary means of transportation on the island. Every week, hundreds of villagers within North Erromango utilize the footpaths to travel between communities. Considering the rugged and difficult terrain in North Erromango, there are often times due to climatic activity when these footpaths become inaccessible. The most frequently used footpath within North Erromango is located near the coastline between Ipota and Port Narvin and includes steep cliffs and segments of sharp volcanic rock. Vulnerable people risk great injury when using these footpaths, especially during rain times when traveling along steep portions of the path that containing no steps, hand rails or drainage.
River & Stream Crossings	There are several locations along the primary footpath where pedestrians must wade across rivers or streams within North Erromango. There have been several near deaths in recent years where pedestrian (mainly children) have almost drowned attempting to wade across. The largest and most dangerous river is located in Iluvuwalam (Cooks Bay) and can be difficult to cross at high tide or in rainy conditions because of flooding. There are also two large rivers on either side of Ipota, as well as several small water crossings around Port Narvin. There are no bridges for any of the three major rivers within North Erromango along the primary footpath. There are a few makeshift bridges (fallen trees or timber nailed together) used to cross smaller streams in some locations. A small boy in Ipota nearly drowned in 2011 while attempting to cross the Melvin river (Ipota) during inclement weather, but luckily was seen and helped across by a family member.
Water Security	Water security issues have been exacerbated by the current El Niño weather patterns, strongly impacting communities in North Erromango AC. The communities of Ipota and Port Narvin are able to utilize gravity-fed water systems, although increased usage and a growing population threatened the reliability of these systems and household access to clean water unless improvements are made and storage capacity is increased. Cooks Bay relies on four public rain harvesting tanks (approximately 6,000 L each), often being insufficient to adequately service the area. There are several small “stations” surrounding each of the major population centers that do not have access to any source of potable water and must transport water containers long distances. The full area reported water security vulnerabilities related to substantial increases or decreases in rainfall.
Cyclone / Tsunami Shelters	Cyclones pose a tremendous risk to North Erromango, with most buildings constructed of local materials and villages having no formal disaster shelters. Cement houses or classrooms are used in emergency situations, but are often ill-equipped and lacking proper toilets, water tanks, or lights. TC Pam wreaked extensive damage to structures and gardens throughout the area and most communities have yet to fully recover.
Sanitation	The overwhelming majority of toilets on Erromango are open pit latrines and many community members are concerned that these toilets may cause sickness due to their unsanitary conditions. Many households have the financial means to construct an improved toilet but there has been little encouragement or awareness regarding this issue to date.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NORTH ERROMANGO AREA COUNCIL

3.1 POPULATION

These figures have been provided by community members in consultation with Community Disaster Committees and the Provincial Area Council Secretary. Youth has been defined as under the age of 25 years, household defined by VNSO as per kitchen rather than by individual housing units. Only those currently present on **North Erromango** during time of assessment are included in figures.

	Men	Women	Youth	Disability	Total Pop	Households
North Erromango (Total)	561	631	500	16	1192	248
Ipota	240	278	250	9	518	102
Cooks Bay	61	67	50	4	128	31
Port Narvin	260	286	200	3	546	115

Remarks - Port Narvin's total population is the largest within North Erromango, however Ipota is the economic center of the area and attracts additional residents originating from other villages due to access to services such as provided at the airport, wharf, post office, bank, health dispensary and secondary school. Locals defined Cooks Bay as covering a large area starting at "Ilvuwalam" at its western border and extending eastward to include the village of "Towit" at its eastern border. Port Narvin population figures are derived from sparsely populated settlements along the eastern coast of the island that are separated by considerable distances. Ipota has a population contained within a relatively smaller area but includes two small outlying settlements nearby, Nalvin and Norah.

3.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

3.2.1

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT / AREA COUNCIL (AC)

Area Secretary	The Provincial Area Secretary for North Erromango is Remi Nembil who lives in Port Narvin and he has worked for the Tafea Provincial Government Council for over a decade.
Area Council (Governance body)	The North Erromango AC operates on an irregular basis. Both the North and South AC's have created an island wide development plan called the <i>Erromango Strategic Development Plan : 2014-2018</i> . This plan was developed through support of the US Peace Corps and NZ Volunteers. AC requested technical training led by the DLA to clarify AC roles and responsibilities, local governance processes and financial management. AC members met three times in 2015, largely focusing on the adverse effects of Tropical Cyclone Pam and the distribution of relief items such as food and WASH supplies. The Area Council's Chairman, John Atvi, reported chronic budget shortages as inhibiting the AC's ability to properly meet their mandate.
Area Council Office / Resources	Functional AC office constructed with permanent materials in Port Narvin Village. Suggested improvements to the facilities by AC members included providing a VIP or water seal toilet, a rain tank larger than 25L, strengthening the metal roof that may have been damaged by strong winds in TC Pam and constructing a sea wall immediately in front of the office. AC members unsure whether the AC Office is appropriate for use by community as a cyclone shelter, as its location is adjacent to the coastline and is considered highly exposed to winds and storm surge. No boats or other means of transport provided to Area Secretary.

3.2.2**OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICERS**

Forestry	A Forestry Department officer was previously stationed on Erromango in Ipota Village but villagers reported that his post was vacated in 2014. This Forestry officer was responsible for supporting efforts to initiate a community based nursery for species such as sandalwood and pine.
Education	Government teachers are located in Ipota Village where there is one primary school (Years 1 - 6) & one junior secondary school (Years 7 - 10); and in Cooks Bay and Port Narvin Villages where there are smaller primary schools (Years 1 - 6).
Health	Government supported nurses are stationed at Ipota Dispensary and Port Narvin Dispensary.
VCAP Site Coordinator	There is a field based coordinator, Jackie Dick, from Ipota, helping to facilitate VCAP activities with local communities as part of the five year CCA project.

3.2.3**TRADITIONAL CHIEFLY STRUCTURES**

Status and Role of Chiefly System	The chiefly councils on the island of Erromango is responsible for enforcing customary rules and regulations within communities, maintaining traditional cultural practices and providing general leadership and oversight for the population. Chiefly authorities most often provide discipline and resolution for smaller criminal cases or disputes rather than the police / judicial system. Chiefly status is hereditary, with stronger links associated with the male bloodline, although leadership may be relinquished to a “steward” outside of the appropriate bloodline if approved by the proper chiefly authorities. Chiefly council contains a female representative as well in North Erromango council. Chiefly consent is required for any development work or activity on this island initiated by any person, regardless of birthplace. Chiefly bodies are also present on tribal, community and island-wide levels on Erromango. The island-wide chiefly council is often the final authority, responsible for settling larger disputes, customary arrangements and preserving important traditional knowledge. Voluntary village development work was previously conducted by entire communities on Erromango once a week or as instructed by the chiefs, but this practice infrequently occurs now. Community meetings regularly take place when the chiefly council decides they are necessary. Recovery efforts relating to TC Pam and the current El Niño weather patterns affecting food security have also impacted community work schedules and availability. While there have been minor disputes over chiefly authority on Erromango, mainly occurring in Ipota Village, all disputes over chiefly authority are currently considered resolved and have always been settled peacefully with rulings from the island-wide Council of Chiefs and Erromango Paramount Chief being accepted by all parties. Most disputes are focused on land ownership claims. Rarely, these claims regarding land ownership have gone through the judicial system and sometimes serious criminal cases are handled by the police.
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3.2.4

NGO's & INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

CARE International	CARE International distributed agricultural tools & seeds in a food security in mid-2015. Tools were distributed via "tool banks", where they are available for communal use and accessible to local women on Erromango. CARE International has employed a local woman from Ipota to help with agriculture and food security projects. CARE International plans to strengthen its community based committees that will address gender, food security and disaster risk resilience issues.
World Vision	World Vision has been implementing their "Bush Kitchen" project, focusing on the construction of toilets and kitchens with local materials. WV also distributed kitchen supplies to households following TC Pam.
JICA	The Japanese government through its JICA program financially supported the construction of gravity-fed water supply systems in Ipota and Port Narvin in 2012.
Live and Learn	Live and Learn has one staff member stationed in Ipota Village, attached to their invasive species project, specially the eradication of American Rope.
Save the Children	Supports Village Health Worker and Aid Post establishment in Cooks Bay with training and equipment.
Red Cross	The Vanuatu Red Cross has one local Volunteer based in Ipota and has been supportive of local CDC capacity building.
UNICEF	UNICEF distributed large tents for use as community classrooms in all three population centers following TC Pam in early 2015.
UNDP	VCAP project is just starting to support adaptation to climate change by communities, specifically regarding infrastructure strengthening and resource management in late 2015.

3.2.5

FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS (FBO's)

Ipota	The largest denomination in the Ipota area is the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church with approximately 250 members and two church buildings made from permanent materials. This is followed closely by the Presbyterian Church that has around 200 members and 1 permanent church house. Smaller FBO's here include the Praise and Worship church with around 20 members and a temporary shelter. These church networks have organized associations for women & youth members. Other faiths without a permanent church building in Ipota include Christian Fellowship Church and Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon Church) (each of which has around 5 members only).
Cooks Bay	A majority of this village attends the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church with approximately 50 members. There are also Presbyterian, Apostolic, and Catholic churches present, although each with memberships limited to approximately 10 members each. None of these churches have buildings constructed with permanent materials.
Port Narvin	The largest faith based organization in Port Narvin is the Presbyterian Church with approximately 170 members and a permanent structure. Other prominent denominations include Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) with approximately 60 members and a permanent church house. Also present are the Apostolic Church (50 members), Praise and Worship (30 members), Jesus Only (30 members), and Church of LDS (Mormon Church) (15 members), although none of these have buildings made with permanent materials.

3.2.6

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBO's) & COMMITTEES

Ipota	Active committees and organized groups in Ipota include a chiefly committee, women's groups affiliated with individual churches as well as one island-wide group, youth groups affiliated with individual churches, a water committee, Community Disaster Committee (CDC), cooperative committee, two school committees and a health committee.
Cooks Bay	Due to the smaller population and scattered communities there are very small committees here including a chiefly committee, women's and youth groups affiliated with local churches, a water committee, a primary school committee, an Aid Post committee, and a Community Disaster Committee.
Port Narvin	Active committees and organized groups in Port Narvin include a chiefly committee, women's groups affiliated with individual churches, youth groups affiliated with individual churches, a water committee, a Community Disaster Committee, a cooperative committee, a primary school committee and a health committee.

**Only CBO's & committees considered functional and active by community members are listed in this report (example, if a village committee was formed for water security purposes but it does not hold regular meetings or perform any recent tasks, it is not cited).*

3.2.7

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES (VDC's)

VDC's	Three functional VDC's as recognized by DLA have been established recently in North Erromango AC. The provincial Area Secretary and VCAP Site Coordinator worked with the communities of Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin to create VDC's between August and October of 2015.
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**VDC's are voluntary technical working groups comprised entirely of locally-based membership that address community oriented, multi-sector development issues. VDC's attempt to utilize representation from all existing organizational structures present within a community- such as chiefly systems / NGO's / FBO's / CBO's / Committees, such as those listed in previous tables above. VDC's are often used for planning or monitoring and evaluation purposes.*

VDC's are flexible, voluntary working groups whose membership comes from EXISTING organizational structures. VDC's should not be viewed as an additional organization within a community but rather as a collection of representatives from a community's existing structures, providing a wide-range of skill sets and the knowledge base necessary to create an informed technical working group familiar with local context and conditions.

3.3 LIVELIHOODS

3.3.1

INCOME GENERATION

Main Sources of Income	By far, the largest source of income generation for communities within North Erromango is derived from the export of coastal / marine resources (<i>lobster, coconut crab, fish, etc</i>) and sandalwood to Port Vila, Efate. Seafood is exported on a regular basis to hotels and restaurants in the capital city, Port Vila. The sale of sandalwood on Erromango is seasonal and regulated by the Department of Forestry. Compared to other rural Ni-Vanuatu communities, the communities in North Erromango are considered to have plentiful opportunities to generate income due to the abundance of natural resources, partly a result of the large size of the island and a relatively small population.
Alternative Sources of Income	A limited number of guesthouses are maintained within North Erromango and they are typically occupied by visiting government officers and development partners. Participation in seasonal work opportunities overseas, such as the Australian SWP and New Zealand RSE schemes, is utilized by a small number of local community members to generate additional income for their households. Regular salaries are paid to government & NGO officers, temporary employees of local schools, and staff of the National Bank of Vanuatu, Western Union, and Air Vanuatu. Other Income Generating Activities (IGA's) include the local sale of kava, tobacco and small food staples. The sale of agricultural produce is very limited, although the demand for fresh produce is high. The potential profit from agricultural activity is perceived by locals as minimal when compared with profits to be gained from seasonal sandalwood sales, so locals typically do not develop gardens for more than subsistence purposes. Kava is sold in Ipota and Port Narvin but due to extremely limited quantity, the sale of kava is irregular. Kava from the island of Tanna is imported to Erromango twice a week via Air Vanuatu and then sold to the public. Kava is planted regularly in Port Narvin but the supply is not sufficient to meet the demand of the local consumption. Timber sales take place mainly in Ipota, where there is one sawmill operating.

LIVELIHOODS INVENTORY

3.3.2

	Ipota	Cooks Bay	Port Narvin	TOTAL
Stores (selling basic commodities)	4	2	6	12
Cooperatives	1	0	2	3
Guest Houses / Bungalows	4	2	2	8
Fuel Sales	4	2	5	11
Boat Transport	3	1	5	9
Ready-Made Kava Bars	4	0	0	4
Markets (fresh produce, fish, etc)	0	0	0	0
Seamstress / Tailor	4	0	0	4
Baker (either local bread or "gato")	10	0	10	20

3.3.3**MISCELLANEOUS - LIVELIHOODS**

Outside Investors	There have been several attempts over the past few years from outside investors to purchase land within North Erromango, but as of yet, no land owners or Chiefs have allowed such a transaction. A private company based out of Australia has established a sandalwood oil distillery in Port Narvin, however it was badly damaged during TC Pam and is currently not operational.
Employment Abroad	There are reportedly seven community members that are currently working abroad in either New Zealand or Australia to seek seasonal employment. Communities report that with limited employment opportunities on the island, there is a large interest in seeking employment overseas.
Cooperatives	There are cooperatives in the communities of Ipota and Port Narvin, both officially launched in 2012. Both cooperatives have experienced supply chain issues and reported challenges associated with their management.
Markets	There are no locally based markets within North Erromango with the exception of sporadic open-air markets held during special occasions when communities gather together, such as during public holidays, to sell produce and fish.
Value Added / Exports	There is extremely limited income derived from value-added processing of resources on Erromango. The sandalwood oil distillery in Port Narvin, while not currently operational, would have been the only value-added good exported from North Erromango.

3.4 SERVICES**3.4.1****HEALTH**

Health Facilities	The Ipota Dispensary is comprised of three buildings and employs a Nurse and Midwife. The Port Narvin Dispensary has one building and employs a Nurse. Both dispensaries are able to assist mothers with child birth, extract teeth, provide medicine including antibiotics, share family planning methods and provide general treatment for mild to moderate medical conditions. The Ipota Dispensary has a boat available in order to transport sick patients and to perform health related work on the island. Serious medical cases are referred from either dispensary to the hospital in Lenekel, Tanna or even directly to the hospital in Port Vila, Efate. Cooks Bay has an Aid Post serviced by a Village Health Worker. The Aid Post is a very small building where the Village Health Worker provides basic assistance such as cleaning and dressing wounds or sores, sharing basic non-prescription medicines, distributing condoms and leading health awareness initiatives. Serious cases are referred from the Aid Post to either the Ipota Dispensary or Port Narvin Dispensary.
Health Concerns / Common Illnesses	NCD's such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes are reportedly growing in incidence among community members and are a common cause of death on Erromango. Health workers believe this is related to a shift away from traditional diets, lifestyles and heavy tobacco use especially by males on Erromango. TAFEPA Provincial Health regularly coordinates with the WHO to initiate malaria-eradication spray programs throughout North Erromango, helping contribute to the very small number of malaria or dengue fever cases reported in recent years.

3.4.2

EDUCATION

Pre-Schools	There are two pre-schools in Ipota, two in Cooks Bay and one located in Port Narvin. These schools are funded entirely by school fees paid by parents each term.
Primary Schools	Potmelou Primary School in Ipota is francophone, has 103 students ranging from Year 1 - 6, and is staffed by two government teachers and two unregistered teachers from the community. The buildings on the compound are in very good condition, especially with regards to a JICA funded double-classroom that was completed in late 2014. Ivulwalam Primary School is francophone, located in Cooks Bay, has 42 students ranging from Year 1 - 5, and is staffed by one government teacher and one unregistered teacher from the community. The condition of the school buildings is poor due to damage caused by TC Pam. Port Narvin Primary School is anglophone, located in Port Narvin, has 126 students ranging from Year 1 - 6 and is staffed by three government teachers and two unregistered teachers from the community. The building is in moderate condition after undergoing repairs following TC Pam, including the construction of a new roof.
Secondary Schools	Ipota Junior Secondary School in Ipota is anglophone, has 89 students (52 sleeping in school dormitories) ranging from Year 7 - 10 and is staffed by three government teachers, two unregistered teachers from the community, an administrative officer, and a handy man. The school buildings are in extremely poor condition due to damage caused by TC Pam, resulting in the temporary use of UNICEF provided classroom tents. Improvements to the school have been proposed by community members but there is a pending plan to relocate the school to Williams Bay, Erromango in the South Erromango Area Council due to the costs of rebuilding and the unsafe proximity to the coast line.
Technical Schools	There are no rural training centers or technical training schools on Erromango. Occasionally community members travel to Tanna, Efate or Santo islands to enroll in technical programs.
Continued Education	Students wishing to further their education and who have passed their exams often leave Erromango to study at senior secondary schools on Tanna or Efate islands. As of October 2015, there was only one local student currently attending university, at USP in Fiji.

3.4.3

OTHER SERVICES

Flights	The national airline, Air Vanuatu, operates flights to Ipota twice a week currently. This is the primary way of transporting light cargo and passengers to and from North Erromango due to the infrequent nature of ships servicing the island. Chartered flights from Air Taxi, Belair Airways, and Air Safari will occasionally service the island for private flights. Aviation Vanuatu Limited has partnered with the Public Works Department to select a local man responsible for providing regular maintenance to the airstrip.
Shipping	Large cargo ships service North Erromango very irregularly, often only once every two months. Ships are essential to transport heavy cargo such as building materials and store supplies. There are access points for ships to provide service and unload cargo near the communities of Ipota, Cooks Bay, and Port Narvin, although Ipota and Port Narvin are typically the primary villages that are serviced.
Financial	The National Bank of Vanuatu has a satellite branch based in Ipota that is open three days a week. Western Union also employs a representative to arrange for money transfers in and out of Erromango. There is a high demand for these services here on Erromango.

Communications	While Digicel and TVL companies provide network coverage to most communities in the area, it is not always readily accessible. The TVL network coverage was provided in 2012 and Digicel was recently installed in late 2015. TVL network coverage was considered unreliable by community members throughout 2013 - 2015. Network access in Ipota is not reliable and locals must walk a short distance in search of network reception. TC Pam badly damaged the TVL telecommunication towers in Port Narvin, effectively blacking out the network on North Erromango until repairs were completed in mid-2015. The new Digicel tower was constructed in late-2015. There are no FM radio stations available, but medium wave radios can pick up Radio Australia. Radio Vanuatu is frequently not accessible on Erromango. Very few households own medium wave radios and tend to rely primarily on mobile phone communications to receive information. A basic internet connection is only available through the mobile phone carriers, with locals reporting improved performance by the TVL and Digicel networks. Reportedly, 3G internet speeds are reachable with the Digicel network only. Some small communities without access to communications networks on Erromango must walk up to one hour to access network coverage, thus they report great concern about their isolation and inability to receive important updates including early warnings for cyclones or tsunamis.
Security	With no police officers present on the island, local security is left to each community's respective chiefly council unless there is an incident that occurs and police are requested to travel to the island.
Community Halls or Meeting Venues	There are no community halls or community buildings intentionally designed to house public meetings on Erromango. Otherwise, public meetings are held in classrooms, at community schools, church buildings or underneath the shade of banyan trees.

4. CONVEYANCE INFRASTRUCTURE ON NORTH ERROMANGO

Roads / Vehicles	There are currently no operational vehicular roads within North Erromango. However, a vehicular road was previously utilized from Ipota leading towards the interior of the island, connecting to Antioch and surrounding villages during the 1970's. This older road was built and used by foreign logging companies operating heavy machinery. Abandoned during the 1980's, the roads have deteriorated in condition and are now obstructed by trees and dense vegetation. There is one vehicle based in Ipota that is utilized to transport timber and wharf cargo to the airport over very short distances. Community members report that there have been PWD survey teams and studies regarding the possible construction of a road connecting Ipota, South River and William's Bay, but community leaders are uncertain as to the outcome of these surveys.
Footpaths	Walking along the footpaths on Erromango is the primary means of transportation on the island. Every week, hundreds of villagers within North Erromango utilize the footpaths to travel between communities. As Ipota is a main service center for this part of the island, locals from other villages routinely walk up to ten hours to access this location. Considering the rugged and difficult terrain in North Erromango, there are often times due to climatic activity when these footpaths become inaccessible. The most frequently used footpath within North Erromango is located near the coastline between Ipota and Port Narvin and includes steep cliffs and segments of sharp volcanic rock. Vulnerable people risk great injury when using these footpaths, especially during rain times along steep portions of the path containing no steps, hand rails or drainage. These footpaths are natural walking trails and have not been maintained or developed with improved materials, drainage, etc. At times, portions of the footpath become inaccessible in wet or rainy conditions.
Bridges / Water Crossings	There are several locations along the primary footpath where pedestrians must wade across rivers or streams within North Erromango. There have been several near deaths in recent years where pedestrian (mainly children) have almost drowned attempting to wade across. The largest and most dangerous river is located in Iluvuwalam (Cooks Bay) and can be difficult to cross at high tide or in rainy conditions because of flooding. There are also two large rivers on either side of Ipota, as well as several small water crossings around Port Narvin. There are no bridges for any of the three major rivers within North Erromango along the primary footpath. There are a few makeshift bridges (fallen trees or timber nailed together) used to cross smaller streams in some locations. A small boy in Ipota nearly drowned in 2011 while attempting to cross the Melvin river (Ipota) during inclement weather, but luckily was seen and helped across by a family member.
Wharfs	The only wharf within the area is located in Ipota and it the community members reported that it is in need of significant repair. Fortunately, both Cooks Bay and Port Narvin have sandy beaches that allow for ships to be pulled ashore or anchored nearby for small fiberglass boats to transport goods.
Boats	Travel by boat is often a preferred means of transportation between communities on Erromango, but it is entirely dependent upon having the financial ability to pay for a charter trip / fuel and also having accommodating weather. There are 9 boats currently providing transport services within North Erromango. Most communities have access to a nearby location where boats can be pulled ashore and stored safely.

5. UPLAND RESOURCES IN NORTH ERROMANGO AC

5.1 WASH (WATER AND SANITATION, HYGIENE)

5.1.1 Inventory of Drinking Water Sources by Community

(Counting functional sources only, not those in need of repair)

	Ipota	Cooks Bay	Port Narvin
1) Gravity Supply System	1	0	1
2) Poly / Fiber-Glass Rain Tanks	10	5	10
3) Above Ground, Cement Rain Tanks	0	0	0
4) Enclosed Ground Wells (Cement bottom)	0	0	0
5) Open Ground Wells (No cement)	0	0	0
6) Powered Pumps (Generator / Solar)	0	0	0
7) Hand Pumps	0	0	0
8) Coastal springs (water directly accessed from a spring located on the immediate coastline)	0	1	0
9) River / spring (water directly accessed and used at a river or spring, no use of pipes)	1	0	1

5.1.2

WASH

Brief Summary of Water Resources by Community	The communities of Ipota and Port Narvin both have functioning gravity-fed water supply systems, funded through the Japanese government in late 2012. Cooks Bay relies on four public rain harvesting tanks (approximately 6,000 L each), often being insufficient to adequately service the area. There are several small “stations” surrounding each of the major population centers that do not have access to any source of potable water and must transport water containers long distances. The full area reported water security vulnerabilities related to substantial increases or decreases in rainfall. Ipota and Port Narvin expressed concerns regarding sanitation and waste management practices, as well as low access to running water and soap. Rubbish is most often burned or buried, with occasional pieces being thrown into the bush or ocean/river.
Toilets	The communities of Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin all primarily utilize bush toilets or open pit latrines, with the exception of a handful of VIP and water seal toilets. Ipota and Port Narvin community members expressed concern regarding sanitation and waste management practices on the island.
Water Committees	All three communities have functioning water committees, with Ipota and Port Narvin asking households to contribute towards a monthly maintenance fee.
Hand-washing Access (Access to Water + Soap)	Access to running water and soap at individual households is moderate in Port Narvin, but very poor in Ipota and Cooks Bay. Locals reported very limited access to running water and / or soap in these communities.
Waste Disposal	Most household waste is disposed of by fire or burying it in the ground. Community members reported waste littered in the bush and along the coastline too.
Access to Community Rain Catchment Tanks	Ipota and Port Narvin communities both have access to a few rain tanks available for public use. Cooks Bay has two public water tanks that can be access by the community.

5.1.3 Improved Toilet Inventory

	Ipota	Cooks Bay	Port Narvin
Flush Toilet	1	0	1
Water-seal Toilet	0	0	1
Compost Toilet	0	0	0
Ventilated Improved Pit Toilet (VIP Toilet)	0	0	20

**Majority of improved toilets located at community buildings such as schools, church housing or guest houses.*

5.2 AGRICULTURE

5.2.1	AGRICULTURE
Primary Crops	Primary food staples within North Erromango include manioc, taro, yam, kumala, island cabbage and banana. Other crops may include tomato, pumpkin, tomato, and watermelon. With a large amount of wild game available, local diets are often supplemented with beef or pig. There are also many fishermen who spearfish the local reefs, providing a variety of fish and crustaceans as well.
Garden Space	Due to low population density, there is ample space for gardening. Erromango is the third-largest island in Vanuatu, but has a small population of approximately 2,000 people. However, the communities of Ipota and Port Narvin have gardens that can be several hours walking distance from their households.
Agricultural Sales	Currently, the sale of agricultural goods is extremely low. Due to low crop yields and water security issues, the sale of local produce and root crops is irregular. Kava must typically be imported from Tanna before being sold for local consumption, with the exception of Cooks Bay that has a small amount of local kava.
Food Security	Food security concerns within North Erromango are currently reported by community members as a matter of great concern. The ongoing recovery from Tropical Cyclone Pam in March of 2015 has been greatly hindered by the current El Nino event, leading to low crop yields and water security issues. Due to TC Pam destroying a substantial amount of local gardens, several months of government-supported food aid were required before agricultural output should have returned to safe levels. However, due to a lack of adequate rainfall as well as abnormally high temperatures and intense sunshine, food security concerns within North Erromango have been exacerbated.
Invasive Species	The International NGO, Live and Learn, has been supporting an invasive species eradication program focusing primarily on American Rope. They have one field officer stationed in Ipota whom is responsible for all of North Erromango.
Pests	Post-TC Pam, communities have been reporting an increase in small insects and snails adversely impacting their gardens. Ipota and Port Narvin reported both white and green pests consuming their manioc, island cabbage, taro, and kumala. Cooks Bay expressed concern regarding their limited kava supply being eaten by pests.
Diet (Use of Store-Bought Foods)	There are approximately a dozen small stores throughout North Erromango that sell a variety of imported food goods. Popular items include rice, tin fish/tuna, flour, sugar, salt, and chips/crisps. However, store inventory may fluctuate regularly due to a lack of cargo ships regularly servicing the island.

5.2.2 Agriculture Inventory

	None Available	Some Available	Plentiful
Coconuts			X
Kava	X		
Coffee	X		
Vanilla	X		
Pepper (<i>black or white</i>)	X		

	None Available	Some Available	Plentiful
Cacao	X		
Fruits		X	
Vegetables		X	

5.3

FORESTRY

Summary of Forestry Activities	There are limited forestry activities within North Erromango, with the exception of seasonal sandalwood sales. There was a Forestry officer previously stationed in Ipota, but has been vacated for some time.
Primary Species	Primary species of wood include White Wood, Mahogany, Pine, Mangrove, and Sandalwood.
Nurseries	There are currently no functioning nurseries within North Erromango, with the exception of a CARE International supported nursery in Ipota.
Timber Sales	The seasonal sale of Sandalwood is a primary source of income for many households on Erromango.
Erosion Control	All of North Erromango reported serious issues of erosion along main footpaths, especially during inclement weather. Technical assistance through DEPC, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Forestry has been requested to help introduce species of grass and trees to help combat the problem.

5.4 LIVESTOCK

5.4.1 Livestock Inventory

	Chickens	Ducks	Goats	Pigs	Cattle
Ipota	150	6	50	20	300
Cooks Bay	1,000	0	20	10	100
Port Narvin	150	4	20	20	20
TOTAL: NORTH ERROMANGO	1300	10	90	50	420

5.4.2 Livestock Summary

Summary of Livestock Activities	The main livestock varieties found within North Erromango AC are chickens and cattle, followed by goats and pigs. It should be noted that there is an abundance of wild animals on the island, particularly cattle and pigs, that are often consumed by locals. CARE International began implementing multiple food security projects within North Erromango in mid-2015 including community poultry projects in Ipota and Port Narvin.
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Geography / Description of Environment	North Erromango, stretching along the coastline from Ipota to Cooks Bay is relatively flat, although there are large hills several hundred meters in elevation located between Cooks Bay and Port Narvin. There are large mountains in the interior of the island. Erromango is the largest island in the province and is renowned for its forest resources, including an abundance of wild game, sandalwood trees and hardwood forests. It is the largest island in the province by far but it is sparsely populated considering its land area.
Pollution	Minimum pollution on Erromango in upland areas, aside from household waste that may be improperly disposed of.
Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	There is no reported use or presence of POP's.
Water Catchment Areas	While there there noticeable logging and timber harvesting on Erromango, there is minimal activity reported as taking place within water catchment areas. There is formal recognition and protection of water catchment areas by chiefly councils here.
Conservation Areas	There are upland conservation areas near water sources currently in North Erromango, which are protected by the Council of Chiefs in Ipota and Port Narvin.
Access to Traditional Building Materials	TC Pam greatly decreased access to traditional building materials, especially bamboo, natangura, and coconut leaves- but otherwise these materials are available.
Access to Firewood	There is sufficient access to firewood in all communities on Erromango Island.
Erosion Related to Logging, Buildings	As logging activity on the island is distributed over a large geographic area in North Erromango, community members did not report of any problems caused by erosion.
Invasive Species	The INGO, Live and Learn, has been supporting an invasive species eradication program focusing primarily on a vine species American Rope. They have one field officer stationed in Ipota who works in Port Narvin and Cooks Bay as well.
Protected Species	Coconut crabs are regularly sold in Ipota to a central buyer who purchases by the kilo and then sells for export to Port Vila market. These coconut crabs are sold year-round, being exported on almost every available Air Vanuatu flight. Locals explained that there has never been any awareness conducted regarding the sale of coconut crab or regulations regarding the industry, thus they have proceeded to conduct this activity.
Mining	There are no reported mining activities in Erromango VCAP site.
Management Plan	No individual communities within North Erromango currently have management plans, but a strong interest was expressed to receive technical assistance in drafting one in Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin. The island's five-year strategic plan, <i>Erromango Strategic Development Plan : 2014-2018</i> , outlines priorities related to environmental management but does not specify any tactics or preferred interventions by community.

5.5.1 Environmental Resource Inventory

	None	Some	Many		None	Some	Many
Coconut Crabs		X		Fresh Water Prawns		X	
"Nawempa"		X		Fresh Water Fish			X
Flying Fox		X					

6. COASTAL RESOURCES ON NORTH ERROMANGO

6.1

FISHERIES

Inshore Fisheries Summary	Many community members fish along the coastline or go diving with spearguns and report an abundance of resources. Fish and other varieties of seafood serve as a primary source of protein for families here. Fish are sold to buyers in Port Vila and Tanna Island, however it is done on a very small scale due to challenges in preserving the fish and the expense of air freight.
Offshore fishing (Trolling or deep sea)	There is infrequent offshore fishing that takes place in North Erromango, primarily taking place during transport trips when there is an opportunity for trolling.
Inshore Fishing Methods	Most fish are caught by speargun, however some fishing poles and traditional spears are also utilized.
Fisheries Exports / Sales	A significant amount of fish, crabs and lobster are exported weekly to Port Vila for use by hotels and restaurants.
Preservation	Ipota and Port Narvin each have two private ice boxes available for preservation of fish but users must pay a daily fee to store their catch inside.
Fish Aggregating Devices (F.A.D.'s)	There are currently no F.A.D.'s within North Erromango AC.
Resource Monitors	The communities of Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin each have a local community member who has been trained in sustainable coastal resource management and is known as a "Vanua Tai Risos Monitor," working closely with Fisheries Department and the NGO Wan Smol Bag.
Coral Reef	All communities reported declining health of coral reefs, highlighted by coral bleaching and declining quantity of resources.
Crown of Thorns Starfish (COTs)	Cooks Bay and Port Narvin report an increase in the number of Crown of Thorns Starfish in their coastal waters.
Ciguatera	Every community reported concerns regarding local fisheries and Ciguatera poisoning.
Sea Cucumber	There is not an abundance of sea cucumber found within North Erromango and Ipota community members report that there are nearly none remaining in their coastal waters.
Traditional Conservation Methods	Chiefs will often "block" certain areas of a community's shoreline for conservation and food security purposes.
Marine Protected Areas (MPA's)	There is an official Marine Protected Area (MPA) located in Cooks Bay that is widely acknowledged and respected by locals.

6.2

ENVIRONMENT - COASTAL RESOURCES

Marine Pollution	There is a limited amount of reported marine pollution located within the area that includes some household waste, discarded batteries from under-water flashlights used for fishing at night and sediment deposits caused by upland erosion.
Coastal Erosion	Port Narvin currently has severe erosion impacting its coastline with dozens of large banyan trees now exposing their roots. Some infrastructure in Port Narvin may be affected by storm surge whereas most households in Ipota are located further away from the coastline.
Sedimentation	There are reports of large deposits of sediment in the shallow coastal waters surrounding Cooks Bay, preventing locals from being able to collect shellfish or go spearfishing.
Dugongs	There are no reported sightings of dugongs North Erromango AC.
Turtles	The communities of Ipota, Cooks Bay, and Port Narvin all report harvesting sea turtles for consumption. Cooks Bay, with its small population, estimated over 50+ sea turtles a year were harvested whereas Port Narvin reported a figure of over 20+ turtles a year. The community of Ipota estimated perhaps 2 sea turtles a year are harvested.
Mangrove Ecosystems	There are expansive mangrove ecosystems on the coastline between Ifo (Ipota) and Cooks Bay, in particular around the small stations of Norah and Nalvin. Port Narvin also has plentiful mangroves located north of the village.
Sand mining	Community members often mine local sand beaches for use in making bricks for construction projects but this has not reportedly created any erosion problems that community members are aware of.

6.3 COASTAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

**While resources differ by community - results indicated below are inclusive of results from every community within North Erromango AC*

	None Available	Some Available	Plentiful
Reef Fish		X	
Bottom-Fish (Pule, etc)			X
Sea Cucumber		X	
Trocha shellfish		X	
Lobster			X

7. NATURAL DISASTER & CLIMATE CHANGE - NORTH ERROMANGO

7.1

NATURAL DISASTER

Tsunami / Storm Surge / Cyclone	There is a high level of risk associated with tsunamis and storm surges, as demonstrated by TC Pam. Ipota, Cooks Bay and Port Narvin are all situated along narrow coastlines and are only a few meters above sea level. During TC Pam, the majority of Port Narvin and Cooks Bay was flooded, with Ipota receiving minor flooding as well. Cyclones pose a tremendous risk to North Erromango, with most buildings constructed of local materials and villages having no formal disaster shelters. Cement houses or classrooms are used in emergency situations, but are often ill-equipped and lacking proper toilets, water tanks, or lights. TC Pam wreaked extensive damage to structures and gardens throughout the area and most communities have yet to fully recover.
Volcanic Activity	There is no volcanic activity effecting North Erromango.
Flooding	Extensive flooding may occur during inclement weather or strong storms. Schools, churches, private homes, and footpaths are often impacted. A lack of adequate drainage often exacerbates the impact of heavy flooding.
Erosion to Infrastructure	Most upland and coastal footpaths experience erosion due to heavy rainfall, poor drainage, and large amounts of livestock utilizing the same throughways.
Landslides	Ipota, Cooks Bay, and Port Narvin all identified areas adjacent to rivers and upland gardens as landslide prone. Hillside gardens near Port Narvin have footpaths alongside steep cliffs, often leading to unsafe conditions.
Drought	Due to the current effects of El Niño, all of North Erromango is experiencing a severe drought. Cooks Bay is heavily impacted due to their reliance on rain water harvesting.
Past Disasters of Note	Tropical Cyclone Pam (2015), Tropical Cyclone Ivy (2004), and Tropical Cyclone Uma (1987) were all noted as climactic disaster of significance.
Community Disaster Committees (CDC's)	There are functional Community Disaster Committees (CDCs), supported by CARE International, in all three major population centers on North Erromango. Ipota's CDC is also responsible for the small stations of Ifo, Norah, and Nalvin. Cooks Bay's CDC encompasses all of the smaller villages in the area.
Disaster Plan	Community disaster plans are the responsibility of individual CDC's and Chiefs and communities report the need to strengthen community plans in the wake of TC Pam.

7.2

DISASTER WARNING

Radio	All of North Erromango utilized radio communications for disaster warnings.
CDC's	CDC's were an integral mechanism for spreading information and warning.
TVL / Digicel SMS Warnings	Every major community received SMS alerts from TVL or Digicel prior to TC Pam and continue to receive "Yumi Redi" SMS alerts from NDMO and SCA.
Family or friends from Port Vila	Friends and family in Port Vila, Tanna, and Santo regularly reach out to community members regarding possible inclement weather.
Traditional Knowledge	Older members of the area were regarded as having traditional knowledge capable of providing advanced warning of upcoming weather event.
No warning	No communities reported having members unable to be warned of pending disasters.

7.3

DISASTER SHELTER

Status of Disaster Shelter by Community	There are currently no proper disaster shelters on North Erromango. However, during emergencies communities will utilize available cement buildings.
Additional Community Buildings Used as Shelter	Ipota and Port Narvin both use JICA-funded double classrooms as evacuation centers, as well as church buildings and their health dispensaries. The communities within Cooks Bay typically congregate in traditional nakamals as there are very few cement structures. Locals living in small “stations” either migrate to the larger population centers or often don’t have safe shelter during emergencies/disasters.
Typical Building Materials Used / Condition - Housing	Typical housing in Erromango is constructed using local materials or a mix of local materials (such as palm thatch, bamboo, timber) mixed with permanent materials such as copper roofing and in rare cases, cement.

7.4

CLIMATE CHANGE

Sea Level Rise Observed?	Yes, sea level rise has been observed in Ipota, Cooks Bay, and Port Narvin as indicated by receding beaches and widening river beds.
Sea Level Rise Affecting any Valued Infrastructure?	Ipota experiences sea levels reaching low lying areas of the community, in particular the junior secondary school where flooding can be extensive. Several small stores and churches along the coastline in Port Narvin are experiencing similar challenges with the sea level rising above previous levels.
Water Security - Impacted by Climatic Effects?	Yes, all communities in North Erromango reported that significant changes in the amount of rainfall adversely affects water security. Currently, the effect of El Niño has increased water security concerns for the entire island.
Food Security - Impacted by Climatic Effects?	Yes, periods of drought such as those caused by El Niño and tropical depressions / cyclones greatly impact North Erromango’s food security.

7.5 OBSERVED CLIMATIC CHANGES BY COMMUNITY (OVER LAST 20+ YEARS)

	Yes	No
Increased Rainfall (total amount per year)?	X	
Increased Occurrence of Drought?	X	
Increased Temperature?	X	
Seasonal Changes? (timing of rainy / dry season)	X	
Bleaching of Coral Reef?	X	
Salt water intrusion of drinking water?	X	

8. COMMUNITY SELF-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT - NORTH ERROMANGO

*At the conclusion of each Vulnerability Assessment, communities were asked to divide into focus groups and identify two leading priorities for development for their entire community, not necessarily for the membership of their focus group alone. This activity allowed for group discussion of vulnerabilities and for the prioritization of needs. Communities were encouraged to identify actions that could be taken themselves instead of being wholly dependent on external donors.

8.1	No of Participants	IPOTA
Women's Focus Group	8	1. <u>Poultry project</u> - support an Income Generating Activity (IGA) related to poultry 2. <u>Disaster preparedness training</u> - disaster preparedness training (CCA/DRM) for children and community members
Men's Focus Group	20	1. <u>Water security</u> - improve existing gravity-fed water system 2. <u>Livestock fencing</u> - provide fencing and technical training from the Department of Livestock
Youth Focus Group	21	1. <u>Youth center</u> - construct proper youth center which could also function as a cyclone shelter 2. <u>Sports venue</u> - construct proper sports venue

8.2	No of Participants	Cooks Bay
Women's Focus Group	8	1. <u>Improve accessibility to service center</u> - improved accessibility of services in Ipota by working on footpath to improve conditions in rain 2. <u>River crossings</u> - Improvements to public conveyance infrastructure, specifically bridges over water crossings
Men's Focus Group	8	1. <u>Improved water security</u> - installation of a gravity-fed water system similar to those found in Ipota and Port Narvin 2. <u>Disaster shelter</u> - Need for a safe location where community members can evacuate during a cyclone or tsunami warning. Can have a function as a comment hall building as well
Youth Focus Group	N/A	N/A. (Due to low population and increasing outward migration to Port Vila and Tanna, no youth were available for consultation)

8.3	No of Participants	PORT NARVIN
Women's Focus Group	22	1. <u>Market house</u> - construction of a market house that could also serve as a cyclone shelter 2. <u>Improve healthcare</u> - improve healthcare service, specifically maternity care and associated facilities
Men's Focus Group	10	1. <u>Disaster shelter</u> - Need for a safe location where community members can evacuate during a cyclone or tsunami warning. <u>EAD</u> - installation of a Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) to promote local fisheries
Youth Focus Group	N/A	N/A. (Youth members were participating in community work and were unable to be consulted in focus group)