

UPLAND RESOURCES, VCAP & NORTH ERROMANGO AC

RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Recommendations for Upland Resources: North Erromango AC

- Establish Agro-Forestry community nurseries in Port Narvin and Ipota, small nursery for Cook's Bay and provide agricultural training opportunities from communities focusing on FOOD SECURITY rather than income generation
- Improve water security in Cooks Bay as a priority for WASH; community requests gravity-fed water system, water hand pumps and / or additional rain catchment tanks
- Erosion control specialist to advise on improvements and soft measures to be taken for improving access of primary footpath
- Strengthening of existing upland conservation and protection of water catchment areas from logging and livestock
- Explore potential to improve storage tank capacity for existing gravity-fed water systems in Ipota and Port Narvin communities as a secondary WASH priority
- Coordinate with CARE International on potential food security projects such as promoting household gardens & Live & Learn in controlling invasive vine species affecting local gardens
- Provide awareness regarding regulations for coconut crab harvest and work with Air Vanuatu to prevent continuous export of this resource
- Low priority for livestock activities due to abundance of wild game



(Cement water storage tank in Cooks Bay)

Water Security

Every community on North Erromango has requested support relating to water security, as villagers indicated a **need to improve access to safe drinking water** within communities.

Cooks Bay relies on rain water harvesting currently but **requests the installation of a gravity feed water system or a pump** to provide more reliable access to water that cannot be affected by periods of drought such as the one currently being experienced due to El Niño weather patterns. Cooks Bay relies on four public rain harvesting tanks (approximately 6,000 L each), that they consider insufficient for their collective need.

Villagers in **Ipota** and **Port Narvin**, who as recently as late 2012 received support from JICA for installing gravity feed water supply systems, report that generally their water supply systems are still not sufficient to meet demand. Community members reported that TC Pam damaged the gravity feed and rain harvesting systems and that **repairs are needed**. **Increasing the capacity of water storage tanks** to ensure water access despite pressures from growing populations was also considered important by these communities.

Exposure to sea spray has affected rain harvesting systems as well due to the frequent corrosion of corrugated iron roofing on local buildings and some community members are afraid that water harvested using catchment on these buildings may be contaminated as a result.



(Above: vegetable garden in Ipota near “station” of Norah)

Food Security

Communities throughout North Erromango have reported **moderate to severe food security issues**, as food reserves in local gardens have been damaged by **TC Pam** and the ongoing **El Niño** imposed drought conditions. Food security concerns remain as villagers on North Erromango have reported very poor crop yields as they have conducted agricultural activity throughout 2015.

Many households in Ipota and Port Narvin report a growing reliance on “store-bought” food, such as bread and rice, to

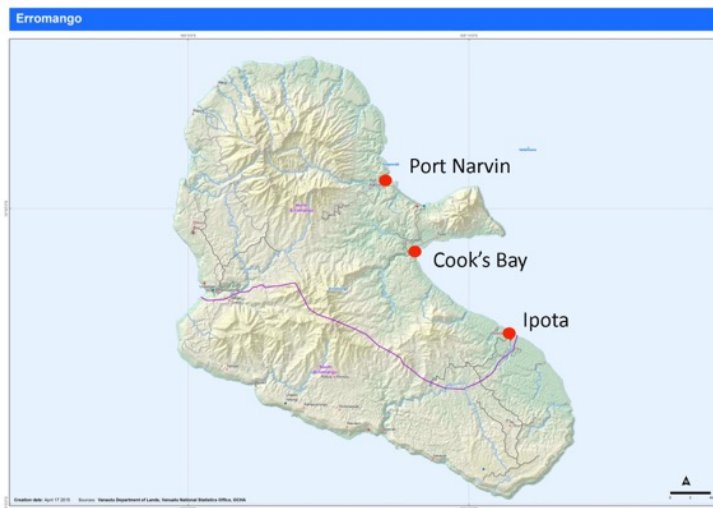
supplement locally grown food from their gardens. Many locals report a **minimal focus on agriculture** and a need to encourage increased levels of agricultural activity, possibly through the creation of **Agro-Forestry community nurseries and through training** opportunities. As many households earn a relatively large portion of their household income forestry and fisheries activities, locals from North Erromango are not as interested as other rural Ni-Vanuatu communities in taking part in agricultural activity in order to generate income. However, communities members did report a strong interest to increase the amount of agricultural the activity on the island from a **food security perspective**. To date, the very small subsistence gardens planted by households in North Erromango AC have not proven resilient when impacted by climate related disasters such as cyclones or drought.

There is much wild game on Erromango and community members reported that they hunt wild pigs and cattle on a regular basis. However, often their gardens are affected by the abundance of animals on the island. Locals seemed interested in establishing household gardens, that could more readily be **protected from animals** by fencing. There is a potential partnership to support CARE International in initiating this activity, as CARE International has conducted similar food security efforts on Futuna Island that have proven successful.

Erosion Control

All communities from North Erromango AC reported serious erosion hotspots located along the primary footpaths. Communities reported an interest to take part in **soft measures**, such as the **planting of vetiver grass, trees and other vegetation to compliment any structural improvements made to the footpaths** in order to reduce erosion and improve the accessibility of local walking trails. Most upland footpaths experience erosion due to heavy rainfall, poor drainage and a large quantity of animals (mostly cattle and pigs) damaging the access ways and surrounding vegetation. In particular, the upland footpath connecting Cooks Bay to Port Narvin becomes nearly impassable during heavy rainfall, blocking access to the main service center of Ipota. It may be useful for an erosion specialist to advise communities regarding erosion control techniques. This specialist could assist communities in the creation of a plan to manage a vetiver grass nursery and to provide future maintenance footpaths as needed.

Individual community members utilize chain saws for private logging but the impact is perceived by communities as minimal especially due to the large geographic area where logging and forestry activities take place. However, with growing populations it may be an appropriate time for **awareness and training relating to erosion control** and sustainable forestry practices to take place.



(Above: Map of communities in North Erromango)

Environment - Upland

As communities report that there are upland conservation areas already established in North Erromango, DEPC may be able to provide support and link with other established conservation areas to create a network of protected resource management areas in Tafea Province to promote shared training opportunities.

Communities did express an interest in controlling an invasive species control ("American Rope" vine) that is causing damage to the upland environment and local gardens. The INGO, Live and Learn, has been supporting an invasive species eradication program and have one field officer stationed in Ipota whom is responsible for all of North Erromango.

Communities may require some resources in order to take part in activities related to controlling "American rope".

Coconut crabs, a protected terrestrial crab species in Vanuatu, 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.

Livestock

With the abundance of wild animals, 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, therefore VCAP should not place much emphasis on livestock activities in North Erromango.

Site Coordinator

The North Erromango Island sub-site has a residing Site Coordinator, Mr. Jackie Dick, who has previous experience in coordinating programs related to food and water security.

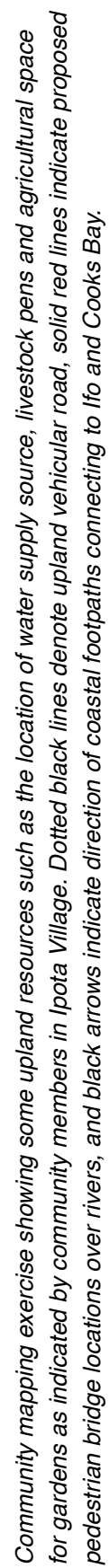
Data for Upland Resources

Refer to the Vulnerability Assessment Report for North Erromango from February 2016 to review data relating to upland resources.



(Above: Woman in Ipota displaying coconut crabs to be sold to buyers in Port Vila)

Ipota; Community Mapping

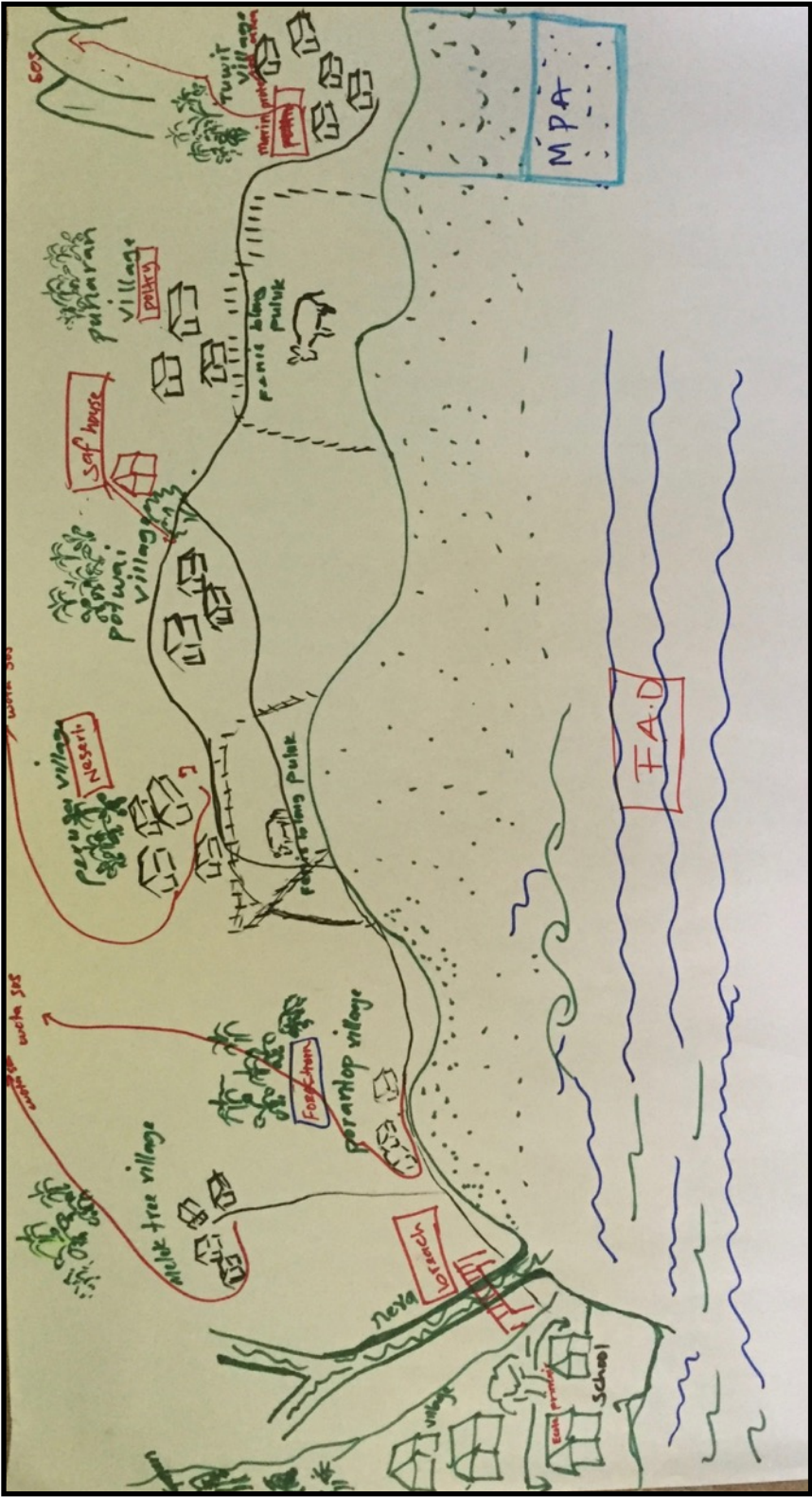


Port Narvin; Community Mapping



Cooks Bay Community Mapping

Cooks Bay Community Mapping



Community mapping exercise showing location of upland resources such as the location for a potential agro-forestry nursery and livestock project in Cook's Bay.