

National Forestry Week Report on Activities Supported by R2R Project Vanuatu

24th-28th August, 2020



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DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AND
CONSERVATION

JOINT IMPLEMENTERS:

TRMC

DEPARTMENT OF
FORESTRY (DOF)

DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AND
CONSERVATION (DEPC)



Acknowledgments

IW R2R Project Vanuatu would like to convey its uttermost sincere acknowledgment to the responsible organizing Department, the Department of Forestry for choosing Tagabe Watershed Catchment to commemorate 2020 National Forestry Week. Not only because it is the pilot demonstration site for the project, but also because the activities implemented through the event duration is complementary with the R2R initiatives. We would like to further this overwhelming gratitude also to the following project partners' participation; Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Ifira Marine Management and lastly the resident communities of Tagabe River for their considerable time and commitment towards the week's activities.

IWR2R Project Vanuatu

The International Waters Ridge to Reef (IW R2R) Project Vanuatu project is pilot project derived from the overall Ridge to Reef Program based in Suva Fiji. In Vanuatu, the Tagabe River Area Catchment (TRCA) is designated as the demonstration site for Vanuatu R2R project since it is a perfect resemblance model of the Ridge to Reef concept.

Vanuatu R2R Project utilizes the Tagabe River Management Committee, the local catchment committee has its project steering committee. In 2018, marks the major milestone achievement for both the project and TRMC seeing the launching of the Tagabe River Management Plan (2016-2020) which is now being implemented cross sectoral.

In adjacent with project deliverables and the current catchment management plan, the project has been very successful thus far. Project activities targeting specific outcomes includes; improving the quality of both ground and surface water, improving livelihoods standards, increase resilient and adaptation to climate change as well as the preservation of coastal environment. The project utilizes an integrated approach towards essential ecosystem such as forest, land, and water and coasts to strengthen the interconnectedness between local watershed and intercostal management within pilot site. So far catchment restoration has been a priority for the local authorities and projects with restorations program along the coast, riparian areas of Tagabe River and the upper catchment i.e water protection zones. Awareness programs as been the basis for sustainable and environmental friendly practices to resident communities with regards to livelihood improvements and the sustainability of Tagabe River.

Basic Data

Activity Name	<i>Tree Planting along Tagabe River</i>	
Restoration Project Name	<i>Tagabe River Restoration Project</i>	
Activity Location/Project Site	<i>Tagabe River</i>	
Contributions	Component 1	Strengthening coordination in support of the development and implementation of the Tagabe River Management Committee (TRMC)
	Outcome 1.2	Replication of Best Practices and Lessons Learned from IWRM Sarakata Catchment Demo Project
	End of Project Target	Buffer and Protected Use areas established and adhered to.
Activity Name	<i>Tree Plating in Matnakara Water Protection Zone 2</i>	
Restoration Project Name	<i>Tagabe Catchment Restoration Project</i>	
Activity Location/Project Site	<i>Matnakara Water Protection Zone 2</i>	
Contributions	Component 3	Establishing partnerships for sustainable coastal area development.
	Outcome 3.1	A multi-sectoral partnership that should revive the Existing Botanical Garden providing environmental and educational benefits to the Tagabe River Catchment
	End of Project Target	Existing Botanical Garden preserving Vanuatu's floral biodiversity and operating as a self-sustaining entity for the national botanical garden. 30 hac established and planted with rare endemic species in Vanuatu.
Activity Name	1. Tagabe River Clean-up Campaign 2. Eradication of Invasive Species (Water Lettuce)	
Activity Site	Along Tagabe River	
	Component 3	Establishing partnerships for sustainable coastal area development.
	Outcome 3.2	Community, local government partnership for sustainable land and surface water use preserving livelihoods.
	End of Project Target	Best practice for community local government partnership for sustainable land and surface water use reported and replicated through National STAR Projects.
Activity	Stakeholder and Community Engagement in the river clean-up campaign, removal of water lettuce and tree planting along River and rehabilitating Tagabe Catchment.	

	Component 2	Strengthening the capacity for participatory monitoring and evaluation of the Tagabe River Catchment R2R management plan to strengthen the enabling environment for coastal area management			
	Output 2.2	Participatory engagement with Local community, private business and government agency in sustainable practices and monitoring of Tagabe Lower Catchment and Upper Catchment.			
	End of Project Target	Proportion of target population monitoring coastal area impacts increased to through established agency and community awareness programmes			
Financial Expenditures	Complementary Activities		Complementary Activity Funds Committed		
			VUV	USD	
	Tree Planting along Tagabe River		77,659	664.09	
	Tree Planting in Water Protection Zone 2				
	Tagabe River Clean-Up Campaign				
	Removal of Invasive Water Lettuce in Tagabe River				
	Co-financed	Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation		20,000	171.03
		Ifira Marine Management		20,000	171.03
Total		117,695	1,006.15		

Organizers and Implementers for the National Forestry Week

National Forestry Week is an annual event scheduled on the 24th – 28th of August. The Department of Forestry in Vanuatu is mandated the responsibilities to organized and coordinate such event every year. Forestry week is an important occasion commemorated not only in Port Vila but across the country, for instance in the outer and rural islands. This year, the forestry week is declared officially to be celebrated with highlighting events at Tagabe Watershed Catchment, the R2R Pilot Project Demonstration site for Vanuatu.

Logically, the national forestry is usually commemorated with much emphasis and approach prospected on commercial forestry. This year, the Forestry Department through its conservation unit decisively lead by the Shefa extension officer redirects the approach to celebrate this event uniquely to restore Tagabe Catchment. The activities specifically outlined through the week (24th-28th August) specifically contributes to the restoration of the catchment linking to two (2) rehabilitation projects; 1, Tagabe River Riparian Project and; 2, Catchment Restoration Project. Other inclining activities were versed on sustainable practices/catchment protection involving the entire river clean-up campaign and the eradication of invasive water lettuce along Tagabe River.

The Forestry Department, as the organizers for this event, formally requested the R2R Project for funding supports and technical assistant towards the implementation for this annual event. Other supporting partners including the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Tagabe River Catchment Management Committee and the SPREP PEBACC Project. Vanuatu R2R Project has respond proactively and positively since it is complimentary to the ongoing project activities as well as practically within the project demonstration site.

National Forestry Week Activities

Monday 24th September- Day 1

➤ **Launching of National Forestry Week**

Launching of the National Forestry Week by the Honorable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity. To officiate the launching and opening of this national annual event, the Minister responsible and the invited guest participated a tree planting to mark the launching of 2020 National Forestry Week this year hosted at the Tagabe Catchment.



Figure 1 from left to right, Director General of MALFFB, and Director of Forestry Department (Source: Presely Dovo)



Figure 2 from left to right, Director Dept. of Livestock and Director Dept. of Water Resource (Source: Presely Dovo)



Figure 3 from left to right, Port Vila Town Council Lord Mayor and Rural Agriculture Development Bank Representative (Source: Presely Dovo)

➤ **Tagabe River Clean Up Campaign and Invasive Water Lettuce Removal**

Begins from Water Protection Zone 1 Boundaries to Destination Communities. Resident communities from Ohlen Nambanga and Ohlen Futana/Erromango were proactively engaged in this river clean up respectively within their residing boundaries of the river. Inmate from the Correctional Center were invited and enthusiastically participated as part of this specific event on that Day.



Figure 4 Invasive Water Lettuce Removal Day 1 (Source: DoF Vanuatu)



Figure 5 Invasive Water Lettuce Removal, Day 1 continues (Source: DoF Vanuatu)

Tuesday 25th September- Day 2

➤ **Tagabe River Clean Up Campaign and Invasive Water Lettuce Removal**

Both activities were executed in complementary to each other. Day 2, both activities resumed with Destination community to clean up their portion of river; removing aquatic invasive water lettuce, and littering items invested in and along the river river banks. The campaign resumes from Destination Community to Danstan Hilton’s Nakamal. A total of 200 plastics bags were distributed and collected for Day 1 and Day 2 within the justified areas of work.



Figure 6 Invasive water lettuce removal continue day 2 (Source: DoF, Vanuatu)



Figure 7 after and before scenario, activity output for the water lettuce removal



Figure 8 physical removal of water lettuce and some rubbish collected in the river (Source: DoF, Vanuatu)

➤ **Tree Planting along Tagabe River.**

The communities along Destination and the Inmates also planted livelihood tress along the riparian areas of the River. A total No. of _____ were planted on this day.



Figure 9 Tree Planting along Tagabe River conducted by Destination and Huerere Community (Source: DoF, Vanuatu)

➤ **Tree Planting in Matnakara Water Protection (MWPZ) 2**

The Dept. of Forestry Staff, Red Cross Society Volunteers and Ifira Marine Management (IMM) Rep initiated the first ever tree planting within the MWPZ 2. The activity on this day consist mainly of pecking and positioning of 400 mahogany tress to be planted on the 26th of August.



Figure 10 Position marking and staking for tree planting on Day 3 (Source: DoF, Vanuatu)

Wednesday 26th September- Day 3

➤ **Tree Planting along Tagabe River.**

The communities along Destination and the Inmates also planted livelihood trees along the riparian areas of the River. A total No. of _____ were planted on this day.

➤ **Tagabe River Clean Up Campaign and Invasive Water Lettuce Removal**

The river cleanup proceeds from Danstan Hilton's Nakamal to 21 Jump Street area and ending this campaign at Tagabe Main Bridge. As usual practice, invasive water lettuce were removed as well as any littering items; whether organic or inorganic found in the river or otherwise along the river bank. As a common practice, communities from Huarere Studios and 21 Jump Street were equally engaged for both activities within their related portion of the river. Another total of 200 plastic bags were collected during this day.



Figure 11 River clean-up campaign conducted by 21 the youth group from 21jump community (Source: DoF. Vanuatu)



Figure 12 21 Jump youth group participated in the removal of the invasive water lettuce found in Tagabe River

➤ **Tree Planting in Matnakara Water Protection (MWPZ)2**

Forestry Dept. Staffs, the Red Cross Volunteers and IMM continued with the tree planting in Zone 3 of the water protection zones. On this day a total of 400 Mahogany Trees were planted on the allocated rehab site. As such, this specific activity was coordinated by Dept. of Forestry Staffs.



Figure 13 Tree Planting in water protection zone 2 by Red Cross Society Volunteers and DoF Officers (Source: DoF, Vanuatu)

➤ **FM107 Talk-Back Segment**

A team of environmental activist comprising of UNELCO, Dept. of Water, Ifira Marine Management, Dept. of Forestry, SPREP PEBACC Project, and the IW R2R Project participated on this life talkback show. Discussion topic revolves around Tagabe River Catchment Area, the efforts of each partners implementing on site for the protection and towards the sustainability of the catchment. Callers were also able to call and to better the discussion with much relatedness to this annual event organized by the Forestry Dept.



Figure 14 FM107 talk-back segment with DoF, DoWR, Unelco, SPREP PEBACC, R2R Vanuatu and IMM

Thursday 27th September- Day 4

➤ **Tagabe River Clean Up Campaign and Invasive Water Lettuce Removal**

Both activities resume from Tagabe Main Bridge to Blacksand Main Bridge. A total of 5 resident communities participated on this campaign. Again restricted to their own boundaries, communities include; Tongoa Bridge Community, Sulpher Bay 1 & 2 Community, North Tanna Community, and Olwi School Residents. The campaigned approach is as usual with Day 1-3. A total of 300 plastic bags were distributed and 200 bags were collected by Port Vila Municipality.

➤ **Tree Planting along Tagabe River**

A few vetiver grass were planted along Tagabe River and livelihood plants from different portion of river between Tagabe main bridge and Blacksand Bridge. This significant activity is initiated and coordinated internally by the communities largely.

Friday 28th September- Day 5

➤ **Tagabe River Clean Up Campaign and Invasive Water Lettuce Removal**

The campaign continued on the same area mentioned in Day 4. Therefore it was only a continuation from day 4 with a total of 300 cabbage bags collected.

➤ **Closing of the National Forestry Week and Tree Planting Day**

Recommendations/Conclusion

The National Forestry Week held on the 24th – 28th August, 2020 was organized by the Department of Forestry as part of its annual national events. This year the event was commemorated at Tagabe Watershed Catchment which is the national project's demonstration site for Vanuatu R2R.. It was an unveiling opportunity for the IW R2R Project and other partner project such as PEBACC Project to raise visibility on the significant importance of Tagabe River but also to promote the ongoing integrated approach towards catchment management. The drawn activities for this event reflects/supports the ongoing efforts for both adaptations projects mentioned. Such activities complements at least 4 priority project activities which have been implemented successfully. The monitoring, maintenance and compliance for catchment restoration project and riparian restoration project will guarantee the success of our rehabilitation projects.