



Pacific R2R Programme Workshop

Most Significant Change

The GEF Pacific IW R2R Project - Vanuatu



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Waste Management in Tagabe River

I used to be the former area secretary of Tanvasoko area representing the local provincial government in which the IW R2R Vanuatu demonstration site is located in. Currently I represent Ifira Marine Management (IMM) a CBO in Tagabe as the Environmental Officer. We have been actively engaging communities towards traditionally management of marine resources at Black-sand area. The extension of our work with the communities in order to protect and maintain the coastal ecosystem health, we extend our involvement terrestrial as resembling the R2R approach, understanding the close connectivity between land, forest, water and coastal. Therefore waste management related concerns is a major area we are considering in our approach.

My view on waste management/littering in Tagabe Rive which would define as the area is disorganized, there are not proper waste management system in place. The communities do not understand the impacts of waste to the environment, their health and overall their livelihoods and the rivers sustainability even though the awareness have been done but such was not that effective. We are more concerned on the water quality (river) because the residing communities often use this for cooking, drinking, and washing. But also to the extend reeferal areas the organic and non-organic products may cause significant impacts to the reef by smattering the reef, reducing species of coral and other reef fish from the adjacent reef.

Since the IW R2R Project comes into play, I, as the representing the IMM and Tanvasoko Youth Council have engaged with project in majorly organizing, coordinating and executing the Tagabe River Clean-Up Campaigns. There were at least two clean-ups campaign and mini awareness of this campaign that we I was directly involved in. At current times, I am also involved with the R2R project on the awareness carried in which our perspective of waste related matter is incorporated and convey to the target communities residing along Tagabe River.



Community Youth group engaged in Clean-up Campaign



Community at Blacksand Area collect rubbish and litter in the river

The changes I observed from the activities i.e. Clean-Up-Campaigns and awareness to the communities about the river are very important in my observation as this are some improvements which might be regarded as basis towards maintaining and protecting Tagabe River. Firstly, the communities now realizes and understand the importance of managing their waste and the waste practices. This is even more important because as the people become to realize then it is a very first step of process towards enhancing their mindset in regards to water pol-lutions and how they can improve their practices for their very own benefits.

Secondly, Cooperation. Cooperation is established internally within each communities and the target groups. Elderly, youths, women and men, community groups cooperate well to ensure litter and rubbish is collected within their respective boundaries. Such cooperation not only forged within communities but between communities to address waste management in Tagabe River. This portrays and forges good governance with communities in Tagabe river that will ensure to pursuer a common interest in not only waste but other approached to sustain Tagabe River for their livelihood. The cooperation is not only bound to the community but also the relevant authorities i.e. government natural resource/or related sectors. It is from this institutional level that advocacy and knowledge dissemination of waste and other related matter of concerns to the environment. Therefore their participation with the communities resemble their commitment as well as enthusiast communities to proactively take waste management seriously which will also pave the way forward towards enhancement community' mindset on their view of waste management practices and littering. Once this important moral step is achieved the river may be sustainable to provide provisional and recreational needs for the livelihoods of the communities.

Thirdly, from the past campaigns there has been reduction in waste and littering item in Tagabe River which means that there is not much changes.

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The participatory engagement from the communities and government institutional resource regulators resembles a community to cabinet approach resembling their collaborative commitment as well as to proactively take waste management seriously as well as adopt strategical practices to mitigate waste/lit-tering in Tagabe. It is more important that the government comes down to the level of the communities to work with them, thus will enthusiast them to more proactive on their approach. This will also pave the way forward towards enhancement community' mindset on their view of waste management practices and littering. Once this important moral step is achieved the river may be sustainable to provide provision- al and recreational needs for the livelihoods of the communities.

In my perspective, if the activities goes on the changes I mentioned (above) are intergrade every time, then I guarantee that waste management and practices that the project takes and will implement in the near future will ensure waste management be regulated freely by the communities taking ownership to ensure the river quality is safe for daily subsistent usage. Yet if the project works with the relevant local authorities to developed and established management system, this will entirely combat and mitigate waste management issues in Tagabe River. Thus the approach will be consider not only by communities but also relevant government sectors.



Dept. of Environmental Protection and Conservation Staffs Collect rubbish and litter at Tagabe Bridge as well as collection of data on littering items collected.