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# Communications Strategy: V-CAP

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*“Adaptation to Climate Change in Vanuatu in the Coastal Zone” or “V-CAP”*

## A.) Background

### V-CAP Project Overview

V-CAP or the “Adaptation to Climate Change in Coastal Zone in Vanuatu” is a 5 year, approximately \$8 million US, community based CCA project targeting project sites in each of Vanuatu’s six provinces funded by UNDP. The project objective is to “improve the resilience of the coastal zone in order to sustain livelihoods, food production & preserve and improve the quality of life in vulnerable areas.”

The 4 project components include:

- 1.) Supporting integrated community approaches to CC Adaptation (with a focus on coastal & upland resource management along with the “climate-proofing” of essential infrastructure)
- 2.) Strengthening early warning systems on coastal hazards
- 3.) Assisting the government with the development of Climate Change policy
- 4.) Knowledge management.

### Knowledge Management

This “Communications Strategy” developed by V-CAP will be utilized to support the Knowledge Management, Component 4 in particular:

#### **4.1. Increased awareness and ownership of climate risk reduction processes at the national and local levels**

- 4.1.1 Best practices are captured, documented, and distributed to all local and national stakeholders and shared globally in appropriate mechanisms (development, populating and maintenance of national website for CC) through the NAB (National Advisory Board)
- 4.1.2 Awareness, training and education programs developed and implemented for e.g. schools, households and the private sector; translated into Bislama and French as applicable and working with ongoing initiatives

## **Purpose of Communications Strategy**

This Communications Strategy has been developed to assist in the effective implementation of V-CAP, in particular Component 4 – “Knowledge Management” so that there is a clear methodology outlined for implementing project staff. The outlining of a communications strategy is a useful exercise to conduct before the implementation of a given project begins. Clearly identifying the objectives, processes and benefits of V-CAP for key target audiences (including communities) at the local, national and regional level is a high priority that will allow for replication of project successes and the dissemination of “lessons learned” throughout the future.

The implementation of V-CAP will generate a large amount of information and valuable knowledge on best practices and lessons learned. Such information and knowledge will be organized, translated and made accessible to the government, concerned communities and civil society partners to strengthen on-the-ground adaptation activities, facilitate cross-fertilization of relevant efforts, and inform decision-making on future adaptation actions in Vanuatu. Such information will also be distributed globally through UNDP. In combination, the component seeks to ensure that climate adaptation and ICM can be sustained as core activities of the government and civil society in the future.

## **Communications Strategy Components**

This Communications Strategy for V-CAP is comprised of:

- Outline of Communications Programme Process
- Identification of Target Audiences
- Identification of Communications Methods

## **B.) Communications Programme Process**

The overall process will follow five stages outlined below:

### **Communications Assessment**

- Of the current CCA awareness levels and gaps that need to be addressed
- Of the target audiences;
- Of the communication channels, challenges and opportunities
- Of the resources available to implement communications activities

### **Communications Plan Development**

- Set realistic, achievable and measurable objectives
  - Both SMART objectives and ‘necessary and sufficient’ indicators

### **Design**

- Develop effective and appropriate messages, communication interventions or activities that engage stakeholders in learning about the problem and in identifying solutions

### **Pre-test**

- Test these messages and methods with their target audiences.

### **Evaluation**

Find ways to continuously improve their communications programmes through reflective learning and using monitoring.

## **C.) Target Audiences**

### **V-CAP Target Communities**

The V-CAP target communities are the ultimate beneficiaries, and it is critical that they are involved in helping to scope out intervention needs, capacity needs and to also provide their knowledge and experience of dealing with community based CCA interventions as captured in community history and stories. Project successes and lessons learned will vary between V-CAP project sites, so it is important that these are communicated effectively to avoid duplication of error and to maximize efficiency.

### **Area Secretaries & Provincial Based Officers**

The Area Secretaries & Provincial Officers will coordinate and implement V-CAP activities at the site level and also possibly at replication sites. They are the key linkage points between beneficiary communities and the Provincial Governments and other agencies. They will work to ensure the interventions are appropriate on the community level and that they are also in line with V-CAP objectives while supporting the plans and policies of other relevant national government agencies & departments. These Area Secretaries & Provincial Based Officers also report to the Provincial Governments to ensure clear communications and transparency, and should therefore be highly valuable resources to the Vanuatu Government.

### **Project Implementing Committee (PIC's) & Area Councils**

These groups, as committees & Area Councils, will guide and coordinate V-CAP interventions with V-CAP staff and target communities. Where appropriate, Pilot Project Committees (PPC) will be established at the level of the pilot projects. These will help guide activities within each pilot project. These PIC and Area Council members will be the community voices shared during communications activities- as they will be the community members with the most technical expertise and general knowledge regarding V-CAP.

### **Lead Agencies / Ministries / Provincial Governments**

It is vital that key persons within lead agencies and ministries (e.g. MCCAMGEDM, MoIA, MAgFF, NAB, PMU, DLA, and NDMO) as well as provincial governments see how V-CAP results achieved during implementation can be replicated and used to improve ongoing work during and beyond the life of the Project. Many donor projects worldwide have attempted to find effective ways to promote ownership of projects within lead agencies. Strategies have included:

- Profiling key management officials in the media/videos
- Involving key lead agency managers and staff in project Communications Teams

### **Wider National Public**

Having a wider audience and a more general public understanding and support for V-CAP objectives is necessary if there is to be sustainable change at the national level.

National level social marketing campaigns may help promote behaviour change.

**Other key Target Audience members include:**

- Private Sector: national and regional organizations representing farmers; fishing reps; manufacturers; hotel owners/managers; tour operators; dive operators; yachtsmen etc.
- Scientific Community  Non-government organizations  Regional Partners and Co-financers  Other Projects  International/Donors  International Partners

## **D.) Communications Methods**

### **Public Relations and Awareness Raising**

Activities to consider:

- Communications strategy specifically for public relations and awareness raising (National and Provincial advocacy messages – to brand the project)
- Project brochures
- Project logo
- Media releases and ‘media event’s for key milestones
- Profiles of key managers
- Feature press article/s
- Media tours of V-CAP project sites
- Short radio messages / interviews
- Theatre (popular across Melanesia)
- Video documentary/public service announcements (ideally, to be done with both a PR perspective in mind and an ‘instructional’ perspective for later communication of best practices)
- Social media uploads of PR project media (ex: Facebook page for project)
- Information and project data uploaded on NAB portal

### **Media Releases**

Media releases are distinguished from feature press articles in that they should be used to provide information on events, landmark project developments, and updates of public significance. They should be concise, relevant to public interest, and clearly provide information on who should be contacted for additional information or for interviews. Key persons or “champions” referred to in the media release or who are spokespersons for the project should be prepared for requests for further provision of information.

### **Profiles of Key Communities involved in Pilot Sites, Community Members, and Provincial Officers**

Key individuals within lead stakeholder institutions involved in the project can be profiled to help clarify connections between community activities and relevant plans to address climate change impacts on coastal communities. Short case studies on valuable approaches and experiences of the project managers will be actively supported via website and other media (newsletter, etc). Video or radio interviews to provide profiles are encouraged for the V-CAP communities as well as the general public in Vanuatu due to literacy challenges present in rural communities.

### **Feature Press Article/s**

Establishing working relationships with newspaper editorial departments would be beneficial in terms of placing feature articles, tip sheets and interviews. Feature articles

written by V-CAP staff with the guidance of the the PMU, Provincial Officers, etc. can be placed in local newspapers. Editors can be approached to determine their willingness to print single or short series of feature articles on V-CAP.

### **Radio**

Radio is listened to extensively throughout Vanuatu and can therefore be an effective broadcast medium. Short radio messages regarding V-CAP objectives & developments (two minutes or less) can be pre-recorded/produced and aired by arrangement on several radio stations, sometimes as public service announcements. Government Information Services are often available to assist with production in most countries and may make time slots for public service announcements (PSA's) available to the project.

### **Video documentary / Public Service Announcements**

The Vanuatu Broadcast and Television Corporation (VBTC) and its Television Blong Vanuatu (TBV) would be an excellent television medium to provide awareness to viewers in Port Vila, Efate & Luganville, Santo. As it is owned and operated by the national government, V-CAP should be able to use this medium without paying for broadcast time. Video footage can also be distributed via DVD's or mobile phone in order to reach communities without access to TBV. Instructional best practice examples can be clearly communicated with this format. Video diaries and national campaign videos could be developed around clear V-CAP endorsed messages. As much of Vanuatu has poor literacy rates, using video media is an attractive delivery method.

### **Project Information Shared on Website - NAB Portal**

The PMU is responsible for content of the NAB Portal and the V-CAP will work closely with the PMU to ensure information regarding project activities and results are regularly updated for stakeholders and the general public to access and download if desired.