

## **Malakula Island, Vanuatu 2012**

### **Waitakere Rotary Club**

#### **Project: Dining Hall, Kitchen, Composting Toilet, Water Tank**

##### Introduction

*In May 2012, Waitakere Rotary led its first project on Malakula Island, Vanuatu, at the village of Orap. This is primarily a French-speaking area of Vanuatu and our club wanted to make sure we could communicate well with the villagers as we wanted to start off on the right understanding about their needs. We arranged to have Marie- France Duhamel, a Frenchwoman who had studied the language at the village of Orap a few years earlier and still had contacts on the island. Marie is a tutor at the University of Auckland.*

*This proved to be a very sound way of getting started on projects in a new community. Our club used a similar approach for the projects on Tongoa, with a resident Peace Corps worker who knew local people and helped with communications.*

*The work undertaken by Waitakere Rotary and Dunedin Rotary was well-supported and valued by the locals and a full report is on our website.*

<http://www.rotarywaitakere.org.nz/our-projects/international>

*The following report completed by Marie is an example of how detailed information can be gathered about the community while (or before) the project is being carried out. The report looks at the Collège (secondary school) and some of the issues that arise there.*

*This information is useful for any further projects being undertaken in Orap or on Malakula.*

*Phyllis Anscombe*

*Community Director*



Marie's photo of Rotary members on arrival at Malakula

## ***Orap Secondary Education: 'Collège et Lycée FELP d'Orap'***

### **Context**

The *Collège et Lycée FELP d'Orap* is set in the tiny village of Orap on the island of Malakula, in Vanuatu.

In the second map that shows Malakula in more detail, Orap is indicated by the red marker.

To set the context of this project it may be helpful to know a little about the village of Orap. The Island of Malakula has a subsistence fishing and agriculture based economy – that is, enough food is grown or caught to eat and there is very little to trade even if it was practical to do so. There are coral packed roads but the most common form of transportation is by foot, or by boat. Some garden areas are inland requiring walking to and from - and back packing the produce - out to the villages.

Water supplies are from rainfall, creeks and spring water or wells. There have been a number of aid donor projects that have installed various water supply arrangement but due to lack of maintenance and understanding the context, most break down after awhile and are not used. Many of the villages have what is termed a "Rural Water Supply Systems", meaning that communal taps and showers are installed in public areas outside buildings.

The primary energy is petroleum. Around 60% of urban households have power but in the villages and rural areas there is no power supply except through generators or other alternative fuel methods. Cell phones are the preferred telecommunication method these days.

The village of Orap has a primary school and the Collège and Lycée.



Solar power sites

### **'Collège et Lycée FELP d'Orap'**

When the students finish primary school, if they are local, they will most likely continue their education at the Collège et Lycée d'Orap. This school is a Federation of Free Protestant Education (FELP) institution. As such, it also attracts children who attended FELP primary institutions elsewhere in Vanuatu. The Collège can therefore count on a regular intake of

new entrants. But new secondary schools having been created in the region of Malakula in the last ten years and the number of students at Collège et Lycée d'Orap has significantly reduced. The principal, Mr Tavunwo, wants to attract new students and retain the ones he has.

The Collège includes school years equivalent to New Zealand system of Year 7 through to Year 11 (or previously, Form 1 to Form 5). The students are typically aged 11 to 17. It is a co-educational school and funded by the Vanuatu government<sup>1</sup>.

Most students are locals, from the village of Orap or nearby. There are others students are from further afield and they live at school. In May 2012 there were 13 girls and 11 boys living at school out of the total of 69 students

At the Collège there are 8 teachers, the principal and four support staff.

### **Curriculum/ academic achievement**

In Vanuatu, the schooling is taught in English and/or French. In the village of Orap, education is delivered in French.

The curriculum taught at the Collège is fairly comprehensive. It is adapted from the French curriculum and covers 8 subjects which are compulsory for all students. At each level, students study: French (language and literature), Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, History, Geography and English as a foreign language.

The school only offers sports as an extracurricular activity but every Friday, there are team sports such as soccer, volleyball and basketball, and there is running on the beach. Unfortunately, students are not taught to swim and athletics isn't a taught sport. Music is not available because there are no instruments even though one of the staff members is able and willing!

Students are regularly assessed and their progress monitored. A student who fails in too many subjects must repeat the year. Academic students are offered to further their education in Port Vila. There they can study for another two years in a secondary school and prepare for the University Entrance Diploma (DAEU), after which they may be eligible for a government-funded university scholarship.



Rotary and locals at work

All of the teachers speak at least three languages – their home dialect, Bislama (the national language spoken by everyone in Vanuatu – a pigeon English that has developed into its own language) and very good French.

<sup>1</sup> The government produces some educational resources and pays staff salaries but it pays nothing towards building maintenance. The parents pay for their children's schooling and board.



Rotary and local team members at work, May 2012.

### What is needed?

Mr Louis Tavunwo, the principal, wants to increase the roll of the school and become the main secondary college in Orap. He is confident the school is doing well academically, but he feels this is not enough to attract new students. To promote the school to prospective parents, he wants to be able to offer a reliable source of electricity, good dormitories and a new refectory. Next year, the school is expecting 40 new entrants and this is an opportunity to prove to the local and wider community that the school can provide an excellent education.

Here is Mr Tavunwo's list of what is needed, in order of priority:

1. A fixed generator, powerful enough to provide electricity for the whole school for 3 to 4 hours per day. This would be used for:
  - a. computers<sup>2</sup>,
  - b. audio-visual resources (such as language learning videos and CDs),
  - c. administration,
  - d. fridge for refectory.



The generator would have to come with accessories (cables, circuit-breakers, switches).

2. A new dormitory for boys
3. Design and material for the local people to build tables and chairs for the new refectory, for the classrooms and for the staffroom
4. Repair the existing solar panels
5. Build a new sanitary and toilet block for staff and teachers



school desks

The teachers are keen to source educational resources, especially textbooks, mural posters, maps, encyclopaedias and earth globes. But all this material has to be in French. have

<sup>2</sup> Computers are under-used due to a lack of reliable power supply.

been are in contact with the 'pikinini' association ([http://pikinicaledo.com/index.html#ancre\\_sommaire](http://pikinicaledo.com/index.html#ancre_sommaire)) in Noumea, New Caledonia, who can help with locating and collecting second hand material from French schools in New Caledonia and with sending it to Orap.

But Rotary can help with other material such as:

1. musical instruments, especially guitars, ukulele, harmonicas, flutes, drums
2. material for science laboratories, in particular an oscilloscope and all the basic equipment for school physics, biology and chemistry laboratories (list was provided and is being translated from French)
3. sports uniforms: shorts, t-shirts and singlets
4. equipment for athletics (esp. discus, javelins)
5. English/French bilingual dictionaries – I have sent a couple but another two could help

The librarian stressed the need for shelving. Books are being stored on the floor in the library for a lack of shelves. There is not much point in sending more books before the shelving problem is addressed. We can help by sending design and material for the local people to build new shelves.

George and Yvonne are the Head Master and Mistress, primarily responsible for pastoral care of the boarders at the Collège. They are keen to have access to training resources (such as videos) that will help them understand how to manage teenage issues through education and information. I am continuing to look into this as these resources would have to be in French.

**Marie-France Duhamel**

**University of Auckland**



*A wonderful, well-earned meal, island style*

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