

## SANITATION MASTER PLAN FOR PORT VILA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

TA No. and Name TA 2597-VAN: Sanitation Master Plan for Port Vila			Amount Approved: \$360,000	
			Revised Amount:	
Executing Agency: National Planning Office	National	Source of Funding: ADB	TA Amount Undisbursed \$25,540	TA Amount Utilized \$334,460
Date			TA Completion Date	
Approval 27 June 1996	Signing 10 July 1996	Fielding of Consultants 15 August 1997	Original December 1999	Actual 3 September 1998
			Account Closing Date	
			Original December 1999	Actual 3 September 1998

### A. Description

1. The project preparatory technical assistance (PPTA) for the urban infrastructure project,<sup>1</sup> financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), recommended the installation of a reticulated sewerage system for the entire urban area of Port Vila. Further review of this option by ADB staff and consultants showed that such a system may not be economically or financially viable right now because of high operation and maintenance requirements, and because high user charges would be required to recover the investment and operating costs. Furthermore, the technical difficulties associated with Port Vila's hilly topography, and land ownership and custom rights, would overly complicate the installation of a conventional sewerage system because various options, such as ocean outfalls, would require considerable negotiation with custom land owners concerning rights of way and compensation for possible loss of fishing waters.

2. Regardless of the problems, there is considerable concern, particularly from standpoints of public health and the environment, that the present sewage treatment and solid waste disposal practices significantly pollute ground, surface, and coastal waters around the urban areas. Geologically, the highly permeable coral limestone bedrock beneath the relatively shallow soil moves effluent discharge rapidly from septic tanks and pit latrines to the groundwater. Similar concerns have been raised about the poor disposal of industrial and toxic wastes.

3. The Government was well aware of the urgent need for efficient sewage solutions in the context of rapid urban growth, pollution, public health, and the impact on tourism. Thus, the Government recognized the need for a sanitation master plan (SMP) for Port Vila before beginning any physical work. The Government was also concerned about the high cost and lack of affordability of utilities in general, and the need to review both its role in monitoring and regulating utility charges, and measures needed to strengthen that role.

### B. Objectives and Scope

4. The objectives of the TA were to (i) prepare an SMP for the systematic development of a sanitation system that will meet Port Vila's requirements for 20 years, and provide a range of options for sanitation appropriate to low-, medium-, and high-density residential, tourist and commercial developments; (ii) target sanitation needs of specific socioeconomic groups, such as low-income families; and (iii) undertake the detailed feasibility-level design of the first

<sup>1</sup> ADB. 1994. *Technical Assistance to the Republic of Vanuatu for Urban Infrastructure Project, Port Vila and Luganville*. Manila. (TA No 1952)

investment phase proposed through the loan. The scope of TA services comprised the preparation of a sanitation master plan for Port Vila, and detailed preparation of the first phase of a sewage collection and treatment system.

### C. Evaluation of Inputs

5. The resources provided under the TA totaled \$334,000, including 15 person-months of consulting services over a 7-month period and \$46,900 for equipment, workshop, and administration costs. Consulting services were provided by a team leader and sanitary/environmental engineer (4.75 mo.), urban planner (3 mo.), environmental engineer (2.75 mo.), local design engineer (1.25 mo.), physical and social environmentalist (1.5 mo.), and institutional and financial specialist (1.75 mo.). The Government provided liaison officers in concerned agencies, as well as office space and support services for the consultants.

6. The formulation of the technical assistance (TA) and the associated terms of reference (TOR) were prepared after ADB TA. The TA evolved from extensive consultation with the Government and stakeholders during Project design, and was considered satisfactory. Lessons learned from the prior ADB PPTA were incorporated into the TA objectives and scope.

7. The consultants' performance was highly satisfactory. The consultants were fielded on 18 September 1997, 14 months<sup>2</sup> after the Loan Agreement was signed. That was 3 months after TA contract negotiations, and a month later than agreed upon during the negotiations, because the availability of the nominated team leader was delayed. The delivery of all reports and the conduct of a workshop were broadly in line with the TA program. The final SMP report was provided on 27 April 1998, a month earlier than in the TA schedule. The final TA report was provided in August 1998, about 4 months later than in the original TA schedule, because of the delay in receiving the Government's comments on the draft final report. Throughout the TA, the consultants took a proactive approach to progress reporting and provided monthly progress reports during the preparation of the master plan. The consultants also encouraged the Government to prepare sanitation bylaws, and to initiate institutional strengthening in the municipalities, but these proposals did not materialize.

8. Progress of this TA was reviewed during the Project through regular review missions described in the *Performance of ADB* section of this report. Four review missions were completed from 8 November 1997 to November 1999. That level was adequate, considering the reporting process that the consultants integrated into the TA. The Executing Agency (EA)—the National Planning Office (NPO)—played a strong and proactive role during the main TA period.

### D. Evaluation of Outputs

9. The consultants presented draft and final inception, master plan, and final reports according to the TA requirements. Additional monthly and progress meeting reports, although not specified in the TOR, were provided. Some institution building and training was done with officers of NPO, the Environmental Unit (EU), and the Port Vila municipality through the TA. Neither the Government nor the Port Vila municipality has formally adopted the SMP; the first stages of work identified in the feasibility study did not begin because of a lack of Project funds. The first stage of the SMP involved works that cost \$2.7 million, compared with a Project allocation of \$1.75 million, which included the component for an Erakor causeway bridge. But the EU and the municipality regard the master plan highly, and utilize it. Both the EU and

<sup>2</sup> TA implementation was delayed at the request of the National Planning Office for this TA to follow the results of the Urban Growth Management Strategy under TA No 2596-VAN.

municipality have adopted selected master plan recommendations. The master plan is likely to continue to provide these organizations with a frame of reference, and will form the basis for a later urban infrastructure project, separately or within a multifaceted framework. Outputs are judged to have exceeded the TA TOR.

#### **E. Overall Assessment and Rating**

10. Achievements of the TA have been significant, and the first stage of the SMP works would have been implemented, had Project funds been available. While the SMP has not been fully adopted, some recommendations have been implemented. The SMP serves as a reference point, is regarded as a useful document, and is expected to form the basis of a later sanitation works program, either as a separate project or within an integrated urban infrastructure project. The consultation process undertaken through the TA and the amount of stakeholder dialogue has been beneficial for the political, public, and private sectors. Overall, the TA is rated successful.

#### **F. Major Lessons Learned**

11. It is preferable that a TA designed to provide an essential element of the urban framework be conducted in a situation with a reasonable likelihood of funding for proposed capital works, which would begin within an acceptable time frame after TA completion. Considerable positive stakeholder dialogue was generated, and expectations were raised. The failure to meet those expectations within a reasonable time may damage future implementation efforts. In proceeding with the TA, more attention should have been addressed to establishing realistic costs for the first stage of sanitation works in Port Vila, as well as for the other Project components. An additional lesson learned was the need to start Project implementation sooner after loan approval. This would have likely lowered the costs for all Project components.

#### **G. Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

12. Implementation of the SMP's stage one works remains an urgent priority; a funding source for this capital works program should be sought. The possibility of an ADB urban infrastructure II project should be considered. Capacity building and institutional strengthening in the EU and the municipalities should also be initiated.

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