



# *Ambae broods at sunrise, ejecting more suffocating ash*

*Volcanic activity on the island of Ambae this year has caused the Vanuatu government to declare a state of emergency and permanently evacuate all 10,000 people on the island. The evacuees are being relocated on neighbouring islands. It is very stressful for the evacuees and the host villages as land, water and food resources, building materials, schools, medical clinics, communications and transport services all have to be adapted to cope with the increase in population in these small, isolated, communities. The social and psychological effects on the evacuees, as a result of having to leave the places their families have lived for thousands of years, is also immense.*

*Click on this [link](#) to the **Guardian** newspaper to read more about the evacuation. Further information about the Trust's work on Ambae is below.*

## Nurturing Neediness: When Aid Goes Wrong

The world of foreign aid and development has been shaken by allegations of sexual and other abuse over the past year. In our view, these allegations represent just one aspect of the way in which this industry (and we use that word deliberately) operates and which needs to be remedied.

The abuse allegations are indicative of the power imbalance that exists at nearly all levels of aid and development programmes. (Even the language “aid and development” implies a recipient nation needs help and is “undeveloped”.) Consequently, it is all too easy for aid agencies and donor governments, either deliberately or unintentionally, to impose their will on recipient countries. Sometimes this means aid programmes benefit the donor as much as, or even more than, the recipient.

Three subtle ways in which ostensibly well-meaning programmes can have the consequence of undermining local cultures are set out below.

Firstly, aid agencies, large or small, and their workers, come to the

countries they want to assist, with their own cultural perspectives. It can be difficult to step outside those perspectives and divine what people of the assisted communities really require. In some cases, despite the rhetoric, there is very little attempt to do this, usually because it is not a funding priority and there is no money to spend on the weeks, or months, or even years, that could be necessary to really understand what is required. Donors want to see “positive” results quickly and aid agencies want to ensure “positive” results in order to obtain more funding. Consequently, aid workers and their organisations tend to run programmes through the prism of their own cultural experience to a fixed timeline.

Secondly, funding, particularly when

it comes from governments, is often tied to key requirements, such as promotion of gender equality and other human rights, combatting climate change, or other political interests of the donor. For example, New Zealand’s Aid Programme Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019 proudly proclaims that:

“We will integrate environment and climate change, gender equality and women’s empowerment, and human rights issues in our policies and investments.”

While these sentiments can sound laudable from a Western perspective, when applied to indigenous societies which may be patriarchal, it can be argued that this is an attempt, well-intentioned or not, to impose one world view upon another.

Thirdly, aid emanates in most cases from countries which follow the capitalist model of economics. Most aid and development programmes therefore end up reflecting that model in some way. It goes without saying that many traditional societies did not operate in this way historically and consequently find it difficult to adapt to that model when required to do so in order to receive the benefits promised by donors.

The way in which the power imbalance plays out is complicated but not unavoidable. We need to be open to talking with locals, and talking more, before embarking upon programmes. We need to emphasise what is good for the recipients of assistance rather than compromise due to the needs of the donors. We need to recognise that capitalist systems are not the only way of running societies and respect traditional systems of government in recipient communities. We need to recognise the power imbalance which is implicit in what we do and openly explain how we will deal with it. We need to allow recipient communities to develop as they want to develop and not try and herd them into becoming inferior, “mini-me” versions, of donor countries.

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## AMBAE - Health Education Work in a volcano's Shadow

*Living on the verge of potentially catastrophic, geological events for generations has endowed the people of Vanuatu with an innate resilience and an enduring capacity to balance uncertainty with routine.*

Their sense of time is far more expansive, and not as constrained and outcome-focused, as in wealthy countries, at least when it comes to handling project timelines and set activities.

Over the last 3-1/2 years, nature has intervened on several occasions to unsettle the Trust's health education project on Ambae in the villages of Lolovoli, St Barnabas and Lolomanganda. There was Cyclone Pam in 2015 which delayed the start of the project for almost a year.



*"There is a huge desire amongst the villagers to keep going. It is the first time that there has been a focus at this level, in this community. The people want the programme to continue so there can be some long term changes for the future, particularly a reduction in some diseases."*

*Belinda Tari, Village Health Worker*



**The first evacuation of Ambae residents occurred in September 2017.**

**Since then, continuous volcanic activity has resulted in permanent relocation of the entire population of approximately 10, 000.**

When momentum started to gather, Monaro-Voui, the volcano on Ambae, erupted. Then Cyclone Hola swooped in early this year. Undeterred, the community in Lolomanganda pressed on, hosting a refresher training workshop and review of activities over the year. The same workshop was planned for the Lolovoli community, and suspended when the state of emergency was declared this year.

The immediate needs around access to balanced diets, safe drinking water

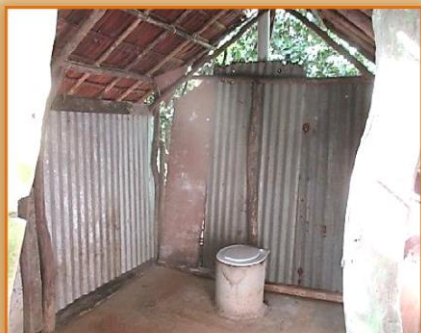


and adequate accommodation then took priority. Lolovoli and Lolomanganda were designated safe zones and temporary evacuation points for communities from worst affected areas. Villagers were tasked with building additional toilets and washing facilities. Water, sanitation and hygiene issues became critical. According to Health Promotion Officer for the province, Markson Tabi,

*"None of the lessons taught went to waste. Resources may have been diverted to deal with the change in circumstances on the ground, but the essential messages around health and hygiene remained."*

Markson is adamant that the project should be sustained. It must be flexible and evolve to meet the needs of displaced communities regardless of where they eventually relocate.

He further pointed out that prior to the mandatory evacuation, all three communities had expressed renewed determination to reduce the incidence of worm infections, particularly in children.



Toilets, clean water and handwashing were high on the agenda of health education activities on Ambae. Where access to piped water was difficult or non-existent, villagers were encouraged to use 'tippy-taps', made from recycled plastic containers. A communal concrete water tank was completed in Lolomanganda (below L/R), and VIP toilets built using a combination of local materials and corrugated iron sheets.

The health education project on Ambae began as a pilot between the Trust, Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Penama Provincial Health team on Lolowai. Rotary District 9910 provided initial funds. The Neglected Tropical Diseases Unit at the MOH provided technical expertise, resources and training to community leaders and village health workers. Since its inception, implementation has been driven by locals and led by the health promotion officer.



Under the watchful eye of village health workers, Belinda Tari and Jennifer Tari, each community set goals to build toilets, make simple 'tippy taps' from recycled plastic containers, organise rubbish disposal areas and keep domestic cattle and pigs in fenced compounds. Over time, further health topics were introduced.

needs, and health problems associated with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) were highlighted. At recent meetings, the communities discussed setting up village health committees, as well as strengthening health promotion in schools.

The key phrase or question has to be 'what is sustainable over the very long term'. People have competing

priorities and health issues do not necessarily take 'nambawan' (number one) place all the time. Change will take time and measures must be introduced incrementally. The reality is that hospitals will continue to admit end-stage NCD patients such as diabetics with irreversible complications for a long time to come. These are deaths that may have been preventable had problems been detected early and the disease pathway understood in a holistic way. It is also about exploring alternative ways to inspire and encourage the retention of such knowledge in ways that are culturally appropriate.

There are many different ways to communicate health education. Our role is to help in this exploration, enabling discovery and growth of health literacy organically.

The evacuation of Ambae is now complete. As communities such as Lolovoli, St Barnabas and Lolomanganda disband, new generations establish. It has been a time of intense upheaval for many who have lost their ancestral land, endured scattering of extended family groups and loss of livelihoods. There is ongoing political interplay to be had. When the dust settles, literally, there is much that must resume.

Issues around dietary and nutrition



*For the displaced people of Ambae, water, sanitation and hygiene needs remain high on the list of priorities. If anything, communities are more vulnerable to diseases due to overcrowding, inadequate toilets and poor sanitation practices. Wherever communities reestablish - on neighbouring Pentecost, Maewo or the more populated island of Santo - adequate toilets, safe drinking water and handwashing facilities are essential.*

**Please donate to the Butterfly Trust's Community Health Programme**

**Contact [david.lynn@butterflytrust.org](mailto:david.lynn@butterflytrust.org)**

**Trust Bank account: ASB 12 – 3233 – 0464934 – 50**

**100% of your donation will be applied to project costs.**

*"This hygiene programme has enabled the community to identify their own health problems. Encouraging behavioural change has been one of the biggest challenges in the programme so far. Ongoing awareness on how to prevent disease plays an important role in the revitalization of the primary health care approach at the very level of the community."*

*Butterfly Trust continues to work closely with Penama Health Promotion Officer, Markson Tabi, who will oversee the reorganisation of health promotion projects on the ground. Markson is presently engaged in relocation work with the Ministry of Health on Maewo and Pentecost.*



*HPO Markson uses the tippy-tap*

# HEALTH MATTERS

*New Zealand volunteers continue to play an active role in mentoring nurses and support staff alongside clinical consultations. As there has not been a permanent local doctor at Norsup Hospital for a number of years, volunteer clinicians provide a substantial amount of clinical assistance. They also assist with staff development, particularly training in small groups and during ward rounds. The plan is to incorporate junior doctor mentoring at Norsup Hospital. Working holistically, management staff as well laboratory, pharmacy and medical records staff are also included in the support project, as are links to both referral hospitals to advocate for the improvement of the discharge process. At the other end of the scale, weaknesses around communication and follow-up with patients who are discharged back to their communities have been identified.*



**Doctors Michael Brewer and Michael Kahan working with nurse practitioners, nurses and laboratory staff at Norsup Hospital.**

**I**n 2011, Butterfly Trust signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Vanuatu Ministries of Health and Education & Training to launch a number of projects that had taken root in the Maskelyne Islands. One of these projects involved supporting the sole nurse in charge of the dispensary by engaging volunteer doctors from New Zealand to provide clinical assistance. The medical support project has progressed over the years. Communities have benefitted from many dedicated volunteers, some of whom remain involved to this day.



It then became a question of how best to harness this opportunity to nurture a lasting impact on medical services in rural Vanuatu. Adjustments have been gradually introduced to ensure ongoing intervention provides much more than an interim solution.

Local nurses undergo a three-year training course through the Vanuatu Centre for Nursing Education followed by a year or two spent in residence at the main hospitals in Port Vila or Santo. A proportion of young and relatively inexperienced nurses are subsequently posted to rural communities. Many of these nurses are charged with a daunting task. Sole charge nurses must cope with minimal administrative or management support. Supervisory visits from senior nurses are few and far between. They face formidable challenges with poor diagnostic capability. Facilities in the dispensaries are often basic, sometimes with lack of access to water and no electricity.



Poor communications, the relatively high cost of private transport, and chronic systemic issues make referrals to higher-level facilities challenging.

The next level up from the community dispensary is the health centre. Lamap Health Centre used to have two nurse practitioners, both of whom are now retired. There were two registered nurses, one of whom left suddenly last year. The one remaining nurse lives on site, on call seven days a week. Reluctantly, she adopts the unofficial role of manager-in-charge. There are plans to assign a local midwife in the near future, and possibly a doctor, but this is as yet uncertain. Volunteers from groups including the Butterfly Trust have been providing help for some years. The Trust also facilitates a dental clinic at Lamap.

Eventually, the Trust's volunteer placements were extended to Norsup Provincial Hospital in the north of the island.

This is the referral hospital for the people of Malekula, Ambrym and Paama islands with a total combined population of approximately 30,000. There has been no resident doctor for the past four years. A team of nurse practitioners and nurses run inpatient and outpatient clinics, and organise community outreach clinics from time to time. The management team has been fragmented for the last three years, but things are slowly improving.

Medical support is currently focused on strengthening clinical, management and support services at Norsup hospital. The idea is to establish stronger relationships with the clinicians and support staff at the provincial level, and in the process highlight some of the cascading issues that stifle operations of health facilities down the hierarchy, such as those at the dispensary in the Maskelynes, and the health centre at Lamap.

Existing issues are inadequate clinical supervision, lack of opportunities for continuous education and upskilling, lack of a proper patient discharge process, substandard staff accommodation and so on.

The framework exists but, as pointed out by a senior management staff member, because there are problems at every loop and link in the network, the entire canvas simply unravels and nothing gets resolved quickly.

Gaining a clearer understanding of some of the issues does help, although the Trust is also wary that an outsider's opinion, however well-intentioned is not necessarily the best solution. The Trust is determined to maintain and constantly reinforce relationships at every level from the community upwards. The best outcome, we believe, is for local solutions to be derived and implemented, however long that takes.



*In 2017, the Trust facilitated research and consultation into the viability of introducing palliative care as a component of clinical and community-based care in Vanuatu. The consultations included introductory workshops in palliative care for nurses at Vila Central Hospital. Consultation visits with members of the Shefa Provincial Health team to Paunagisu Health Centre on North Efate took place. The Trust is currently working with MOH and Shefa Provincial Health on a palliative care pilot. This project is still in the early stages, as working through local processes takes time.*



Capacity building and mentoring to improve clinical skills, laboratory capability, leadership skills and team work.



*"You cannot hope to build a better world without improving individuals. We all must work for our own improvement, and at the same time share a general responsibility for all humanity." ~ Marie Curie*

**Experienced general practitioners, specialists in rural hospital medicine, nurse practitioners, laboratory technicians and practice managers who would like to be a part of a long term project to support the development of Norsup Provincial Hospital, please contact David and Lynn on [david.lynn@butterflytrust.org](mailto:david.lynn@butterflytrust.org).**

**Due to a number of challenges, one of which is around logistics and documentation, a period of 4 weeks or more would be ideal. However, if you are interested and can afford less than 4 weeks, we would still like to hear from you.**





# Education Matters Too

## Working with the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training

*The latest iteration of the Trust's Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education & Training runs until mid-2022. We outline the work which is continuing under this MOU below.*



*The relationship between the Maskelyne Islands, the Butterfly Trust and Pikinini Playtime School (PP) in Port Vila goes back to 2010. Paths crossed when sailing yachts McDiver (PP) and Rireana (the Trust), both involved in community health projects, converged at Sangalai Harbour in the Maskelynes. Improving the quality of early childhood and primary teaching in South Malekula is the latest step in this partnership. PP provides the technical expertise while the Trust and the Maskelynes' community join forces to coordinate and sponsor teacher development workshops.*

**R**ight from the very beginning, education was the catalyst. Helping to improve access to secondary school for children from the Maskelynes was the impetus behind the school fee subsidy scheme and more recently, academic and hardship scholarship awards. The secondary school fee support scheme is now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year. These cash grants have supported a number of students who have reached Years 13 and 14. One of the earliest recipients, Peter Kamsel from Pellongk Village, was awarded a government scholarship to further tertiary studies at Fiji National University. Peter is currently in his second year of a degree in Environmental Science.

Over the years, the Maskelynes Education Support Project widened to include early childhood education with a particular focus on improving

teachers' skills and empowering local kindergarten committees.

The kindergartens in the Maskelynes were the first to become involved. Teachers were mentored by teaching staff from Pikinini Playtime who provided skills and resource development on site. Repeat visits by Pikinini Playtime teachers were organised to reinforce lessons taught. Meanwhile, the PP Port Vila campus

grew from being a kindergarten and childcare centre to a primary school catering for Years 1 to 6.

Despite dealing with a burgeoning school role and navigating through multiple responsibilities in their roles as directors and principal, Tony and Carol Batten are staunchly dedicated to extending opportunities to teachers and students outside the capital. It has been a naturally harmonious fit. Not only is the Trust partial towards access to education, it is also continuously exploring ways to address the standard and quality of teaching. By working together, this could be a pathway to bridging that gap.



**Group activities in the classroom and out in the field (left and overleaf). Kindergarten and primary school teachers from South Malekula attended a development workshop in the Maskelynes in July.**



The Maskelynes' community has been warmly receptive. For the first time this year, the teachers' workshop was extended to other schools and kindergartens in South Malekula. A total of 48 teachers representing 24 schools and kindergartens participated in a 2-day workshop hosted by the Maskelynes' Sangalai Primary School.

Families of scholarship recipients donated local produce for meals while the Trust's support group and committee from the Maskelynes worked tirelessly on the logistics around accommodation, transport and catering.

Malampa ECCE coordinator, Pelau Michael and the School Improvement Officer for South Malekula schools, Ansen Veremaito also participated in the two most recent workshops.

Monitoring visits to individual schools and kindergartens to reinforce concepts presented at these workshops are also in the pipeline, as is further in-depth engagement with the Malampa Education Office of the MOET.

The intent is to collaborate further with MOET, augmenting existing training, challenging teachers to unearth creative insight, and think more laterally.

*"I hope to see changes and differences carried out in teaching practice as the teachers have learnt additional strategies apart from other education workshops organised by MOET."*

**Pelau Michael, Malampa Early Childhood and Care Coordinator**

## Strengthening local partnerships

The Trust has worked with and for the Maskelyne Islands' community from the very beginning – it is the Trust's oldest partner. Nurturing latent skills and encouraging locals to gradually take over is part of the long term plan to 'hand over the reins'. There is the suggestion of setting up a local education trust fund to take over from the Trust's scholarship scheme. As well as distributing and collecting the school fees scholarship applications and advising on the awards, the committee has helped coordinate training for the local teachers, assisted people to travel to Lamap for dental treatment, and also run local fundraising events to supplement the work of the Trust.

### THANK YOU

*to all our donors both individual and corporate, who contributed to the health and education programmes mentioned in this newsletter.*

*If you would like your name associated with any particular programme by way of sponsorship, please discuss this with us.*





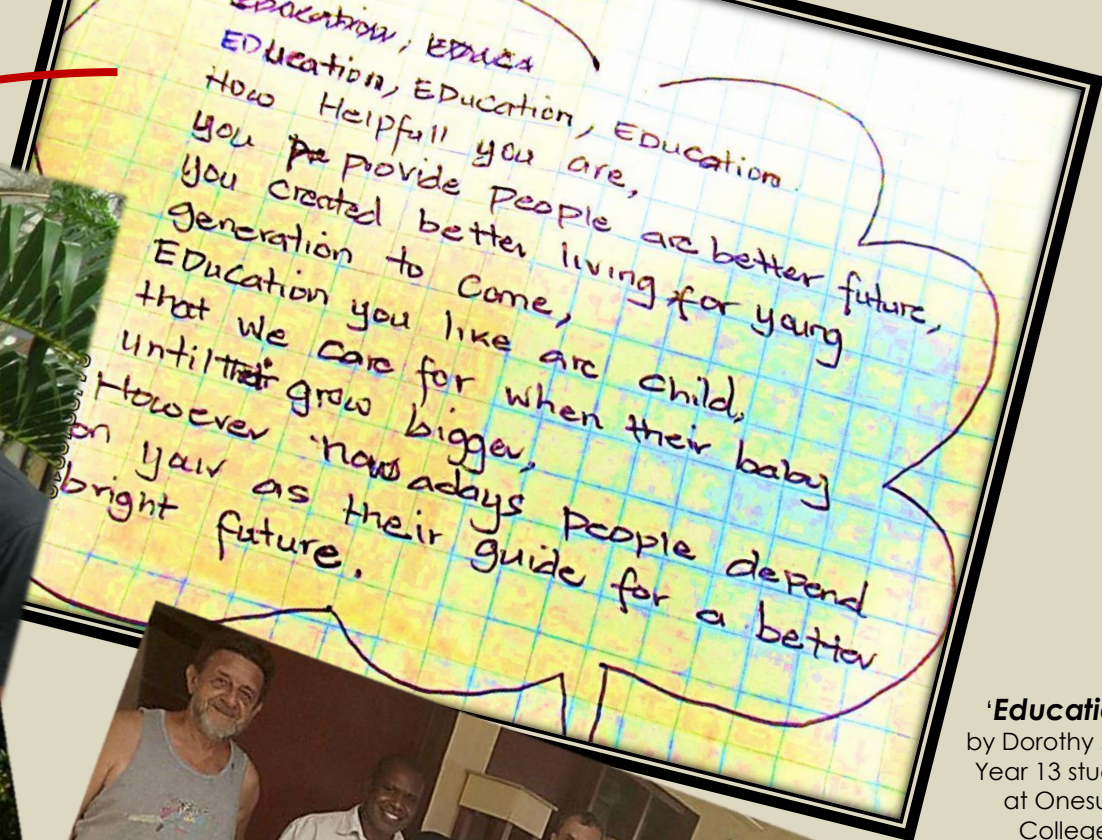


Lissing

Dorothy

Lindong

Jerel



# 'Education'

by Dorothy John,  
Year 13 student  
at Onesua  
College

We caught up with these scholarship recipients in Port Vila recently. Nice lunch and 'storian' time!



Many thanks to Auckland City Football Club for donating footballs and uniforms. Pascal from Vanuatu Ecotours (above middle) helped with distribution to Loanatom Secondary School (above), Iwel, Imaru, Lamenaure, Enkataley and Lamlu Schools on Tanna.

Football team from Aulua, Malekula (left) also received uniforms.



**B**utterfly Trust continues to facilitate dental and oral health promotion activities in South Malekula. The aim of the Trust's dental programme is to improve access to, and quality of, dental care for remote communities. A primary component of the programme is the integration of treatment with screenings and education for the long term improvement of oral health status in these communities. Since 2013, the Trust has been committed to the incremental development of a basic dental service at Lamap Health Centre in partnership with the Malampa Provincial Health team at Norsup and the Ministry of Health.

# *Dental and Oral Health Programme for South Malekula*



'Brashem tut' (toothbrushing)  
at St Pierre Chanel Primary  
School, Lamap in July 2018.





**T**oothbrushing in Schools – Daily '**brashem tut**' was established in Luwoi Primary School on Akhamb last year while schools in Lamap and the Maskelynes were encouraged to begin similar activities this year. Under the overall oversight and guidance of the MOH's Oral Health Unit, the Trust is currently working with Malampa Health, Malampa Education Office and several school principals in South Malekula to support a gradual introduction of the Health Promoting Schools Programme in selected schools in the area. This is a long term plan to encourage a uniform approach towards oral health as well as a variety of other health issues under the MOH's 'Healthy Island' strategy and vision.



**2017:** In **May**, Dr Mackenzie Sitobata from Malampa Province and assistant Pascal Wilson led a dental outreach to Lamap. Despite the disruptions caused by Cyclone Donna, they provided much-needed pain relief and some restorative treatment to people in the immediate vicinity and beyond. In **July**, a joint team of dental practitioners from Vila Central Hospital and a private practice in Port Vila, Novodental, provided dental screening, treatment and education to the people of Southeast Malekula, also based at Lamap. In **September**, a team of practitioners from Port Vila and New Zealand, jointly led by New Zealand dental therapist, Celeste Compton, and local dentist Dr Mackenzie Sitobata, transported portable equipment to the remote island of Akhamb which lies off the southern coast of Malekula. It is a difficult and expensive trip in small, open boats for the people of **Akhamb** to travel to Lamap for treatment, so we decided to take the clinic to them. Head teacher of Akhamb Primary School, Iven Meltely, worked closely with dispensary nurse Joshua Kalvanu and nurse aide, Haidriv Frank. They ran a smooth operation which also benefitted nearby communities of Farun and Hokai. Thanks to the Chiefs and Mamas of Akhamb, the team had a memorable time, enjoying the warmth and hospitality of the host community.





**2018:** Repeat visits to follow-up on previous screenings and reinforce oral health and hygiene messages are built into the programme. In July, the team consisting of Dr Wellin Jerety (Vila Central Hospital), Bob Natuman (PCV Health, Port Vila), Pascal Wilson (Norsup Hospital, Malekula), Celeste Compton and Dee Hollingsworth (both from New Zealand) returned to the Maskelynes. The previous visit was in 2016. Dr Wellin and Bob were kept busy looking after adult patients, while Celeste, Dee and Pascal tended to screening, education and urgent extractions at Sangalai Primary and Secondary Schools. An oral health awareness session was organised by dispensary nurse aide Angela Kali at Pellongk. The Trust's support team in the Maskelynes subsequently coordinated boat and truck transport for patients requiring restorative care at Lamap the following week. Lamap schools and kindergartens also received examinations, education and treatment.



In October 2018, a second team of New Zealand and local practitioners will once again make their way to Lamap. Three more schools are scheduled to be screened. This time, dental and oral health activities will be combined with WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) education in schools and communities.

In partnership with the Neglected Tropical Diseases Unit at the MOH and Malampa Health Promotion Officer, the WASH team is planning to bolster previous community awareness exercises in Yaws prevention.

(see BT Newsletter via link on Yaws surveillance support provided in 2013).



***The Trust continues to work with its primary partners - MOH, MOET, Malampa Provincial Health, Vila Central Hospital and Northern Provincial Hospital to support the transitioning process in line with national strategies and programmes. The dental support project could not thrive without the following additional partners and supporters, both local and offshore:***

***Novodental and PCV Health, both from Port Vila,  
for their ongoing partnership with personnel and technical expertise.***

***The following organisations and dental suppliers that have donated or subsidised funds and product for clinical operations:***

***Oral Health Unit of MOH Vanuatu  
Newton Wickham Auckland Dental Association Trust (NWADAT) and Dr Jonathan Cole  
Perla Dental Supplies NZ  
Eagle Protect NZ  
Acer Dental Supplies NZ  
GC Australasia  
Shop Dental NZ***

***New Zealand Dental Industry (NZTI). NZTI is a special interest group of the Medical Technology Association of New Zealand (MTANZ). NZTI invited the Trust to be one of four charities represented at the Dental Expo held in Auckland in May 2018.***

***[www.mtanz.org.nz](http://www.mtanz.org.nz)***



## Please donate to the Butterfly Trust

We can't do this work alone. If you like what we do and how we do it, please donate. We work with some of the poorest communities on the planet.

Reasons you may like to consider when donating:

- All our projects are designed to maximise local custom and culture, input and initiative.
- All our projects in Vanuatu are carried out with the knowledge and guidance of the Vanuatu Ministry of Health, and the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training.
- All our donations are spent on actual project work, not administration costs. (We meet administration costs from fundraising events.)
- All our projects are overseen by the two trustees of the Trust, Dave and Lynn.
- Accounts of all the Trust's income and expenditure are professionally prepared every year and made available at [charities.govt.nz](http://charities.govt.nz).
- We provide full reporting on the way your donation is spent in our newsletters.

**Trust Bank Account ASB 12 – 3233 – 0464934 – 50**

**Swift Code: ASBBNZ2A**

**Or donate through [www.givealittle.co.nz](http://www.givealittle.co.nz)**

*"How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world." ~*

**William Shakespeare**

# Batis Seaside Bungalows, Pellonk, Maskelyne Islands



This colourful mural greeted the visiting dental team in July. We are very touched by Sethric's gesture! We love supporting local businesses as much as possible. Sethric and his wife Liman have looked after Butterfly Trust groups Since 2012.

Owned and operated by Sethric and Liman Phillip  
Phone: +678 775 1463 / 594 3885

Aside from accommodation and delicious aelan kakae, Sethric arranges transport and organises local tours, including 'swimming with the dugong' experience.. (see below)



Click on the green 'play' icon to view underwater footage of a family of Maskelyne dugongs seen around Sakao Island in July 2018, courtesy of a Japanese wildlife enthusiast. Sethric organises snorkelling and dugong tours from Batis Seaside Bungalows.



**FACT-** The Maskelyne area is home to the dugong (or sea cow) - large numbers live in the sheltered inlets feeding on the abundant seagrass