


# Vanuatu







# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF MARINE RESOURCES FOR WOMEN AND LISTENING TO THEIR VOICES IN DECIDING ON HOW THESE MARINE RESOURCES SHOULD BE GOVERNED FOR SUSTAINABLE USE

Thank you to all the people in the Lekan in North-West Malekula, Vanuatu, who helped us with this research. This is their story.

The researcher was Polly Walker-Dora assisted by Frances

ANDASTANEM IMPOTENS  
BLONG OL RISOS BLONG  
SOLWOTA LONG OL WOMAN  
MO LISEN LONG VOIS BLONG  
OLGETA BLONG TEKEM  
DESISEN ABAOT HAO YUMI  
SUD MANEJEM OL RISOS  
BLONG SOLWOTA LONG WAN  
SASTENEBOL IUS

Tank yu long ol pipol blong vilij blong Lekan long Not-West Malekula long Vanuatu we oli helpem yumi wetem risej ia. Storian ia hemi storian blong olgeta.

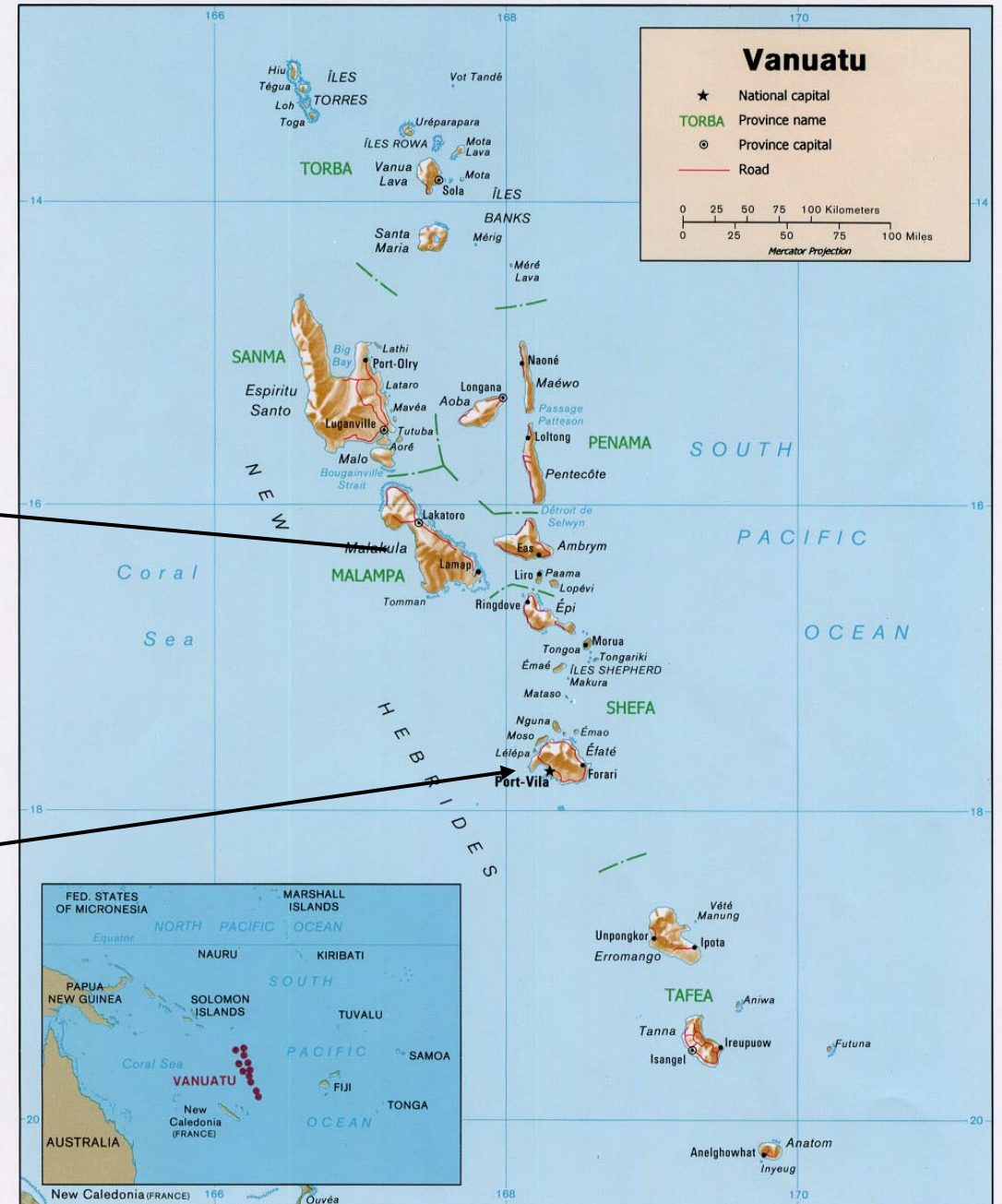
Riseja ia Polly Walker-Dora mo Frances i help blong mekem.



# FIELD WORK IN VANUATU

Lekan Village  
North West  
Malekula

Sunae Village,  
Moso Island,  
West Efate







the road leading into Lekan  
village, Northwest Maleku



# What did we want to know?

- How do women use marine resources?
- Why are they important to them?
- What rules control the use of marine resources?
- Are women included in discussions and decisions about these rules?
- Did you think they should be?





# Wanem nao yumi wantem save?

- Hao ol woman oli stap iusum ol risos blong solwota?
- From wanem hemi impoten long olgeta?
- Wanem rul hemi kontrolem ius blong ol risos blong solwota?
- Ol woman oli tekem pat long ol diskasen mo desisen abaot ol rul ia o no?
- Did you think they should be? Yu ting se oli sud bi?
- 



# Lekan Village

Lekan/Malua Bay  
approximate location  
(Northwest A)







the river that runs into Malua



# Introduction to Lekan Village

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- Polly reached the village by flying from Port Vila to Norsup and then by road which took about 2 and half hours
- There is a population of around 500 in the Lekan/Mulua area
- Houses are mostly made using local building materials, wood with bamboo woven walls and natangura roofing. There are a few concrete houses in the village and some houses that are half made of concrete and half local materials.
- There is a large store built out of concrete located centrally in the village that sells very basic supplies (rice, tinned meats, small treats, batteries, mosquito coils etc..).
- There is a small clinic available in the community but the nearest hospital is in Norsup – 2.5 hours away.
- There are at least three churches in Lekan village and an additional Church in Malua Bay. These are all within walking distance.
- There is a primary school in Lekan village and a secondary school located in Malua Bay. These are SDA Church schools. The children access these schools by foot, although there are boarding facilities at the secondary school for children who live further away. The primary school in Lekan village is located up a steep hill and children who live down the bottom of the village need to walk up that hill every day to get there. Children from nearby villages may walk 2-3 km's each way to get to school.
- There are small '20vt' roadside markets within the village. There are other roadside markets that sell vegetables to passers by during the day. The nearest larger market is in Lakatoro accessed by public transport vehicles – to hire the vehicle for a one-way trip it is 12,000 VT (24,000VT return). For a shared trip in the back of a truck with lots of other passengers – it is about 1000vt per person.
- There is a paramount Chief and who governs an area that includes about three villages. He works with village councils, made up of male community leaders. There is also an Area Council for the Northwest A area that sits above the village councils and feeds into the Provincial Government structures.



# Introdaksen abaot vilij blong Lekan

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- Polly hemi kasem vilij afta we hemi flae from Port-Vila kasem Norsup mo afta hemi tekem trak mo i tekem 2 haoa mo haf.
- Populesen blong Lekan/Malua eria hemi kolosap 500 pipol.
- Kolosap evri haos oli usum lokol materiol, wud wetem wol long bambu mo ruf long natangura. I gat fiu haos long simen mo sam haos oli mekem haf simen haf lokol materiol.
- I gat wan bigfala stoa we oli mekem long simen we i stap long metel blong vilij mo oli salem ol besik samting (raes, tin mit, smol swit, bateri, moskito koil...).
- I gat wan smol klinik we i avelebol long komuniti be hospital we i kolosap moa emi stap long Norsup we emi 2.5 hawa longwe.
- I gat minimum 3 jioj long vilij blong Lekan mo wan mo long Malua Bay. Evri jioj ia oli stap long wan distens we yu save wokobaot iko long hem.
- I gat wan praemeri skul long Lekan mo wan sekenderi long Malua Bay. OL skul ia blong SDA Jioj. Ol pikinini oli wolkbaot nomo blong aksesem skul mo i gat dormitori long sekundari skul blong ol pikinini we oli slip longwe. Praemeri skul long Lekan i stap long wan hil mo ol pikinini we oli slip daon long hil ia oli mas klimb everi dei blong kasem skul. Ol pikinini blong ol vilij kolosap oli mas wokbaot 2-3 km blong kasem skul.
- I gat wan rodmaket blong 20 VT long vilij. I gat sam narafala rodmaket i stap blong salem vejetebol long olgeta we i stap pass. Bigfala maket i stap long Lakatoro mo yu save aksesem long trak. Blong rentem wan trak bae i kostem 12.000 VT (24.000VT go/kam bak). Long wan trip wetem ol narafala pasenja bae i kostem 1.000VT long wan man/woman.
- I gat wan paramon Jif we i stap lukaotem tri vilij. Hemi wok wetem ol kansel blong ol vilij we ol male lida oli memba blong em. I gat wan Eria Kansel long Notwest A eria we stap antap long kansel blong vilij mo we i fidim stakja blong Provinsiol Gavman.





shoreline, Lekan village

Polly asked  
these questions,  
and you helped  
us by answering  
them

### Context

- What are the main marine resources/ecosystems you use (eg reef, river, mudflats, mangroves, other)?
- What do you use these for ?
- Do these ecosystems and resources hold any cultural significance to you as a woman?
- Do you use marine resources for any other purposes?
- Are marine resources important for feeding the family?
- Have you noticed any changes in the marine resources in the last 20 years?
- How have these changes affected for livelihood as a woman?
- Do you get these marine resources yourself, if not who does?
- In your experience is taking food from the sea/reef women's work, man's work or both?
- Is the person who does this work (woman/man) expected to do this work by the community, or is it done by choice?

### Control

- Are there any restriction on what you can catch/take?
- What are these and when do they apply?
- Do these restrictions apply to both men and women?
- If not, how do they differ?
- Are there restrictions that solely apply to women with regards to gleaning/harvesting/fishing?
- Who decides on these restrictions or allowances?
- Who imposes/enforces these?
- Can anyone from outside this village fish/use marine resources available to the village?
- If not anyone, who can?



# Polly hemi askem ol kwesten ia mo yu helpem mifala blong ansarem

## Kontex

- Wanem marine risos yufala i stap usum (olsem rif, riva, mud, natongtong, eni narafala?)
- Yu stap usum olgeta risos ia blong mekem wanem?
- Olgeta ikosistem mo risos ia oli gat kaljaral meaning long yu olsem wan woman?
- Yu stap usum ol marine risos ia long eni narafala pepos?
- Ol marine risos oli important blong fidim famili ?
- Long las 20 yia, yu bin notisim eni jenis long ol marine risos?
- Hao olgeta jenis ia oli afektem laef blong ol woman?
- Yu stap kasem ol marine risos ia yu wan? Sapos no, hu ia i stap kasem?
- Folem experiens blong yu, fasin blong tekem kakae blong solwota mo rif hemi wan wok blong ol man, blong ol woman o tugeta?
- Man o woman we hemi mekem wok ia, hemi mekem from komuniti hemi expektem hem blong mekem o hemi joes blong hem?

## Kontrol

- I gat eni restriksen long wanem yu save tekem o kasem?
- Ol restriksen ia oli wanem mo wetaem yu mas folem?
- Ol restriksen oli applae long man mo woman?
- Sapos no, wanem diferens i stap?
- I gat eni restriksen i aplae long ol woman nomo abaot kolektem/arvestem/fisin?
- Huia i stap disaed long ol restriksen ia o ol aloens?
- Huia i putum mo enfosem olgeta?
- Ol man o woman aotsaed long vilij ia, oli save fising o usum ol marine risos blong vilij?
- Sapos no, hu i save usum?



## We also asked about Customary law

- Are the rules about fishing/reef harvesting written down?
- How do you know about them?
- If they are custom, who decides on the custom?
- Has the custom changed much?
- If the government comes and says we must use custom to manage resources sustainably, who do they speak to/ who would they speak to?
- Have you ever been asked for your opinion on the restrictions on fishing/ harvesting?
- Do you think women have a different understanding of custom from men?
- Are women asked what they know about custom?
- Do you think they should be?
- Would you be prepared to share your experience of customary control of marine resources with others?



# Mifala i askem tu abaot ol Loa blong Kastom

- Ol rul blong fising o arvestem rif oli raetem daon?
- Hao yu save abaot olgeta?
- Sapos i gat kastom, hu i tekem ol kastom desisen?
- Kastom i bin jenis bigwan?
- Sapos gavman hemi kam mo i askem blong yumi usum kastom blong manejem ol risos long wan sastenebol fasin, bae oli toktok long hu?
- Oli bin aksem tingting blong yu abaot ol restriksen long fisin/arvestin?
- Yu ting se ol woman oli gat wan difren andestanding long kastom pitim ol man?
- Oli askem ol woman abaot wanem oli save long saed blong kastom?
- Yu ting se oli sud askem?
- Yu ting se yu redi blong serem experiens blong yu long saed blong kastom kontrol blong ol marine risos wetem ol narafala pipol?



# What did you tell us?

- *There are two types of seaweed that grows on the reef. One is red and the other one is green. We sometimes add them to our meals, or we can pack them in bamboo and we use them as a medicine to help our bodies.*
- *I use the reef mostly. I go fishing and I collect crabs and shells*
- *Some people collect sea water in containers to use as salt in their cooking.*
- *Sometimes I go fishing just to feed the family, sometimes I go fishing to sell them. Sometimes I go fishing for the community if there is a school fundraising or church fundraising as my contribution towards the fundraising.*
- *I use the sea for custom medicine. Sometimes I get sea water to use as salt on food*
- *When we go fishing or gather shellfish it is mostly for eating. Sometimes when there is extra, then we will sell them. But I would say that we mostly use fish and shellfish for food.*
- *I go fishing or I collect shells – I use these to make laplap to sell. Sometimes I eat them but mostly I use it to sell.*
- *Since we have 20vt road markets, I sometimes use it for food but I use it for selling also.*

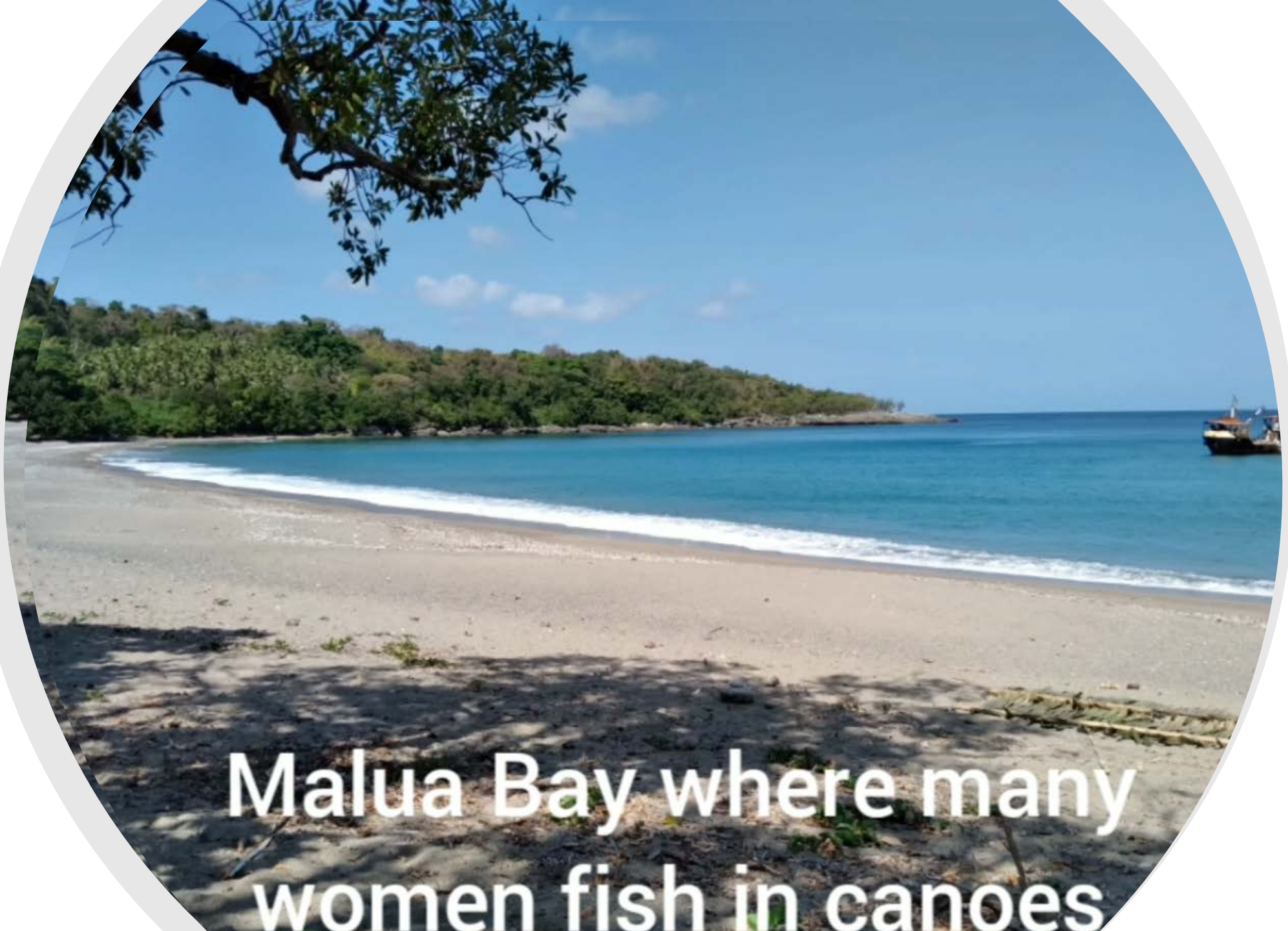




# Yufala i bin talem wanem long yumi?

- *I gat tu taep blong siwid we i sap gru long rif. Wan emi red mo narafala emi grin. Samtaem yumi adem olgeta long kakae blong yumi o yumi putum long bambu mo yumi usum olsem medisin blong helpem bodi blong yumi.*
- *Mi usum rif mostli. Mi go kasem fis mo mi kolektem krab mo sel.*
- *Sam pipol oli kolektem solwota long kontena blong usum olsem sol blong kuk wetem.*
- *Samtaem mi go kasem fis blong fidim famili nomo, somtaem blong salem fis. Samtaem mi go kasem fis blong komuniti sapos i gat wan fanresin blong skul o blong jioj olsem kontribuesen long fanresin ia.*
- *Mi usum solwota blong kastom medisin. Samtaem mi kasem solwota blong usum olsem sol long kakae.*
- *Taem mi go kasem fis o mi go kolektem selfis emi mostli blong kakae. Samtaem taem mi kasem extra mi go salem olgeta. Be mostli mi usum fis o selfis blong kakae.*
- *Mi go kasem fis o mi go kolektem sel. Mi usum olgeta blong putum long laplap blong salem. Samtaem mi kakae olgeta be kolosap everitaem mi usum blong salem.*
- *Since yumi gat rod maket blong 20VT, samtaem mi usum olgeta blong kakae be mi usum olgeta blong salem tu.*





**Malua Bay where many  
women fish in canoes**



# The importance of marine resources

- *Fish is a meat we can add to our food – especially in the dry season when we don't have cabbage.*
- *I would say that the fish in the sea is a big part of our lives.*
- *They are important for our food.*
- *Yes, we need fish a lot. Because it's a meat that everyone likes. Shells and other meat not too much – but fish – everyone likes.*
- *The sea itself is a kind of medicine – you can make people drink it to help with all sorts of ailments*
- *I use the sea for tooth ache. I get sea water, boil it and rinse my teeth*
- *Fish is important – we can also make money to feed the family through fish.*
- *it's important for community gatherings – we use fish as the main source of meat.*
- *It's important for family life... in terms of food for the family.*
- *It's important for us and for our children to make our body's feel strong enough to work. I can't catch a cow or if I don't have chicken or something like that, I can get fish for my family.*
- *Fish is the main thing that we use to eat during the dry season to replace cabbage and other vegetables when they are not available*
- *We believe that the sea can destroy evil spirits. For example, if someone wants to do something bad to or is jealous of another person, and they might use black magic to attack them, we can sprinkle sea salt around the yard to destroy the evil power. Another thing I noticed is, my father and grandfather would sing to the sea to heal any sickness in the body. For example, if someone ate a fruit or any other type of food that has been half eaten by evil spirits, this would cause stomach pain or fever that medicines from the hospital can't cure, I saw them singing to the sea water in a cup before the sick person could drink and they would be healed.*



# Impotens blong risos blong solwota

- *Fis emi wan mit we yumi save adem long kakae espesiali long taem blong drae sisen taem i no gat kabis.*
- *Bae mi talem se fis blong solwota emi wan bigfala pat blong laef blong yumi.*
- *Oli impoten long kakae blong yumi.*
- *Yes yumi nidim fulap fis. From emi wan mit we evriwan i laekem. Sel mo ol narafal mit i no tumas be fis everiwan i laekem.*
- *Solwota emi wan kaen medisn. Yu save mekem pipol i drink blong helpem olgeta wetem ol difdiferen siknes.*
- *Mi kasem solwota, mi boelem mo mi rinsim tut blong mi wetem.*
- *Fis emi impoten. Yumi save mekem mane blong fidim famili wetem fis.*
- *Emi impoten taem komuniti i mit. Yumi usum fis olsem men sos blong mit.*
- *Emi impoten long laef blong famili...long saed blong kakae blong famili.*
- *Emi impoten long yumi mo long ol pikinini blong mekem bodi blong yumi i strong inaf blong wok. Mi no save kasem wan buluk o sapos mi nogat faol o samting olsem, mi save kasem fis blong famili.*
- *Fis emi men samting we yumi usum blong kakae taem long drae sison blong riplesem kabis mo ol narafala vejetebol taem yumi no gat.*
- *Mi biliv se solwota emi save kilim ol ivil spirit. Exampol sapos wan man i wantem mekem wan samting nogud o emi jalus, maet bae i usum blak majik blong atakem olgeta yumi save sakem sol blong solwota araon long yad blong kilim ivil pawa. Wan narafala samting we mi notisim emi papa blong mi o apu blong mi bae oli save singsing long solwota blong hilim eni sik. Exampol hemi sapos wan man i kakae wan frut o wan narafala kaen kakae we wan ivil spirit i bin kakae haf, bae emi mekem bel i so o fiva we medisn blong hospital i save no save kilim, long taem ia oli go singsing long solwota, putum solwota long wan glas mo givim long sik person blong em i drink mo olsem emi save hil.*





# Why are marine resources important?

- *The sea has many uses, we sometimes use it for our traditional cooking. For example, store sea water in bamboo for 3 days to a week and then we make laplap and fill it into the bamboo. It is a traditional way of preparing meals.*
- *Also, we use the sea for water therapy, especially after a hard days' work in the garden to relieve our muscles so we don't get too tired or have sore bodies.*
- *Sometimes we gather shells from the sea shore or go fishing.*



# From wanem risos blong solwota hemi impoten?

*Solwota i gat fulap ius blong hem. Samtaem yumi usum long kastom kaka. Wan exampol, yumi storem solwata long bambu long tri dei kasem wan wik mo yumi mekem laplap mo fulumap i go long bambu. Emi wan tradisionol wei blong preperem kaka.*

*Mo tu yumi usum solwota osem wan wota terapi espesiali afta wan hard dei blong wok long garen blong mekem mase i relax o blong yumi no gat so.*

*Samtaem yumi kolektem sel long so o yumi go kasem fis.*



a woman and her daughter  
patiently wait for a fish to take



# There are some restrictions on what you can take and where you can go

- *Eel fishes and turtles are not allowed to be harmed while at the sea/beach. This restriction is temporary. There may be specific times when the chief will let people catch them*
- *Things that I am not allowed to harvest are sea cucumbers. We are not allowed to kill them. Because if we do, it can poison the fishes.*
- *We are not allowed to take sea cucumber because we think they protect the reef and keep it clean and stop the fish from going bad.*
- *Yes. In this village, our religion only allows us to eat fish. As for others, if their religion permits them to eat anything then they can have shells, crabs and other marine life as well.*
- *Shellfish on the reef – we can't take these – and crabs. Also we can't take turtles (or turtle eggs)*





# I gat sam restriksen long wanem yu save tekem o wea yu save go

- *Ifis mo total yumi no alao blong harmem olgeta taem ol stap long solwota/bij.*
- *Mi no gat raet blong arvestem sikukumba. Yumi not gat raet blong kilim olgeta. From sapos yumi mekem emi save posenem fis.*
- *Yumi no gat raet blong tekem sikukumba from yumi ting se oli protektem rif mo oli kipim rif i klin mo mekem se fis i no posen.*
- *Long vilij ia, relijen blong yumi i alaoem yumi blong kakae fis. Long ol narafala, sapos relijen blong olgeta i alao oli save tekem sel, krab mo ol narafala laef blong solwata.*
- *Selfis long rif mo krab yumi save tekem olgeta. Be yumi no save tekem total (o eg blong total).*





Public Awareness blong Protectem  
Mo mendenem Natural River  
mo Solwater Resources blong  
Yumi, mo ol Surrounding Environment.  
Yumi everyone i must foletem Several  
Condatons olsem se -

- 1 ▶ You allow blong Swim long River mo Solwater.
- 2 ▶ You allow blong Fishing, dive mo Swim long solwater.
- 3 ▶ Tabu blong Dive long River Sutum
  - a) Fish
  - b) Naura
  - c) Namarai etc..
- 4 ▶ Tabu blong Sakem toti long River mo Solwater also No Sakem toti side long Riverbank mo Costal area disem
  - a) Plastics (Paper/Cane)
  - b) Tins
  - c) Iron
  - d) Diaper etc..
- 5 ▶ No Katem Trees Side long River -

Thankyou tumas long attentation mo Understanding blong Yumi everyone.  
"Tugeta Yumi Protectem & Mendenem Natural Environment Resource blong Yumi"

You Save Pem wan Faem Sapos You "No" Respectem olgeta Rules Ya.  
Thankyou:

a notice put up by the village council about rules when using



# Who is bound by the restrictions and how do they know about them?

- The restrictions apply to everyone
- *Once the information (of the ban) reaches us, we let our children know about it so that they know what to get and what not to. It is everyone's responsibility to make sure these restrictions are followed for everyone's benefit.*
- *The rules are not written. It is only what the chief says. Whatever the chief says, everyone must follow.*
- *If (outsiders) come and there is a Namele leaf on the reef, this means they have stopped fishing and so they would need to come and ask permission first. But if there are no Namele leaves on the reef, they can just come.*
- *We [villagers] tell each other about it. Because it is not written down anywhere for people to read.*





# Huia i mas respektem ol restriksen ia mo hao nao oli save abaot ol restriksen ia?

- Ol restriksen oli blong evriwan.
- *Taem infomesen abaot tabu i kasem yumi, yumi letem ol pikinini oli save olsem ia oli save wanem oli save tekem mo wanem oli no save tekem. Hemi responsibiliti blong evriwan blong mekem sua se ol restriksen ia evriwan i folem long benefit blong evriwan.*
- *Ol rul oli no raetem daon. Hemi wanem nomo we jif i talem. Wateva jif i talem, everiwan i mas folem.*
- *Sapos ol aotsaeda i kam mo i gat lif namele long rif, i minim se fising i stop mo olgeta bae oli mas kam blong askem permisen festaem. Be sapos i no gat lif namele long rif, oli save kam nomo.*
- *Yumi ol man long vilij yumi stap talem long yumi abaot emia. From oli no raetem daon blong ol pipol i ridim.*







a woman preparing to go  
fishing off the reef



# Who decides on the restrictions?

- *Our chief and in our church, our church leaders have said the rules are in accordance with the church rules.*
- *The land owners and the area chief would decide on the custom laws then later inform the people if an area is being reserved or if there is a specific marine creature that needs protection*
- *The chiefs and the leaders of the community would decide on that.*
- *Some restrictions are made by the chief and some others by the leaders in the community.*
- *In this area, there is only one person who usually stops people from harvesting marine life, but it is not the chief.*
- *The Fisheries department in Vila inform the Chiefs on what needs to be protected. The Chiefs then inform the people and introduce a fine that a person must pay for killing protected marine life.*
- *If someone breaks a rule put by the landowner, if there is trespass the landowner would go to the Chief and then he would fine the person.*
- *The chief or a chief's assistant would be there on behalf of the chief on his absence*
- *Sometimes the leaders in the community – in a home there is a head of a family – a father or a first born son – they have the right to deal with people who break rules in the first instance.*



## Public Notice:

Vila Council i wandem letem  
Public i "Aware" Se blong Protectem  
Mo mendenem Natural River  
Mo Solwater Resources blong  
Yumi, mo ol Surrounding Environment.  
Yumi everyone i must folem Several  
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- 1▶ You allow blong Swim long River mo  
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a) Fish  
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d) Diaper etc..
- 5▶ No Katem Trees Side long River-

6▶ No Solwater,  
No boreim Trees Side long River mo  
Solwater.

7▶ Tabu blong Wash inside long River.

Thankyou tumas long Mentation mo  
Understanding blong Yumi everyone.

"Tugeta Yumi Protectem & Mendenem  
Natural Environment Resource blong  
Yumi"

You Save Pem wan Faem  
Sapos You "No" Respectem  
olgeta Rules Ya.

Thankyou:

notice put up by the village  
council about rules when using  
the river

# Huia i disaed long ol restriksen ia?

- *Ol jif mo jioj blong yumi. Ol lida blong jioj oli bin talem se ol rul ia oli stap stret wetem rul blong jioj.*
- *Ol land ona mo ol jif blong eria bae oli disaed long ol kastom loa mo afta oli infomem ol pipol sapos wan eria bae i risev o sapos i gat wan spesifik krieja blong solwota we i nidim proteksen.*
- *Ol jif mo ol lida blong komuniti bae oli disaed.*
- *Sam restriksen ol jif oli mekem sam narafala wan ol lida blong komuniti.*
- *Long eria ia, i gat wan person nomo we usuali emi stopem blong yumi arvestem laef blong solwota, be i no jif.*
- *Dipatment blong Fiseri long Vila i infomem ol Jifs long wanem oli mas protektem. Afta ol Jifs oli infomen pipol mo introdusum wan faen we wan man i mas pem sapos hemi bin kilim wan laef blong solwota we i tabu.*
- *Sapos wan man i brekem wan rul we land ona i bin putum, sapos i gat wan trespas, land ona bae i go luk jif mo afta bae i mekem hemia we i brekem rul i pem faen.*
- *Jif o asisten blong Jif bae i stap long bihaf bong Jif sapos emi no stap.*
- *Samtaem ol lida blong komuniti - long wan haos i gat hed blong famili, wan papa o fes bon son – oli gat raet blong dil wetem ol pipol we i brekem rul long fes ples.*



notice put up by the village council about rules when using the river



# What are the changes in marine resources you have noticed?

- *The village population has increased over the past years, this has also caused the number of fish to decrease over the years and it's very difficult to catch fish now.*
- *I've noticed that the sea level has changed. It does not come up to where it usually does, it seems the sea line is receding.*
- *Yes. I have noticed that it has changed a lot. Like before, it is easier to catch fish than today.*
- *It's harder than it used to be. You can go out fishing while it's still morning, but when lunch time comes, you could still have caught nothing.*
- *Yes. I've noticed that there are not as many fish as there used to be. And also, the shells that we gather are not usually as big as they used to be and are not plentiful anymore. It is also hard to catch fish now. Before, it was easier.*
- *I do think it's become harder to catch fish than before – maybe our population has grown too much.*
- *Yes so I've seen the reef grow – there are more stones growing on the reef, but with fish – they aren't as plentiful as before. Maybe because we've used too much fish for meat, because being SDA we don't eat shells, so this has reduced the numbers of fish. And we have more children who also eat fish – we are a central village – people come to use the river and also fish in the sea.*
- *Before there were lots of fish, but now that we have a larger population – fish numbers have reduced a lot.*
- *There is a difference – before there were lots of fish and lots of shells. But now there are not many fish and not many shells*
- *Yes. There have been a lot of changes. Especially with the tide. It has become stronger than the past years. With fish, it has become harder to catch them from the reef.*

# Wanem jenis long risos blong solwata yufala i bin notisim?

- *Populesen blong vilij i stap go antap mo emi kosem se namba blong fis i go daon ova long ol past yia mo emi veri had blong kasem fis naoia.*
- *Mi notisim se level blong solwota emi jenis. Hemi nomo stap kamap long ples we emi bin kamap mo i luk olsem se laen blong solwota i stap go bak.*
- *Yes. Mi bin notisim se i jenis bigwan. Olsem bifo, hemi bin isi mo blong kajem fis pitim tede.*
- *Hemi had moa pitim bifo. Yu save go fising be taem blong lunch i stap kam, yu stil no kasem wan samting yet.*
- *Yes. Mi bin notisim se i nomo gat fis olsem i bin gat. Mo tu, ol sel we yumi stap kolektem oli nomo big olsem bifo mo i nomo gat plenti. I had tu blong kasem fis naoia. Bifo i bin isi mo.*
- *Mi no ting se emi kam had moa blong kasem fis pitim bifo – mebi populesen blong yumi emi bin gro tumas.*
- *Yes mi bin luk rif i gro – i gat moa ston i gro long rif be i nomo gat tumas fis olsem bifo. Mebi from yumi bin usum tumas fis blong kakae from yumi ol SDA yumi no kakae sel so emi bin ridiusum namba blong fis. Mo yumi gat moa pikinini we i kakae fis – yumi wan sentrol vilij – pipol oli kam blong usum riva mo fis long solwata.*
- *Bifo i bin gat plenti fis be naoia yumi gat wan populesen we i bigwan moa so namba blong fis i go daon bigwan.*
- *I gat diferens. Bifo i gat fulap fis mo fulap sel. Be naoia i nomo gat tumas fis o tumas sel.*
- *Yes. I bin gat fulap jenis. Espesiali wetem taed. Emi kam strong mo ova long ol past yia. Emi kam mo hard blong kasem fis long rif.*



Do changes in marine resources have a particular impact on women?

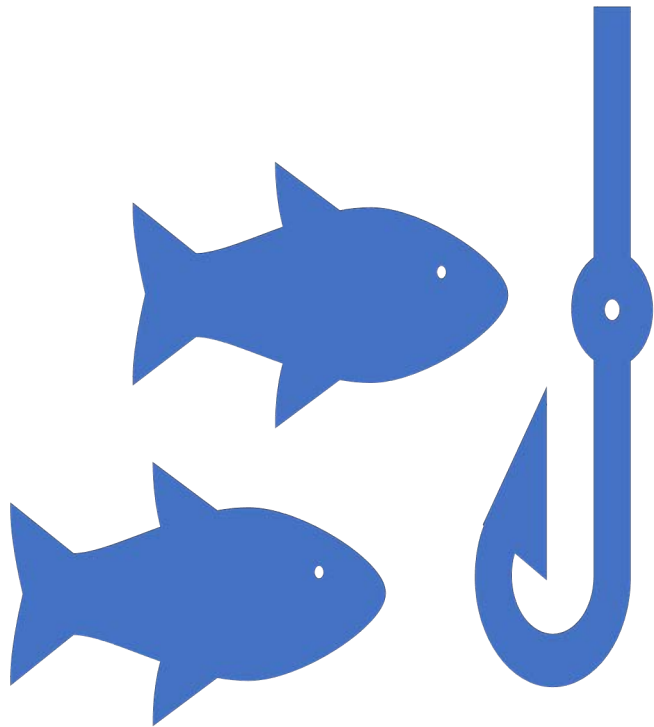




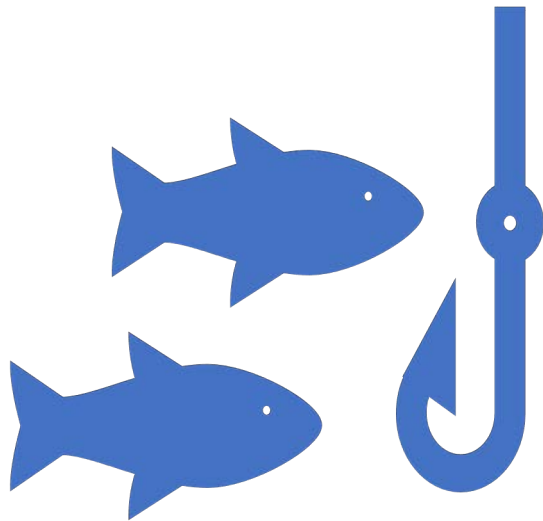
Ol risos blong solwota i gat wan spesiol impak long ol woman?







- *Yes, because when you go fishing you can only catch one or two fish to bring home. These days you have to have patience if you really want to have fish for a meal.*
- *Women are the most affected by these changes. Men can still fish a lot because they go diving where it's easier to catch fish, whereas women are no longer interested in fishing because we have to spend so much time to be able to catch fish.*
- *It is really hard. When you go fishing to find food for your family, sometimes you are lucky but sometimes you return home empty handed. It's very difficult for us.*
- *These changes make it difficult for women to provide food for the family.*
- *Yes, in relation to the time we have to spend trying to catch fish.*
- *Yes, because us women we can catch fish but other meat in the bush – we can't chase pigs or things like that, but we can fish. So if numbers go down, that affects us.*
- *When we go to the sea we have to be really patient – you might get 1, 2 or 3 fish only when you go out to go fishing and it will take some time.*
- *I think maybe just pregnant women are badly affected because they try hard to find meat. When it's hard to get and it's dry and we don't have cabbage, they find it very hard unless they can find fish or shells.*
- *It has made it difficult for women to catch fish and provide food for the family*
- *These changes affect women because women do not have a man's strength to go out in canoes when the currents are strong. Also, it has become difficult to gather shells or crabs for the family during the day. Night time is the only time when you can get these things now.*



- Yes from taem yu go fising yu save kajem wan o tu fis nomo blong karem bak long haos. Naoai yu mas gat pesiens sapos yu rili wantem kasem fis blong kakae.
- Emi rili had. Taem yu go fising blong kasem kaekae blong famili, samtaem yu laki be samtaem yu kam bak wetem nating.
- Ol jenis ia oli mekem i had blong ol woman oli provaedem kakae long famili.
- Yes from taem we yumi mas spendem blong kasem fis.
- Yes from yumi ol woman yumi save kasem fis be i no ol narafala mit long bush – yumi no save ronem pik o ol samting olsem be yumi save fising. So taem namba i go daon emi afektem yumi.
- Taem yumi go long solwota yumi rili mas save wet – maet yu kasem 1, 2 o 3 fis nomo taem yu go fising mo bae i tekem taem.
- Mi ting se onli ol woman i gat bel oli afekted bigwan from oli traе had blong faenem mit. Taem i had blong kasem mo i drae mo yumi no gat kabis, oli faenem i had unles oli save kasem faenem fis o sel.
- Ol jenis ia oli rili afektem woman. Ol man oli stil save kasem fulap fis from oli go daeva long ol ples we emi isi moa blong kasem fis, be ol woman oli no interes blong kasem fis from yu westem tumas taem blong kasem fis.
- Hemi bin mekem i had long ol woman blong kasem fis mo provaedem fis long famili.
- Ol jenis ia i afektem ol woman from oli no gat ol sem pawa blong ol man blong go aot long kenu taem ol taedt i strong. Mo tu, hemi kam had blong kolektem sel mo krab long famili long dei. Naet taem emi onli taem we yu save kasem ol samting ia.





Bringing in the canoe after  
fishing

# Whose voices are heard when it comes to the management of marine resources?

**If the government or anyone came to ask about custom in the village who would they talk to?**

- *They will have to talk to our chief.*
- *They would have speak to the Chiefs who would then pass it on to their people.*
- *They would have to speak to the land owners*
- *I think they can talk to the chiefs or the people in the area.*
- *They would need to see the Chief*
- *I think the Chief and his people*
- *They would have to talk to the chief first – then the chief would tell us*
- *The old men “ol apu”*
- *I think they would have to speak with the chief in the nakamal.*
- *The chief council is only made of men. Women are not allowed to be in the council because most of the meetings are held in the nakamal and women are not allowed in the nakamal.*

**Have you ever been asked for your opinion (as a women) about any restrictions?**

- *No. they don't consult us.*
- *it's mostly men who talk about custom. But they do tell us what we can or can't do. But with men – they talk more.*
- *No, never.*
- *No. no one has asked my opinion on that.*
- *This is the first time [I have been asked anything*
- *... men talk together in the nakamal but women aren't part of these discussions so we don't know what they talk about.*
- *No – this is the first time ever that I've talked about this*
- *Sometimes men understand custom more than women.*
- *Because the Chiefs and the men in our houses won't talk about custom in the house with the women around. But when they gather together as men in places like the nakamal – then they will talk about custom. And us women are at home so we don't hear these conversations and we don't know about what they are discussing.*



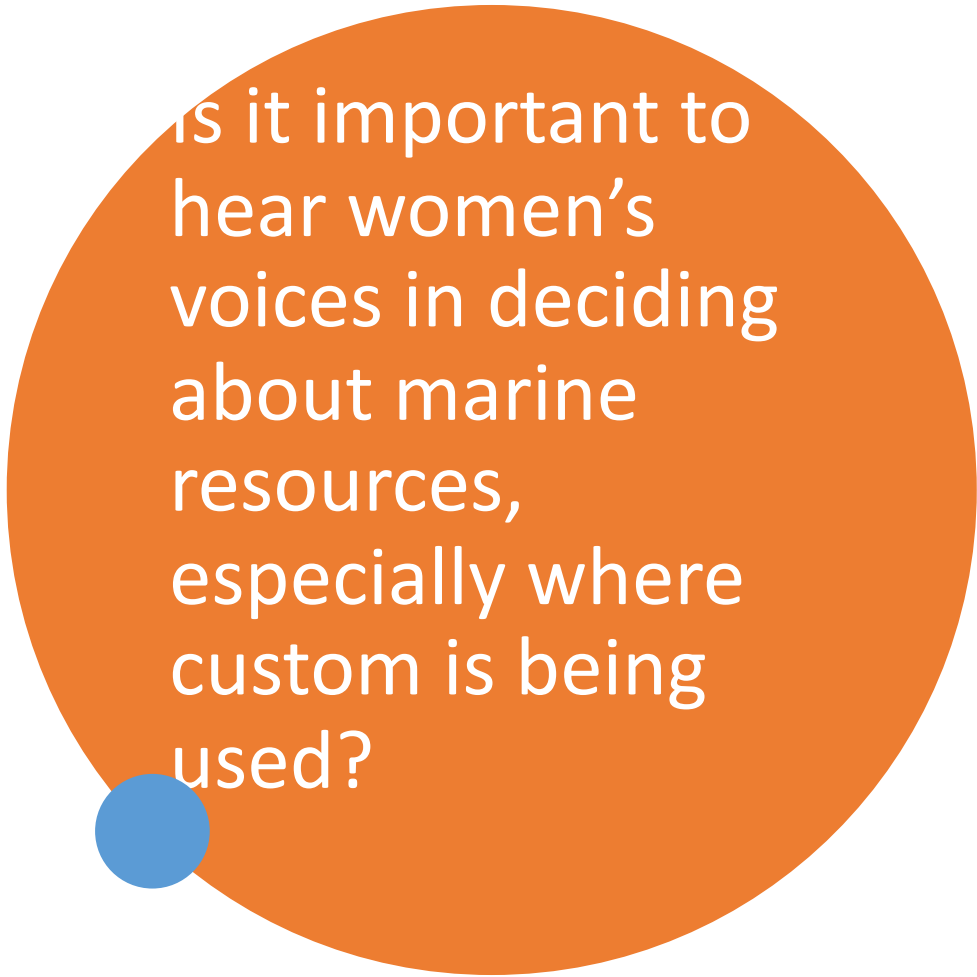
# Wanem vois oli harem taem oli stap tokabaot manajemen blong ol risos blong solwata?

## Sapos gavman mo eniwan else i kam askem abaot kastom long vilej, bae oli toktok long hu?

- *Bae oli mas toktok wetem Jif blong yumi.*
- *Bae oli toktok wetem ol Jif we bae i pasem infomesen i go long pipol blong olgeta.*
- *Bae oli mas toktok wetem land ona.*
- *Mi ting se oli save toktok wetem ol Jif o wetem ol pipol long eria.*
- *Bae oli mas toktok wetem Jif.*
- *Mi ting Jif wetem pipol.*
- *Bae oli mas toktok wetem jif festaem mo afta long Jif bae oli talem long yumi.*
- *Ol olfala man ol apu*
- *Mi ting se oli sud toktok wetem jif long nakamal.*
- *Kansel blong Jif i gat ol man nomo. Ol woman oli no gat raet long kansel from kolosap everi miting i stap long nakamal mo ol woman oli no alao long nakamal.*

## Olsem wan woman, oli bin askem tingting blong yu abaot ol restriksen ia?

- *No. Oli no konsaltem mifala.*
- *Hemi mostli ol man we i tokabaot kastom. Be oli talem long yumi wanem yumi save mekem mo wanem yumi no save mekem. Be wetem ol man oli toktok plenti.*
- *No, neva.*
- *No wan i askem tingting blong mi.*
- *Emi fes taem (we oli askem wan samting long mi)*
- *Ol man oli toktok tugeta long nakamal be ol woman oli no pat blong ol diskasen ia so yumi no save wanem oli stap tokabaot.*
- *No emi fes taem eva we mi tokbaot hemia.*
- *Samtaem ol man oli andastanem kastom moa pitim woman.*
- *From ol Jif mo ol man oli no tokabaot kastom long haos wetem ol woman araon. Be taem oli stap tugeta long ol ples olsem nakamal, long taem ia nao oli tokabaot kastom. MO yumi ol woman yumi stap long haos so yumi no harem ol toktok ia mo yumi no save wanem oli stap diskasem.*
-



Is it important to hear women's voices in deciding about marine resources, especially where custom is being used?

- *Yes, we must talk to them about it too because if they come across an area that is taboo, then they need to know that women are not allowed to go there.*
- *No, it would not be appropriate. Only the men or the chief are the right person to ask about these customs and taboos.*
- *Yes. I think its good that we talk to women about custom.*
- *Yes, I think we should talk to women because we should be aware of the rules and decisions.*
- *Yes, I think it's important to remember our custom.*
- *Yes, because women need to understand their custom.*
- *I think we should talk to women about custom – because we all have to obey the rules of custom – men and women – but most of the time we women don't know much [about custom]*
- *Yes, but not too much because when a woman gets married and leaves, they won't be able to follow that custom anymore [because they will have to learn the custom of their husband's village]*
- *No. I don't think so. Custom is men's business.*
- *Yes. So that women are able to broaden our understanding of our custom and culture.*
- *I think that women should be part of decision making about custom, but it might be hard for women to voice their concerns or ideas because they are brought up with the idea that women have to do whatever the men tell us to do.*
- *Yes. I think both men and women should understand custom. But it is not like that.*



Hemi impoten  
blong harem vois  
blong ol woman  
taem blong  
disaed abaot risos  
blong solwata,  
especiali taem oli  
usum kastom?

- *Yes yumi mas toktok wetem olgeta tu from sapos oli kam akros wan eria we emi tabu, oli nid blong save se ol woman oli no gat raet blong go long ples ia.*
- *No bae emi no stret. ol man nomo mo ol jif oli stret man blong askem abaot kastom mo tabu.*
- *Yes. Mi ting se i gud blong tokabot kastom long ol woman.*
- *Yes mi ting se yumi sud toktok long ol woman from yumi sud save ol rul mo ol desisen.*
- *Yes mi tink se hemi impoten blong rimemba kastom blong yumi.*
- *Yes from ol woman i nid blong oli andastanem kastom blong olgeta.*
- *Mi ting se yumi sud tokabaot kastom long ol woman from yumi evriwan yumi sud obei long ol rul blong kastom – man mo woman – be fulap taem ol woman oli no save abaot kastom.*
- *Yes, be i no tumas from ol woman taem oli mared oli go so bae oli nomo folem kastom (from bae oli mas lanem kastom blong vilij blong man blong olgeta).*
- *No. Mi no ting. Kastom emi bisnis blong ol man.*
- *Yes. From ol woman oli save mekem yumi andastanem moa long kastom mo kalja blong yumi.*
- *Mi ting se ol woman oli sud be pat blong desisen abaot kastom be bae i hard blong ol woman oli voisem konsen mo tingting blong olgeta from oli gro wetem tingting se ol woman oli mas mekem wanem man i talem long olgeta.*
- *Yes. I think both men and women should understand custom. But it is not like that. Yes. Mi ting se ol man mo ol woman oli sud andastanem kastom. Be i no olsem.*

# What did we learn from talking to people in Lekan Village?

- People are dependent on marine resources for food, for selling and for medicines.
- People are noticing changes in the sea and its resources which can make life harder for women
- Men and women catch and harvest these resources as a matter of choice. Men and women are bound by the same restrictions.
- Restrictions on taking marine resources are shaped by religion, custom and government (Fisheries Dept).
- They are enforced by the chief, the church, the landowner(s) and the community.
- Knowledge of some customs is reserved for men. Opinion was divided on whether women and men had the same understanding of custom. There was a general sense that while custom had not changed a lot, many customs had been forgotten or were ignored.
- There is a sense that knowledge of customs is dying out among young people and some of the people Polly talked to had very little knowledge of custom.
- The movement of women because of marriage has an impact on their knowledge of custom.
- Decision making, the imposition and enforcement of restrictions and consultation about these largely ignores the voices of women.
- Many of the women who answered questions would be prepared to share their experiences and opinions.



# Yumi lanem wanem from toktok we yumi bin gat wetem ol pipol blong vilij blong Lekan?

- Pipol i dipen long risos blong solwota blong kakae, blong salem mo blong medisin.
- Pipol i notisim ol jenis long solwota mo ol risos blong hem weh emi save mekem laef i had moa long ol woman.
- Ol man mo ol woman oli kajem mo arvestem ol risos ia from joes blong olgeta. Ol restriksen i samemak long ol man mo ol woman.
- Ol restriksen blong tekem ol risos blong solwota oli kam from relijen, kastom mo gavman (Dipatmen blong Fiseri).
- Jif, jioj, ol land ona mo komuniti i enforsem olgeta.
- Save blong sam kastom hemi blong ol man nomo. Tingting emi divaed blong save sapos ol man lo ol woman oli gat sem andestaning blong kastom. I gat wan jenerol filing se wael kastom emi no bin jenis tumas, fulap kastom yumi fogetem o yumi ignorem.
- I gat filing se save blong kastom emi stap go ded long ol yangfala mo sam pipol we Polly i bin toktok wetem oli gat smol save nomo long saed blong kastom.
- Muvmen blong ol woman from oli mared emi gat wan impak long save blong kastom.
- Desisen making, imposisen mo enfosemen blong ol restriksen mo konsultesen emi ignorem vois blong ol woman.
- Plante woman we i anserem kwesten bae oli pripea blong serem eksperiens mo tingting blong olgeta.

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