



Australian High Commission
Port Vila

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Media Release

Sanma and Torba communities improve roads

Earlier this week, the Minister of Agriculture, Matai Seremaiah with the Australian High Commission's Charlie Jebb, launched new community-based contracts (CBCs) for road maintenance for Sanma Province. Representatives from the Public Works Department and Torba Provincial Government also launched CBCs for Torba. CBCs use a community approach to maintain Vanuatu's rural roads. They already operate in Malekula, Tanna, Ambae and Efate. CBCs are funded through Roads for Development, a partnership between the governments of Vanuatu and Australia.



Minister of Agriculture, Matai Seremaiah, hands over community-based contracts to Sanma Province President, Thomas Vora, in Luganville, Santo.



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CBCs give communities the responsibility of maintaining Vanuatu's rural roads. Communities receive payments for cleaning the roads, cutting grass, clearing drains and removing fallen branches along the road. Safety is a priority for the Department of Public Works. All community groups are provided with safety equipment including cones, high visible vests and first aid kits to use in their work.

"Community-based contracts are a cost-effective way to maintain rural roads, as well as empowering local communities by providing a source of income," said Minister Seremaiah.

"Australia supports the Vanuatu Government to maintain and upgrade its rural roads to ensure that all people have access to schools, health services and markets," said the Australian High Commission's Charlie Jebb.

The Public Works Department encourages communities to recruit women and people with disability. This aligns with Vanuatu Government's efforts on gender equality and disability inclusiveness.

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