

The Female Chiefs of Vanuatu

Explorers Club Flag #101 Expedition Report

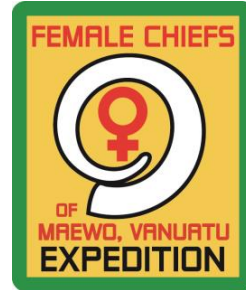
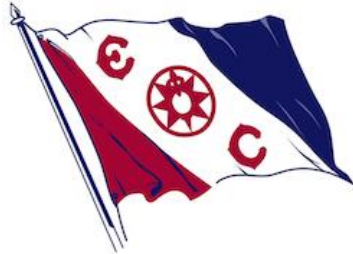


Photo: Daniel Farber Huang and Theresa Menders

**Submitted by Lew Toulmin, Ph.D., MN '04, F.R.G.S.
to The Explorers Club, New York City**

Report contributors:

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September 2016

This report provides information on the Flag Expedition undertaken in Vanuatu, carrying Flag 101 of The Explorers Club, in August and September 2016. The report has the following sections and annexes:

- Summary of the Expedition
- Selected Photos from the Expedition
- Expedition Members
- Anticipated Future Publications and Products
- Annex 1: Article in the *Vanuatu Daily Post* About the Festival and Expedition
- Annex 2: Draft Article for *Island Life* About the Expedition
- Annex 3: Interviews Supporting the Use of the Term “Female Chief” in Vanuatu
- Annex 4: Interviews Not Supporting the Use of the Term “Female Chief” in Vanuatu
- Annex 5: Festival Timeline, Maps of Maewo, Sketches and Other Documentation
- Annex 6: Two Songs About Kerembei Village and Maewo.

These sections are presented below.

SUMMARY OF THE EXPEDITION

The Expedition can be summarized in two parts: its main research questions, and how the effort proceeded.

Main Research Questions. The main, threshold research question posed by the Expedition was: “Is the anthropological literature on Vanuatu and Melanesia correct, when it universally states that there are no ‘female chiefs’ in the country or the region?”

Evidence found that supported the thesis that there are not “female chiefs” in Vanuatu included:

- The existing literature on ethnology in Vanuatu, which goes back to 1914, and contends that only men are “chiefs” or “jifs” or “Big Men” in Vanuatu (and Melanesia).
- Interviews with eight women “notari” of Maewo island, who all stated that they did not consider themselves to be “female chiefs,” but rather that “notari” was a local vernacular term meaning “female custom leader,” and that the word “chief” was reserved for men only. Furthermore, these women stated that they were not aware of any “female chiefs” elsewhere on Maewo. All this, despite the fact that all these women had killed a pig in a custom ceremony called “making Lengwasa,” to become a “notari,” and that in Vanuatu killing a pig is often a key part of men becoming chiefs or being promoted in chiefly rank.

- An interview with a female Peace Corp Volunteer who had worked on Maewo, who had recently killed a pig and been made a “notari.” She at first accepted the term “female chief,” but then within a few days urgently changed her stance, and stated that she was not a “female chief,” only a “notari.”
- Various other interviews which indicated that the term “female chiefs” is not known or at least common on Maewo or in some other islands of Vanuatu.

The major evidence found that supported the thesis that there are at least some “female chiefs” in Vanuatu included:

- An extensive interview with Hilda Lini, who stated that she has eleven chiefly titles, is a female chief and a member of the “women’s chiefly system,” is likely the highest ranking female chief in the country, wears and has earned and paid for extensive chiefly insignia including sacred circular pigs tusks, has killed about 25 pigs in 15 pig-killing ceremonies (the usual way of achieving chiefly rank), and is recognized as a female chief by men (including other chiefs) and women, has the right to enter and speak in various nakamals (the chief’s clubhouse or building, usually reserved for men only), and interacts on “Kastom” (custom) matters with male chiefs at the highest level. She stated that her highest chiefly title is Salvantamata, but the one she is usually known by is Motarilavao. She also listed several other high ranking female chiefs by name, stated that the Shepherd Group of islands has an “Association of Female Chiefs” which uses that name, and contended that the “women’s chiefly system” was once widespread across all of Vanuatu, including areas such as Tanna and Malekula where it has now died out. Ms. Lini served in Parliament for 11 years, held two Ministerial portfolios, has established an institute for the study of indigenous cultures on her home island of Pentecost, and won two international awards for work in ethnology and resistance to nuclear weapons. Her brother was the now-deceased Reverend Walter Lini, a founder of Vanuatu and its first Prime Minister.
- An email exchange with Benjamin Shing, then Director of Strategic Policy, Planning, and Aid Coordination in the Vanuatu Prime Minister’s Office, and a very distinguished senior civil servant of the GoV, who stated that “there are female chiefs in Penama province, but in other provinces the women are called ‘tambu’ or sacred women.”
- An interview with Alcita Vuti, acting CEO of the National Council of Chiefs (NCC), who stated that while the current partial and outdated NCC list of recognized chiefs does not include any women, the NCC is compiling a more comprehensive list, and that this list may include women, if the area councils of the NCC propose women as “women chiefs.”

Furthermore, Mr. Vuti acknowledged that on his home island of Ambae, the term “female chief” is appropriate and is used for and by some women.

- An interview with Phoebe John, who held the title and rank of “chief” for four years on Pele island north of Efate. She held this rank when her husband, the chief of the village, died, and she took over the title and all his duties, rights and responsibilities for four years while a male successor was preparing to take on the role. She then ceded the role, title and responsibilities to her successor, her nephew-in-law. She states that this system, of women taking over the title and all the responsibilities of chief, is common on Pele, Ngunu and Efate islands, and that there are 5-10 women now on those islands who have held the title of full “chief.” She also stated that she served as her village chief, with decision-making and negotiating powers, in a fishing rights dispute with a neighboring village.
- An interview with Dalsie Baniala, the Vanuatu Telecom Regulator and one of the most senior women in the GoV, who stated that women “notaris” on Maewo will generally not state publicly that they are “chiefs” or “female custom chiefs,” in order to not offend the male chiefs, but that in private they will use these terms. She also states that the “notaris” of Maewo go through a custom ceremony of pig-killing like the men, have a similar graded system of ranks (which Dalsie and the Expedition found has three active ranks and previously had three additional ranks), and that the women “notaris” are clearly leaders and that the Western term “chiefs” is a reasonable and appropriate translation of the word “notari.”
- An interview with Dorosday Kenneth Watson, Director of the Women’s Affairs Department of the GoV, who stated that there are “female custom chiefs” in Vanuatu (and on Bougainville in the Solomon Islands).
- Interviews with female chiefs Doreen Leona and her mother Lolowei Musero Leona, from north Pentecost, who state that they are “female custom chiefs” with the title of Motari (a different word and meaning than “Notari” on Maewo); that they killed pigs in a graded system and they are both chiefs of the second rank; that there are numerous “female chiefs” on north Pentecost; and that they have paid for and earned various chiefly insignia.

(Note that all the interviews referenced above are included in the Annexes of this report.)

On balance therefore, the preponderance of the evidence appears to be that there are “female chiefs,” “women chiefs,” or “female custom chiefs” on at least some islands of Vanuatu, with the strongest location being north Pentecost, followed in rough order by the Shepherd Group, Efate/Pele, south Pentecost and Ambae.

The second major research question was, “If there are female chiefs in Vanuatu, how many are there, what are their powers, grades and jurisdictions, and what are their relations with male chiefs, and with programs countering domestic violence?”

These questions will be answered in detail in the academic and other articles about the female chiefs, but in general it appears that some female chiefs are allowed to speak in the nakamals (usually a men’s only clubhouse for kava drinking and decision-making); that a very few have decision-making authority in village disputes, but this is rare; and that there is a very wide variety across the islands and even villages in terms of the names, grades, powers and insignia of the female chiefs and the women custom leaders.

A very rough estimate of the number of the self-identifying female chiefs in Vanuatu will be attempted in the academic article that is forthcoming.

How the Effort Proceeded. The Expedition was initially planned for August 2015, but Cyclone Pam of March 2015 caused a one year delay. For August 2016, the plan for proceeding was to attend a woman’s cultural and arts festival at a village (Kerembei) on Maewo island, where pig-killing ceremonies would initiate the female chiefs of Maewo into their chiefly status, and dozens of female chiefs would be interviewed about their powers, titles, grades and responsibilities.

However, it turned out that the pig-killing ceremonies take place in December and January, not August, that the women interviewed on Maewo would not publicly call themselves “chiefs,” but rather exclusively used the local island language term “notari,” and that the women were quite shy about being interviewed. Hence only eight women were interviewed at the festival or immediately afterwards, and a female notari – a Maewo US Peace Corps Volunteer – was interviewed in the capital of Port Vila.

So at first the effort seemed like it was mis-titled (as the “Female Chiefs of Maewo”), mis-conceived (no “female chiefs” were initially in evidence, or at least none that would publicly use that term), and the effort was headed for serious problems. Such is the fate of many, many projects in Vanuatu.

However, by continuing the effort on the capital island of Efate, it became evident (as described above) that there was considerable evidence that there were in fact some self-proclaimed, legitimate female chiefs on some islands of Vanuatu. And the effort was able to obtain information on the female chiefs’ powers, titles, grades and ceremonies. So the Expedition achieved its major research aims, and re-titled itself as “The Female Chiefs of Vanuatu.”

Furthermore, the Expedition was able to document more information on the “notaris” and “making Lengwasa” pig-killing ceremonies of Maewo than was previously available, and documented other previously unavailable cultural material on Maewo.

SELECTED PHOTOS FROM THE EXPEDITION

Photos from Daniel Farber Huang and Theresa Menders:



Notari and children of Maewo island, Explorers Club Flag 101, and the Expedition and Festival Logos



A young Notari of Maewo, daughter of a Rasa (high chief) – is she a future chief of Vanuatu?



Notari of Maewo, wearing their traditional pandanus mat clothes, use traditional methods to cook a healthy island meal of root vegetables



A Notari of Maewo looks to her future



Kerembei Village, Maewo Island
Republic of Vanuatu, August 2016

HuangMenders.com

Maewo islanders and Female Chiefs Expedition Members

Photos from Michael Wyrick:



Notari of Maewo create the rare and famous “water music”



Notari of Maewo perform a bird dance in a village stream



The Vanuatu Telecom Regulator and festival organizer, Dalsie Baniala, right, explains the Expedition to the notari holding the Explorers Club Flag



Notari engage in a traditional water fight in the Kerembei village stream

Photos from Lew Toulmin:



Doreen Leona, a Female Chief of Pentecost island, Vanuatu, cuts palm fronds from her home garden on Efate to create her chiefly attire



Some of Doreen's chiefly insignia, including her circular pig's tusk from the sacred boar she killed when she became a chief, and the feathers signifying her right to speak in the Chiefs' nakamal



Doreen's mother Lolowai Leona, also a Female Chief of Pentecost with the rank of Motari, applies red face paint to her daughter. Lolowai's father, brother and husband all achieved one of the highest ranks of male chiefdom, each killing 100 pigs in a massive ceremony.



Doreen Leona, Female Chief of Pentecost island, Vanuatu, In her garb signifying her rank as a Motari grade of chief



Phoebe John of Pele island, Vanuatu served as her village chief, with the highest grade in a 10-grade system, for four years, with all the powers of a male chief



A young Notari of Maewo island, Vanuatu has been trained in traditional island customs, legends, language, games and rituals



(Photo from Nuclear-Free-Future.com)

Chief Hilda Lini of Pentecost island, Vanuatu served in Parliament 11 years, held two Ministerial portfolios, has eleven chiefly titles, won two international peace awards, and is likely the highest ranking Female Chief in the country

Photo from Sophie Hollingsworth:



Notari of Maewo on their way to the Women's Cultural and Arts Festival, in traditional garb

EXPEDITION MEMBERS

Members of the Expedition included the following:

- Lew Toulmin, Ph.D., F.R.G.S., Member of The Explorers Club (TEC), Expedition Leader
- Dalsie Baniala, The Vanuatu Telecom Regulator, Expedition Co-Leader
- Daniel Huang, Member of TEC
- Theresa Menders, Member of TEC
- Michael Wyrick, Member of TEC
- Capt. Sophie Hollingsworth, Student Member, TEC
- Corey Huber, Project Manager, GIZ Vanuatu, former PCV-Vanuatu.

Oliver Hartman, Member of TEC, was not able to join the Expedition and dropped out several weeks beforehand, due to illness.

The Expedition wishes to thank all the female chiefs who were interviewed, and the notari of Maewo who worked hard to put on the Festival and who welcomed the Expedition members.

ANTICIPATED FUTURE PUBLICATIONS AND PRODUCTS

The Expedition has already generated an article in the *Vanuatu Daily Post*; this is shown below in Annex 1.

Future publications and products that are expected from the Expedition include the following:

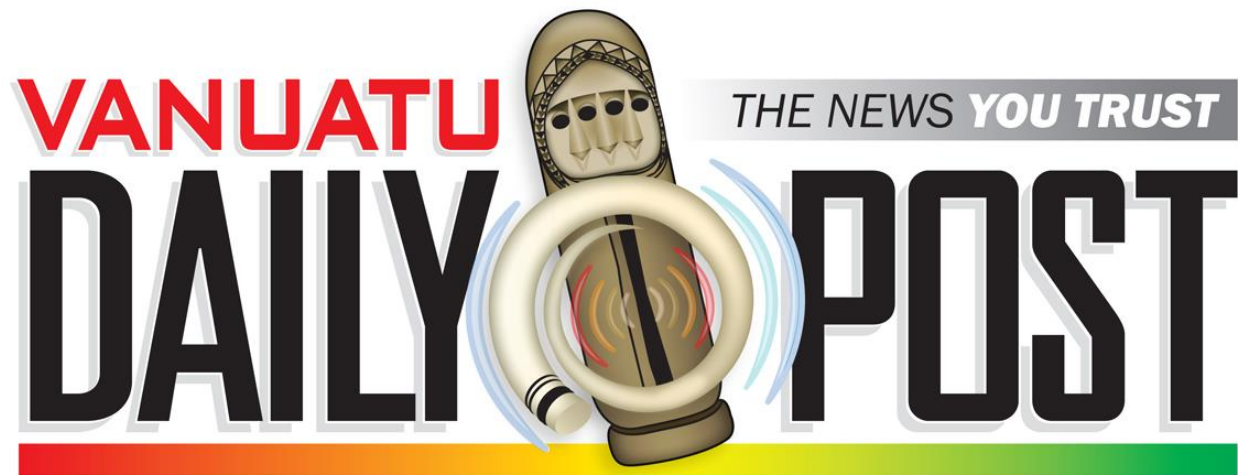
- A story on the Expedition and its findings in the *Vanuatu Daily Post*, the only daily paper in the country.
- A story on the Expedition and its findings in *Island Life*, the national magazine of Vanuatu. (The article submitted to the magazine is included in the Annexes.)
- An academic article in a refereed anthropological journal, likely *American Ethnologist* or *Oceania*. This piece will state that the existing literature on anthropology in Vanuatu and Melanesia states that there are no female chiefs in the country or region; but that while our effort found some evidence supporting this thesis, substantial evidence was found of actual “female chiefs.” This evidence included: interviews with women who stated that they are female chiefs and presented proofs of that claim; statements by senior Government of Vanuatu officials that there are “female chiefs,” especially in PENAMA province; and acknowledgement by an official of the National Council of Chiefs that there are “female chiefs” on Ambae island and possibly elsewhere, and that the

NCC may officially recognize such women as chiefs, at the national level, in a list now being compiled of all chiefs on major islands. The article may also contrast a previous academic article called "Making Lengwasa," written in the 1980s, which described a woman's pig-killing ceremony on Maewo, with the Expedition's findings about women pig-killing and Lengwasa on Maewo.

- One or more columns in *The Montgomery Sentinel* in the monthly travel/adventure column "Travel Tales" written by Lew Toulmin; these will also be posted on his website www.themosttraveled.com.
- A film or video on the Expedition and its findings, and other possible videos.
- A series of photographs on the Expedition on the Instagram page of Daniel Huang and Theresa Menders (www.instagram.com/huangmendersphoto -- with 23,500 followers).
- Posts on the blog of Sophie Hollingsworth: www.thesophialog.com
- Possibly other publications, social media sites, and outlets.

Annex 1

**Article in the *Vanuatu Daily Post*
About the Festival and Expedition**



Sept. 6, 2016

Located in hard copy, and online at:

http://dailypost.vu/news/maewo-women-s-cultural-festival-celebrates-island-traditions/article_3ec8f066-e926-5997-bb6e-d3da4f052f91.html

(accessed Sept 7, 2016)

Maewo Women's Cultural Festival Celebrates Island Traditions

The Maewo Women's Cultural and Arts Festival attracted over 300 attendees, including a team of US explorers studying women's roles and titles in Vanuatu.

Held on August 26 and 27, 2016 in Kerembei village on west central Maewo, the successful festival was organized and run by local women, and celebrated traditional

island culture and the key role of women “ngwotaris” (or notari -- custom women leaders) in village life.



A woman ngwotari (female leader) creates beautiful sand drawings at the Maewo Women's Cultural and Arts Festival, held in Kerembe Village, Maewo. Photo: Lew Toulmin

To become a ngwotari, women must go through a process to learn and know their island history, way of life, tribes, weaving of mats with special and different designs and messages, traditional cooking, arts and drawings, traditional signs and rituals, preparation for custom wedding and death ceremonies, relevant magic, and traditional healing using herbs and plants, among many other items.

Most importantly, the ngwotari must learn the custom values of the island. The stars of the show at the Festival were the older women ngwotaris who passed on traditional knowledge to the younger generation of future women leaders. They sang beautiful traditional songs and chants as they gathered, husked and grated coconuts, started fires to heat basalt stones, watched the rising smoke, cut island cabbage, scraped lap-lap, prepared bananas, and cooked island foods using traditional methods. Every task had its own separate song, which thirty women sang during each group effort. All participants dressed completely in traditional island attire, mostly made of woven pandanus leaves.

The women demonstrated the famous and rare “water music,” by standing in the sea in a line, then cupping their hands and making a deep bubbling and splashing sound under the water. They presented and explained the complex pandanus patterns in their clothes, and offered intricate baskets, sashes and dresses for sale to visitors. One expert lady demonstrated the difficult art of sand drawing, and created six impressive works of art in just ten minutes. Village girls showed off traditional skills by playing games, including bird calling, naming the stars, and counting stones to learn math, while hopping on one leg. Two games involved guessing the identity of other girls, once with the eyes closed and feeling the face of the subject, and once – incredibly – while just being touched on the back by another girl.

Three island Rasas (the second highest ranking chiefs of the island) and other men contributed to the Festival by leading the opening and closing parade, demonstrating their prowess with bows and arrows, performing dramatic custom dances, and chanting traditional songs.

The Festival was observed and documented by an expedition team from The Explorers Club, based in New York City. Dr. Lew Toulmin, the expedition co-leader, said that, “Our Club was founded in 1904, has chapters all over the world, and is focused on exploring and preserving our planet and its species and cultures. We are here in Maewo to study the role of women, especially women leaders, in Vanuatu society, and to see if the term ‘female chiefs’ is appropriate anywhere here.”

He noted that the team carried the Flag of The Explorers Club, and that the particular flag brought to Maewo had already been on numerous expeditions, including twice to the summit of Mount Everest, and on expeditions to document a Pharaoh’s tomb in Egypt, to try to find missing aviatrix Amelia Earhart, and on an expedition to Ambae, the “real Bali Ha’i.” But he told the crowd, “I think this Expedition is the best of all!”

Expedition member Captain Sophie Hollingsworth also brought the flag and endorsement of WINGS World Quest, a group from New York that supports women in exploration, science, field research and conservation. She will be spending time on Maewo and Tanna to document the contrasting roles of women on the two islands.

One of the Festival and Expedition organizers and co-leaders, Telecom Regulator Dalsie Baniala, said that, “I am very excited about our new findings today. By working with the explorers and interviewing various women and two special ngwotari, Gusu Gambu Gwatia and ngwotari Mandingi, we have learned that about 90 percent of women in this area go through one pig-killing and isolation ritual (called “making Lengwasa”) at an early age, that about 10 percent go on to perform a second Lengwasa ritual, and that two women have actually gone on to a third step of Lengwasa,” Baniala said, “We have also made the surprising discovery that three additional, higher steps of Lengwasa and ngwotari previously existed, but are now lost. None of this was apparently documented in previous anthropological literature.”

Member of Parliament for Maewo Ian Wilson, stated that the Festival was important for documenting, preserving, celebrating and passing on local vernacular language and

island culture. He said that “traditional ways are our inner strength, and also our outer asset, because we can attract visitors and tourists with our unique island ways.”

Another Festival is already being planned, tentatively scheduled for May 2017. Making Lengwasa pigkilling rituals, which will elevate young women to the status of ngwotari, will be performed on Maewo during the Christmas—New Year’s break.

jane@dailypost.vu

#end of Daily Post article#

Annex 2

Draft Article for *Island Life* About the Expedition

[Submitted to *Island Life* Magazine, the national magazine of Vanuatu,
on 21 September 2016]

The Search for the Elusive Female Chiefs of Vanuatu

For over 100 years, researchers, writers and anthropologists have agreed that there are no female chiefs in Vanuatu or even Melanesia. Writing in 1914, William Rivers in his *History of Melanesian Society* stated that on Pentecost, females had prefixes to their names indicating differences in rank, but he firmly stated that this was “not connected with any organization resembling the Sukwe” – the male chiefly system. And this was the closest that women came to chiefly status. His analysis has prevailed, down to the present.

So I was quite shocked when over pizza at the Numbawan Café a couple of years ago, my friend (and now the Vanuatu Telecom Regulator) Dalsie Baniala casually mentioned that her sister on Maewo was a “female chief.” I said, “That is not possible – there are none!”

And so the search for the elusive female chiefs of Vanuatu began.

We agreed to launch an Expedition, sanctioned by the famous Explorers Club in New York, to interview and document the female chiefs of Maewo. Dalsie would organize an island festival for the women chiefs of the island, featuring their culture, traditions, ceremonies and promotions. I would bring in and lead a team of researchers, to undertake the analysis. The festival was scheduled for August 2015.

Then Cyclone Pam hit, in March 2015. The festival was postponed to August 2016, and morphed into more of an all-island event focused on women’s arts and

traditional practices. But the female chiefs of Maewo would still be a key part of the festival.

On August 25, 2016 our Explorers Club team arrived in Kerembei village on central west Maewo, ready to interview dozens or even scores of female chiefs, previously unknown to science. But there were two immediate problems. First, the women were rather shy about being interviewed. Second, none of the few who agreed to be interviewed were keen on the term “female chief.” They stated firmly that they were “Notari,” a local vernacular word which they translated as “female cultural leaders.” They felt the term “chief” must be reserved for men only.

Dalsie contended, also firmly, that the Notari were “female chiefs.” She said, “The Notari of Maewo go through a pig killing ceremony like the male chiefs do. They have three active grades now, and we have just found new, previously unknown evidence that there were three higher grades used in the past for women chiefs, that have now been lost.” She added, “Often the Notari will call themselves ‘female chiefs’ in private, but in public they do not want to offend the male chiefs by using that word.”

But somehow it didn’t seem quite right to call the women by a title that they themselves disputed in public.

Later in the festival Theresa Menders and I found several male chiefs in Kerembei who stated that there were “female chiefs” on Maewo, but they could not name the villages involved.

Back in Port Vila, we thought we had located an actual “female chief” – amazingly, a US citizen! This was a remarkable young Peace Corps Volunteer who had done such terrific work on Maewo that she had been given a pig-killing ceremony and a title. In an initial interview the term “female chief” was freely used. But within several days she emailed to state firmly that only the word “Notari” should be used for her, and that she was not a “female chief.” Furthermore, she wanted to remain anonymous and not have any articles written about her.

Oh, dear. No “female chiefs” who would agree to that term. Nothing to show for our Expedition. Maybe William Rivers was right in his firm statement, 102 years ago.

Luckily, the staff of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer came through. They recalled that Doreen Leona of Pentecost and Port Vila, an employee of the VNPF and a former colleague, was a female chief. I immediately called her.

Doreen was quite clear. She said, “I am a female chief, with chiefly insignia including the circular pig’s tusk of the pig I killed. About 25 percent or more of the women of northern Pentecost have chiefly rank. We do not have jurisdiction over civil, criminal or land disputes, but we do instruct young people in custom and traditional matters. And I think that the fact that women of north Pentecost are recognized and respected as female custom chiefs by men, means that the rate of domestic violence against women is lower there than elsewhere.”

Doreen’s 80-year-old mother Lolowei Musero Leona agreed. She said, “My rank and Doreen’s chiefly rank is ‘Motari’ – this is different from the Maewo term ‘Notari.’” She added, “On north Pentecost we have three active ranks of female chiefs that perform the pig-killing ceremony: Mwei (the lowest), Motari (second) and Sal (the highest). The male chiefs in the area also use these same three ranks as the first tier of their system. Then above those three ranks, the men have five additional grades that women cannot earn. These are (starting at the lowest): Tari, Livus, Fera, Bofudolua, and Vera. My husband, brother and father all achieved the Bofudolua level, for which they had to kill 100 pigs.”

More investigation led our team to Phoebe John, a strong woman from Pele island just off the north coast of Efate. She said, “For four years I was a female chief of my village of Piliura, with all the powers of a male chief. This came about because my husband was the village chief, but he died in 2010. I was given the sacred mat that was used as a shroud under his body as a symbol of my new

authority and rank. But I did not kill a pig in this ceremony. His rank and mine was 'Meserie,' which is the highest rank in a ten-rank system of chiefs."

Phoebe John continued, "I held the rank for four years, during which time I negotiated as a chief on a fishing dispute we had with a nearby village. Of course as chief I worked closely with the male assistant chief, and with the village council of men, women and youth. But I was the chief. Then in 2014, when my nephew-in-law was ready to take on the title and role, I gave him my title and powers, and he killed a pig to symbolize his new status as chief of the village. Now I have no official title, but I am consulted sometimes because of my experience and because I am respected."

Former chief John estimated that there are "five to ten other women serving now as chiefs in Pele, Nguna or Efate islands, with all the powers of male chiefs, because like me, they have inherited the rank from their deceased husbands. They will typically serve as full chiefs for two to seven years before passing on their titles."

Several sources suggested that the team interview Hilda Lini, the distinguished sister of Reverend Walter Lini, one of the founders of Vanuatu and the country's first Prime Minister. She served for eleven years in Parliament, was a Minister twice, and founded an institute for the study of indigenous cultures on her home island of Pentecost. She proved to be a font of knowledge on female chiefs.

She stated, "There is a 'women's chiefly system' that once covered almost all of Vanuatu, even places like Tanna and Malekula, where men dominate now." She said that, "I have been involved in about 15 different pig-killing ceremonies in my lifetime, and have ten chiefly titles and ranks, in addition to my highest rank and title of Salvantamata. As a result I am probably the highest ranking female chief in the country, especially in terms of rituals. In 2009 we had a very large ceremony to declare our 'custom economic independence,' and we killed 360 sacred pigs tied to 360 separate sacred rocks. I killed ten pigs myself in that ritual, and was the only female among dozens of male chiefs."

Lini noted that, “I have earned and paid for the right to speak in chiefs’ nakamals, the chiefly house usually reserved for men, and I am involved with decision-making in custom and other matters at all levels, including the highest. I wear two circular pig’s tusks, and other insignia, as a symbol of my status as a female chief.”

Chief Lini added, “Most female chiefs do not undertake administrative functions, although there are exceptions like the women chiefs in Pele and Efate who take on all the powers of male chiefs.” She noted that in the Shepherd Group of islands there is an “Association of Women Chiefs” that uses that name, and female chiefs are strong in Ambae and Tangoa. She had found that, “In south Pentecost there are seven non-Christianized villages, and there the female chiefs earn and take on their husband’s chiefly rank, as the men are promoted up their chiefly ladder.”

Additional proofs that “female chiefs” exist came from discussions with the Director of the government’s Women’s Affairs Department, Dorosday Kenneth Watson, who stated that, “There are no female chiefs in my village on Malekula, but there are women chiefs in PENAMA province, especially Pentecost and Ambae, and in the Big Bay region and in Lele village on Santo.” Distinguished civil servant Benjamin Shing stated in an email that, “There are lots of female chiefs in Vanuatu, especially in PENAMA province... In other provinces, they are called Tabu (holy) women.”

And surprisingly, an interview with the acting CEO of the National Council of Chiefs (the Malvatumauri), Alcita Vuti, yielded this statement: “There are currently no female chiefs on the old and incomplete list of chiefs that the NCC has. But we are compiling a new list, and if the area councils recommend that women be recognized as chiefs, and the women are given proper custom chiefly names and titles, they may well be certified as such at the national level by the NCC. And it is possible that in the future there will be female chiefs with all the rights, powers and jurisdiction of male chiefs.” He noted that, “In my home area

of northwest Ambae, there are now female chiefs. They have two ranks, not four like the men, and have somewhat limited powers.”

The last word should go to Dalsie Baniala, who started the search. She firmly stated: “The word ‘chief’ is originally a Western word. But it is a major mistake to ignore that word just because of its source. ‘Chief’ is used today in Vanuatu as a term of power, in custom matters, and it is even used in our laws, regulations and Constitution. So it is important that we women assert our position in society, by saying that we can become chiefs -- and that some women already are female chiefs of Vanuatu.”

Contributors to this article include: Lew Toulmin, lead author, and co-authors Dalsie Baniala, Michael Wyrick, Sophie Hollingsworth, Daniel Huang, Theresa Menders and Corey Huber.

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Words in the article and authors above: 1821

Photo credits (please be sure these are accurately assigned)

Captions for photos with credit to Lew Toulmin:

1. Doreen Leona, a female chief from north Pentecost with the rank of Motari, cuts plants in her garden for her chiefly costume.
2. Some of the chiefly insignia of Doreen Leona. The circular pig’s tusk is one from the pig she killed in her chiefly ceremony, while the multiple feathers symbolize her right to speak in the nakamal as a Motari (second rank) chief. The entire chiefly regalia and ceremony can cost up to 100,000 Vatu.
3. Doreen’s chiefly red face paint is applied by her 80-year-old mother, Lolowai Musero Leona, who is also a female chief of Pentecost with the rank of Motari.

4. Doreen Leona achieved chiefly rank in 2007 by killing a pig in a custom ceremony. She works as a finance supervisor at the VNPF. Her grandfather, father, uncle, mother and most of her sisters are chiefs.
5. Doreen Leona, a female chief of Pentecost and Vanuatu, in her chiefly regalia.
6. Doreen Leona, a female chief of Pentecost and Vanuatu.
7. The Notari (female custom leaders) of central Maewo assemble in Kerembei village for a custom and arts festival. While some contend that the Maewo Notari are in effect custom chiefs, the Maewo women themselves state in public that the correct term is “Notari,” not “chief.”
8. A young Notari of Maewo – they go through a pig-killing ceremony called “making Lengwasa,” usually before the age of six.
9. A young Notari of Maewo and possible future leader of Vanuatu.
10. Phoebe John of Pele island was a village chief with full powers and the highest title in a ten-rank chiefly system, for four years.
11. Sketch of Chief Hilda Lini, former Member of Parliament and Minister, winner of two international peace awards, and holder of probably the highest rank of female chief in Vanuatu. (courtesy photo)

Photos with credits to Daniel Farber Huang and Theresa Menders:

- A. The Notari and children of Maewo and the Explorers Club team hold flag #101 of the Club, which has been twice to the summit of Mt. Everest, to the opening of a Pharoah’s tomb in Egypt, to Ambae -- the “real Bali Hai,” and on the search for the missing aviatrix Amelia Earhart, among many other Expeditions.
- B. A young Notari of Maewo and possible future leader of Vanuatu.
- C. A young Notari of Maewo and a young male friend. Will both someday be recognized as chiefs?

- D. A woman of Maewo brings hot doughnuts down from the mountain to the village of Kerembei each morning.
- E. Traditional cooking using wood and red-hot stones creates a lot of smoke.
- F. Three Notari of Kerembei village wear their traditional mat dresses and sashes, while cooking the traditional way -- with no metal pots or tools, only with bamboo, hot rocks and water.
- G. A Notari (custom female leader) of Maewo makes food using traditional techniques.
- H. Women making food using traditional tools, including a sharp bamboo knife (on the left).
- I. A young girl of Vanuatu looks to her future – as a Chief? M.P.? P.M.?
- J. Women of Kerembei village on Maewo in a traditional waterfight, part of the Women’s Cultural and Arts Festival.
- K. Notari of Maewo and Lew Toulmin of The Explorers Club hold Club Flag number 101, which has twice been to top of Mt. Everest.

Photos with credit to Michael Wyrick:

1. Women of Maewo make their famous “water music” – a gurgling, moaning sound.
2. Young Notari of Maewo perform a traditional bird dance in a rock pool near Kerembei village.
3. Women of Maewo in a water battle.
4. Telecom Regulator Dalsie Baniala, a co-organizer of the Maewo Cultural and Arts Festival, and of the Explorers Club Female Chiefs Flag Expedition.

5. Notari of Maewo process traditional foods using scrapers made of thorny wood.

#end#

V2

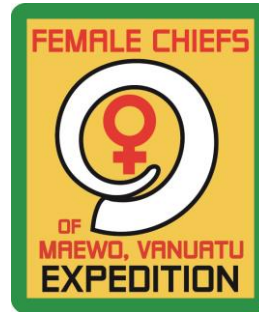
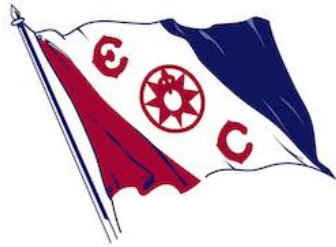
Annex 3

Interviews Supporting the Use of the Term “Female Chiefs” in Vanuatu

- Female Chief Hilda Lini, former Minister and M.P.
- Former Female Chief Phoebe John
- Female Chief Doreen Leona
- Female Chief Lolowai Musero Leona
- Alcita Vuti, Acting CEO, Vanuatu National Council of Chiefs
- Dalsie Baniala, the Vanuatu Telecom Regulator
- Dorosday Kenneth Watson, Director, Women’s Affairs Dept., GoV
- John Silk Sala, Member of Parliament
- Three male chiefs of Kerembei Village, Maewo
- Email from Benjamin Shing, GoV

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: Female chief Hilda Lini, from one of the founding families of Vanuatu
2. Full name of interviewee: Salvantamata Hilda LINI
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 1 Name of Month: Sept Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 1:38 hours
5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and Michael Wyrick and Alfred Baniuri
(names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: _____
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: _____; in possession of: Michael Wyrick and Lew Toulmin
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____

12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: ____NA_____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 56 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French _____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

[Hilda Lini is a very well-known figure in Vanuatu. She was one of the first two women elected to Parliament, serving 11 years. She was the sister of Rev. Walter Lini (now deceased), one of the founders of Vanuatu and its first Prime Minister. She won two international awards for her work in indigenous cultures, health, and resistance to nuclear weapons. Her current projects are an Institute in north Pentecost which promotes the study of indigenous cultures, and a bank for traditional currencies such as mats, tusked pig, pig skulls, etc. She is from Pentecost island but now lives in Port Vila. She was interviewed at her home there. The interview was audio taped, with Ms. Lini's permission, and lasted 98 minutes; it is available on request. Highlights are presented below.]

Hilda Lini stated the following:

- In Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo there exists what is best called a "women's chiefly system," or "women's chiefly system in society," which is the same or similar to the "men's chiefly system."
- I use the word "chief" because that is the word that the English brought here for "leaders." We don't know what to call it in English, but that is a good translation.
- In Pentecost in the north and center of the island, there are five major titles (ranks) of women chiefs in the first tier of ranks. The highest of the five is Motari Salvan. Above this tier are three more ranks in the next tier, for a total of eight; these latter are more specialized.
- In Pentecost isolation is not used in the women's chiefly promotion ceremony, except in the sixth step. But all involve pig-killing.
- At the low steps in this Pentecost system, the woman must kill a pig but it need not be a tusked pig. At higher steps, it must be a sacred, tusker pig.

- Female chiefs on Pentecost have different decorations that they must pay for the right to wear. They pay the women who already have these decorations and rights, for the right to wear the insignia. Also, each insignia will have a certain ritual that must be followed to obtain it, although today some women skip some of these rituals. So a woman might be called a Motari, but might not have the right to enter into the nakamal.
- For example, one insignia is two long curved feathers sticking out of her hair; this signifies the right to go into the nakamal, which is normally reserved only for men. But sometimes now women wear that insignia without going through the nakamal-entry ritual.
- On Pentecost the local word for a female chief is a Motari. On Maewo the term is Ngotari. [or notari]
- I wear two circular pigs tusks on my arms. I paid for the right to wear these, on the day that I killed a sacred tusked pig. These are two separate transactions, each of which must be paid for: killing the pig, and buying the right to wear the tusks. (You usually buy this right from someone who already did the pig-killing.) I did each on my wedding day, before the wedding took place. But this pig-killing and tusk-wearing was separate from my wedding and not part of the wedding ceremony. The tusks that I wear I obtained from my brother (who was already a high ranking chief), since he was not wearing them; they are not the tusks from the pig I killed that day. He put them on my arms. He had killed so many pigs that he gave me two of his.
- I also paid for the right to go into the (normally) men's nakamal, and I have that insignia.
- It is the responsibility of the parents and her relatives to prepare a daughter for marriage, to give her the knowledge and the items and insignia that will make her ready for marriage. The husband will not take her through the rituals. It is a great insult for a husband to say to a new wife, "Your father didn't prepare you for our marriage." You don't want talk about a bride not being prepared for her responsibilities in the home, or in the custom ceremonies, dances, relationships with other people, and so on.
- I will give an example. Last August I assisted and advised in a wedding that took place where a high ranking male chief from Malo island off Espiritu Santo had a daughter who was getting married to a man from Pentecost. So I asked if I could prepare her in the Pentecost system, and received permission. So we on Pentecost prepared her for her marriage, since she was going to live on Pentecost. She had to pay for certain rights, learn the right sacred dances, and she had to kill a pig (that my son gave her). The wedding took place on Aore. She had to pay for rights and insignia, such as for killing the pig, the right to wear a belt with shell money on it, the right to have her face and body painted, and so on. She had to be made ready to go into any nasara or nakamal on Pentecost – or even on Santo in a Pentecost-style ceremony. Most of the people came from Tentato island. All the people attending the wedding were very attentive when I explained what was happening and the various insignia. Malo island used to have all this, but with Christianity and modernization, much of it was lost.
- One of the most valuable items on Malo was a strap (or belt) made of shell money. It was a women's strap on Malo, and it went to Ambae, then to Pentecost. The old story was that a chief from Ambae visited Malo, and saw a chief's wife wearing this beautiful belt, preparing round yams in the sea, and the wives' belts looked very valuable and nice

to wear in the nasara. So the chief from Ambae asked the chief from Malo to bring one of the straps to Ambae. He said he would pay for the belt with ten sacred pigs with circular tusks. And that is how the shell belt went from Malo to Ambae. Later it was traded to Pentecost. All this happened many, many years ago.

- Malo, Ambae, Pentecost and Maewo have similar systems, but some traditions have not been practiced.
- All the preparation for the wedding and instruction of the bride takes place in the bride's location, in the week before the wedding.
- The day before this kind of wedding is very important, perhaps the most important. The bride must pay fees for all the rights and insignia that she is getting then and didn't have before. She must have an appreciation ceremony where she thanks all the relevant people, especially her paternal uncles. Mats will be given during this ceremony.
- The wedding ceremony itself will take place at the husband's location; but everyone from the bride's party will make the trip to that location.
- When the bride leaves her father's house, all her relatives who have gathered sing sad songs and cry, because they are losing the bride. The father sings a special goodbye song.
- On Pentecost the bride price is paid in pigs by the husband's family. Red mats of equal value are given, in exchange, by the bride's family.
- In Pentecost and Maewo there is shyness about using the term "chief" in modern times, but in fact women chiefs had a very powerful and effective role. But this was largely in the past. Today many women get the chiefly titles but don't really show it or play the chiefly roles.
- On north Pentecost, there were three women chiefs who took part in everything, except they did not give judgement in custom cases like the men. But they did play a role in the custom court. But they have all three died now. I participated in giving a judgement in a custom court and was told that that was the first time that had been seen on Pentecost. The women chiefs played a very effective role in the various ceremonies.
- Most people don't realize that in "men's pig-killing and rank promotion ceremonies," the pigs are actually generally owned by the women, who have raised them, fed them, and negotiated behind the scenes. (So you might see the chief arriving with five tusked pigs and you might think those are his. But they are not.) These women chiefs' negotiations are regarding whether or not the tusked pigs will be brought forward to help this particular male chief get promoted to the next level of male chief. If the woman agrees to allow her pig to be brought to the ceremony, that creates a debt from that chief being promoted to the woman, which must be paid in the future in some way.
- On Malo there was a traditional bank of numerous pig tusks or live pigs, which had value in the same way that money has value today.
- I assisted with a case on all this when I was a Canadian-sponsored volunteer on a remote part of Malo (because none of the Canadians wanted to go to such a remote location; I was there five years). I was at this custom bank, and some local women approached me, and wanted to talk to me. They wanted to know how to re-acquire the value of five tusked pigs that they had donated to a ceremony, and they wanted to see if they could get back the pigs' tusks to put into the bank as theirs, or find out -- did the tusks now belong

to the chief? So I helped them go to a custom court, which ruled that all this was to be subject to negotiation: some tusks could go to the women, and some to the promoted male chiefs; or all the tusks could belong to either party. If the chief retained ownership, then he should pay something to recompense the women, like a live pig or two live pigs, for example. Before this decision, the chief had retained ownership of the pig tusks and jaw.

- In the past, women did more as custom judges, especially in providing the crucial knowledge often needed in custom cases. But in modern times I don't remember the women serving as custom judges, only as information providers.
- For example, it is usually the women who know the names of the different lengths of the pig tusks, and the value of various ones. I sat through a discussion of this at our Institute to establish all these names in vernacular language, and the women were the ones who knew this, as well as the history, legends and backgrounds to many chiefly gatherings.
- From my research, the "women's chiefly system" was once all over Vanuatu, even in places where it is not prevalent now, such as on Tanna.
- Most people think that Malekula does not and did not have female chiefs. But I met an old man from Malekula who lived there and told me that there were woman chiefs there once, and that his mother was a woman chief, and that her house was higher and larger than anyone else's. So Malekula once had women chiefs, but no longer.
- Malo used to have women chiefs, but I am not sure about now. I am not sure if the wives of male chiefs there are given ranks or not.
- There are still women chiefs in all of PENAMA province. There are women chiefs on Maewo, on east, north and west Ambae, although the latter have reduced in number. And there are women chiefs on north Pentecost.
- In south Pentecost, a female still takes on the same title and rank as her husband, if he obtains a chiefly rank. They both must work for this rank and play a chiefly role. There are seven indigenous communities that have not been Christianized on south Pentecost that have this practice. I have worked with them and talked with them about this.
- Here in SHEFA province (Shepherd Group and Efate) there is an Association of Women Chiefs who use that name, located in Shepherd's and Tongoa. Lucy Naviti was formerly the chair of this Association, and she lives in Port Vila and could be interviewed. She is still alive, and lives in the Pango neighborhood. In Shepherd's and Tongoa they have a strong women's chiefly system. Their system is similar to south Pentecost, with the woman taking on the same title and rank as the chiefly husband.
- On Pele there was a women chief who took over the title and all the powers of her deceased husband chief, for several years, until a male in the next generation was ready to fulfill the duties of chief. [This female chief was found by the Expedition and interviewed.] In that role, she would be the leader, and apparently take on the role, but would have listened to her subordinates. In taking on the administration of society in the past, the men would take the lead, but women would do the other duties, such as custom, giving information, pig-killing on Pentecost in the nasara (but they had to have the means (wealth) to do this).
- On central Pentecost a female chief named Liwewe (her traditional name) died in 2003. She had many other chiefly titles also. I visited her in 1997. She had a nakamal of her

own; she had paid to have all the insignia that male chiefs wore; she beat the custom drum; she did everything the men chiefs did. She was the highest ranking chief in Pentecost that I knew of. She would wear a “mal-mal.” She had been prepared very early, then when her husband died, she did everything. She had been one of the (male) chief’s ten wives.

- It is probably known only inside the National Council of Chiefs that they might approve of female chiefs at the national level in the future.
- Re the National Council of Chiefs (NCC) – it is important to understand the history and place of the NCC. The traditional system of chiefs in Vanuatu goes back thousands of years, long before the NCC; and under it, men and women knew what their roles were. The NCC was created by the French and British and set up just before Independence, and included in the Constitution. So it is quite new. The chiefs in the NCC are elected and it is a democratic system. I work with the NCC and with the traditional system. The NCC does not include everything about the traditional chiefly and leadership system – for example, it does not explicitly provide for the fact that there were and are female chiefs. But in the traditional system, women chiefs were included in different levels of meetings were the ones who kept the knowledge of the land history, the clans, the tribes, the dancing, the yam harvest, the traditional ceremonies, etc. You cannot do any of the traditional ceremonies without the participation of the women. The women cannot be excluded.
- If the NCC is thinking of “authorizing” some “female chiefs” at the national and area council level, they should do it, so that the reality would be reflected in their list of chiefs. But up to now, it hasn’t happened and hasn’t been mentioned in any of the NCC policies. But in the traditional system, the women had to be there, even in the nakamal.
- In the nakamals, women solve disputes or help solve disputes. In the old days of tribal wars and conflicts, and a man could not be sent, women would be sent to negotiate settlements, rather than men, since women were seldom killed in tribal wars. The woman might be briefed by a woman chief on what to do. If I went on such a mission, everyone might know that I was doing it, because I am a woman chief, and people would guess that I was going to negotiate. But I could brief another, non-chiefly woman to undertake the mission instead of me, and she could go quietly. If a woman negotiator was killed in such a negotiation, this would provoke a huge response. Also, a woman with a small child could be sent to a hostile village to “visit her relatives or parents” and when there she could feel out the possibilities for a settlement of the war and send or bring a message.
- The women or women chiefs might provide for the actual settlement of the war or conflict, with pigs, mats, kava or other items.
- Today if there was a killing, the men might appear to settle the dispute in the nasara. But the women would have been involved in the background negotiations and providing for the settlement, which might be 10 to 20 pigs for compensation. Women in that tribe, village or clan would come up with the pigs. But this would create a debt that would need to be paid back in a future situation.

- In the nasaras (sacred grounds), the men are usually seen to be settling disputes up front, but often the women have argued out the terms of the settlement behind the scenes, ahead of time.
- Female pigs are rarely killed in custom ceremonies, because they are there to produce new pigs, and so are valuable. Only an old female pig might be killed.
- It may be that the SHEFA Province (Tongoa, Shepherd and Efate) will put forward a name(s) of some female chiefs for the NCC to authorize at the national level. There is no law against this, only the existing practice. Men have always chosen men. If the men think the women can do the job, they should be elected.
- It should be noted that recently a qualified woman applied to be the CEO (chief of the staff, an executive position) of the NCC, and she was disputed and turned down. So that casts some doubt on their intentions.
- The NCC only dates back to the 1980 Independence and the 1979 Constitution. So it is not the traditional chiefly system of Vanuatu. Some men in the NCC now say that women should not be allowed to serve on municipal councils, in the NCC, or in Parliament. But this is wrong, because it is not in line with the true history of the role of women in society and in the chiefly system of Vanuatu. And there is supposed to be no discrimination under the Constitution, in the NCC and elsewhere.
- There was and is more respect for women shown in the traditional chiefly system of Vanuatu than there is in the supposed democracy we have had under the Constitution.
- The woman chief on Pele, who took over all the powers of a male chief, would be good to talk to. [This was done.]
- There are currently woman chiefs in Efate, Tongoa, and Shepherd Group, among other places.
- Johnson Naviti, the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office (DG-PMO), has a mother named Alice Meraki. She is a female chief and a widow. She lives in the Numbatu area of Port Vila.
- I don't remember seeing any women in the traditional chiefs' delegation from Maewo, at the national meeting of traditional chiefs. I do know that on Maewo they have been trying to revive tradition for the past 15-20 years.
- On Pentecost there are quite a few female chiefs, but we generally don't have administrative roles – we are in charge mainly of the “women's chiefly society.”
- When we have annual national meetings of traditional chiefs, there are women who attend as female chiefs, and they usually sit together.
- On south Ambae there are some female chiefs, including Rosslyn Garae, a widow.
- I am working now with the Melanesian-Global Institute of Science, Philosophy, Humanities and Technology, on NE Pentecost. It is a school which teaches seven levels of education about indigenous cultures. We have had Japanese, Chinese and numerous other foreign visitors. We study indigenous philosophy, customary law, indigenous economics, indigenous leadership, etc.—about 60 subjects in all. We also study the “women's chiefly system.”
- From levels 1 to 6, the parents teach the traditions; then from 7 to 12, the nakamal does the teaching. Then after 12 the Institute does the teaching, in five more levels. We also teach English, Japanese, Chinese and other languages.

- You should know that in Vanuatu, 80% of the economy is not undertaken with cash, credit cards or bank accounts. The 80% consists of barter and the use of indigenous currencies – shell money, money mats and belts, pigs, pig tusks, pig skulls with tusks, red mats, precious stones and even sacred rocks (as on Erromango). A traditional bank was created in 1983 for all these currencies. This is all kept in one location, and it can be visited.
- So if the entire Western economy collapsed, we could easily carry on with our traditional economy, which pays for all or most of the weddings, custom disputes, land disputes, and other important exchanges. There is a TV program put together by the SBS called the “Piggy Bank” which is good, on this topic [see <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/dateline/story/vanuatus-piggy-bank>], and a film by Debra Harry called “The Leech and the Earthworm” which is also good.
- We have set up a bank in NE Pentecost for these currencies, and do lending, savings accounts, and withdrawals, and exchanges between types of indigenous currencies.
- On Malo there used to be the biggest traditional bank; it consisted of numerous pigs tusks. Women and women chiefs deposit pig tusks into this bank.
- I was the first woman Member of Parliament; there were two of us elected at the same time but the other woman lost her seat after four months.
- In the municipality of Port Vila there are five seats on the council now set aside for women, and in Luganville there are five setaside (or “reserved”) seats. This is a good thing. This may be a temporary measure, to just get people used to the idea of voting for women, and to help the parties field women candidates.
- In 2012 17 women contested for Parliament but none were elected. We then formed a coalition to negotiate for reserved seats. We have generated a lot of discussion. The traditionalists argue that women should not be in Parliament, but this is supposed to be a modern democracy.
- Purity from Matentas village on Santo is one of the 17 who contested for Parliament in 2012, but was not elected.
- There have only been five women elected to Parliament in the 36 years since Independence. That shows the problem. We should aim for 30% female representation in Parliament at first, but should later raise this higher to meet UN norms of 50%.
- We need setaside seats for women in the Provincial Councils and in Parliament.
- I was a Minister two times during my 11 years in Parliament – first for Health and Rural Water Supply, and then for Justice, Culture and Women’s Affairs. I served in Parliament from 1987 to 1998.
- Your Expedition should speak to Dorosday Kenneth Watson at the Women’s Department of the GoV. [This interview was conducted.]
- I am from a village near Laone on Pentecost.
- There is a book called “Women Leaders in Vanuatu” which is good.
- In Pentecost we train young women as female chiefs, to bring them up.
- I am very active in male and mixed custom councils at different levels, even at the highest level that I would call the level of a “tribal king,” since I speak the men’s languages and understand their concerns. They have started accepting me, since I have

studied them since 1996. I work and live with them, so they let me into their decision-making councils. I speak at their meetings.

- My highest chiefly rank is called “Salvantamata,” and the “tamata” means “peace.” I received this title as part of my 2005 international Award for a Nuclear Free Future. It was awarded in Norway. [See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear-Free_Future_Award] So the chiefs on Pentecost gave me the title after I got the award. The nuclear award is called the “alternative to the Nobel Peace Prize.”
- Previously I had received the Sean MacBride Peace Prize in London in 1993. [See: <http://www.ipb.org/web/index.php?mostra=content&menu=about%20ipb&submenu=Sean%20MacBride%20Peace%20Prize>, which states that “Hilda LINI of Vanuatu won the prize in 1993, was a former Health Minister who played a key role in WHO’s decision to approve a request to the World Court on the legal status of nuclear weapons.”
- Of all the women chiefs in the country now, I am probably the highest ranking in Pentecost and the nation, in the performance of chiefly rituals. In the north of Vanuatu, including Pentecost and Ambae, the highest ritual (for male or female chiefs) is to kill pigs on the rocks that are planted. (At lower levels one can kill a pig just by holding it, or at a higher level the pig is tied to a nemele plant, or at an even higher level you can kill a pig tied to a single rock. But at the highest level many rocks are used.) I did this in a major pig-killing ceremony in 2009 where 360 rocks were used and 360 pigs were killed in a very big nasara. This celebrated our “custom economic independence” and our reliance on the custom economy – land, natural resources, pigs, kava, and food – which has sustained us for thousands of years. This was part of the Melanesia Forum that meets every year at our Institute. In that ceremony I killed ten pigs, and was the only woman involved in the pig-killing. We are an indigenous nation that is independent. About 2500 chiefs from all over Vanuatu came to this ceremony of cultural economic independence.
- In my lifetime I have been involved in about 15 different pig-killing ceremonies and have killed about 25 pigs altogether. Some of them had full circular tusks.
- Some nasaras require me to wear full custom attire.
- I have 10 other chiefly titles besides my highest title of Salvantamata. So I am a female chief. And there are many female chiefs and we are also modern leaders.
- I have coordinated and mentored about 10 different women leaders to become Motaris -- women chiefs.
- When I received the award in London I was not sure how to dress; but I realized the best way was to dress in my full traditional dress as a female chief, since that is what I am. So that is what I did. My chiefly title, name and dress then, and that I am mostly known as now, is Motarilavao Hilda Lini.
- The custom bank on Malo has a three circle pig’s tusk; this is small but it is the most valuable in the custom bank. The man who deposited it kept one other three-circle tusk outside the bank, just to have it.
- There were hermaphrodite pigs in the past, and on Malo there were breeding techniques for this. They still exist, but they are quite rare. They are so special.
- [Chief Lini had recently been in an auto accident and did not want to be photographed at this point. She stated that she could supply a good photo of her in custom attire winning

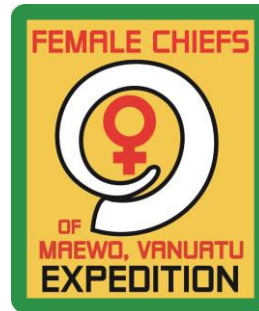
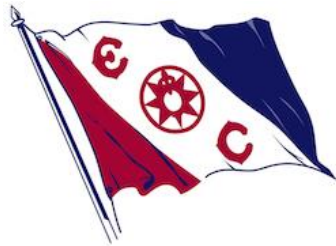
one of her two international prizes. She could be reached at cultureofpeacetours@gmail.com.]

- We gave Hilda Lini a patch from the Expedition, which she liked and thanked us for, and she gave us a Pentecost red mat.

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **Female chief who held highest title and all powers of a male chief, for four years**_____

2. Full name of interviewee: **Phoebe JOHN** _____

3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 31 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016

4. Approximate duration of interview: 45 minutes

5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu

6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email

7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and Alfred Baniuri
_____(names of persons)

8. Name of translator, if any: Alfred Baniuri_____

9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none

10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: _____

11. Tels for Interviewer: _____

12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: ____NA_____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: ____ _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 60 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French _____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

Phoebe John stated the following:

- She is from Piliura village on Pele island, north of Efate.
- Her father was a chief, born into a chiefly line.
- Her husband was Steven John, with the chiefly title of Meserei [she also later used the term "Mesereitonga."] He was a chief of Piliura village.
- Steven John held the title of chief for 14 years, but died in 2010.
- Steven John had received the chiefly title of Meserei from his elder brother, Kalpilelu John, who had died in about 1996.
- Kalpilelu John had young sons when he died. However, these sons were not old enough to become chiefs, nor had they accumulated wealth. Hence the title went to Steven John to hold.
- When Steven John died, the chiefly title of Meserei went to her, Phoebe John, and she held the title and office of village chief and all its powers, rights and privileges for four years, from 2010 to 2014.
- The rank of Meserei is the highest in a ten grade system of male (and sometimes female) chiefs.
- During that four year period, the eldest son of Kalpilelu John, who is named Henry John, was preparing to eventually take on the title of Meserei. He did this by "shadowing" Phoebe, attending the same meetings she did, and by accumulating pigs, mats and other wealth that he would eventually use in the ceremony in which he assumed his new chiefly title. However, during this four year period he had no decision-making power,

no chiefly title, and was only an observer in the meetings and in working with the village council and the (male) assistant chief.

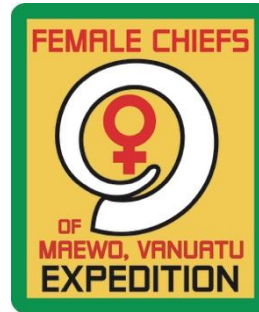
- Although Phoebe John held the title of chief of the village and rank of Meserei, she needed to work closely with the assistant chief on all decisions; he was male. As the village chief, she did have the final say, however. She also had to work with the village council, which was composed of men and women, holding various positions and titles. These included youth representatives, community leaders and others.
- Her village on Pele was rather peaceful and there were not many disputes in which she became involved. However, there was dispute she recalls that occurred with a neighboring village, in which that village was infringing on the reef that her village traditionally used for fishing and considered theirs. The situation was complicated by a “taboo” conservation area where fishing was not allowed, to allow the fish to restock.
- In this dispute, Phoebe John took action by analyzing the situation and giving instructions to her assistant chief to go to the other village, to find out their demands and to negotiate. She had sacred nemele leaves placed on the shore at the boundary line to mark her village’s area of the reef.
- She states that although some parts of the dispute were resolved during her time as chief, some nemele leaves are still being removed, and all parts of the dispute are still not over, as of 2016.
- As chief of the village, she did not get involved in marital disputes or matters.
- One role of village chief that she took on was welcoming visitors to the island and village.
- She described the manner in which she became chief as follows: first, her husband’s body was placed on a sacred mat which was used as his coffin/shroud. Second, after a time, the mat was removed from under his body and given to her as a symbol of her title as chief. Once she had this mat, she was the village chief, with the rank of Meserei. She did not kill a pig in the process of taking on the title of chief. She did not sing or chant a song at this ceremony. Third, she had to keep this mat safe, in a secret place, and very close to her, in her house, stored in the ceiling. The mat is special, has chicken feathers on it, and was originally brought to Steven John by the Pele council of chiefs. She apparently does not know who originally weaved it. Fourth, if the sacred mat was needed in a village ceremony, she did not use the actual mat, but wove a replica and only the replica was used in the ceremony. Fifth, she held the office and title of chief for four years, but some women in similar situations hold the office and title for as little as two years or as much as seven years. She noted that women in her area will normally take on the title of chief when their chiefly husband dies, so that the son (or in her case her nephew in law) of the dead chief has time to prepare for his role. She also noted that if she had died while she held the title of chief, then no-one would have held the title, until the nephew in law was ready to assume the title. Thus there might have been a period of several years in which the male assistant chief would act as village chief, but he would not have held the title of Meserei.
- She states that before she took on the rank of Meserei, she had no rank or title, and was only known as Phoebe John. While she was the chief of the village, she was known as

Phoebe John, Tukurao Masereitonga, with Tukurao being her chiefly name and Masereitonga being her chiefly rank.

- She states that many women in this system take on the roles, titles and ranks of chief for a period, this practice is common, and that at present in Efate, Pele and Nuna there may be five to ten such women with such chiefly titles and offices.
- In her village, there are two nasara [sacred grounds] and nakamals [chief's meeting house], each with a chief. She was the chief of the larger, more important nasara and nakamal, and was senior to and over the other, minor chief, who was male.
- The male (and sometimes female) system of ranks has ten levels, with Masereitonga being the highest grade [designated by the interviewer as grade 1], then grades 2 and 3 at the same level; then grade 4 at a different, lower level; then grades 5 and 6 at the same level; then grades 7,8,9 and 10 all being at successively lower levels. She does recall the names or the requirements for these 10 levels, other than the top name. [It was not clear why some "grades" are at the same "level" as others.]
- If any of the chiefs at any grade or level dies, then their wives will assume their titles for a period, until a male in the line is ready to assume the title.
- After she (and other women in her situation) give up the chiefly title and office, then she no longer has the title and office, and reverted to her simple name of Phoebe John, with no rank or title.
- While a chief, she was consulted and ruled on all village matters, but now that she is an ordinary person again, she is not formally consulted, but she may be asked informally for her opinion since she is respected.
- When she ceded her chiefly title to her husband's brother's eldest son, Henry John, there was a pig killing ceremony in which Henry killed a pig. She exchanged mats and other gifts with Henry, to symbolize the handover of the title and office. She also gave him the sacred mat that Steven John had laid on. In describing this ceremony, she used the term "ordination of the new chief."
- She thinks that it would be a good idea for women to take on the full role of chief regularly, not just when their chiefly husband dies, and to have the pig-killing "ordination" ceremony for women, too. She thinks that men just tend to "talk, talk, talk" and not accomplish much. But when women speak out, a resolution and solution is quickly reached.
- A copy of any article published about this interview should be sent to her daughter, Lotto at lotto@vanuatu.gov.vu (she works in the Marine department of the GoV), or to her at her private email: lei.yoan3@hotmail.com.
- [I, Lew Toulmin, took several photos of Pheobe John; these will be appended in the final report.]

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition
Explorers Club Flag Expedition
Questionnaire for Female Chiefs



1. Focus topic of interview: Female chief from Pentecost Island
2. Full name of interviewee: Doreen LEONA Mwei Amuna (DL)
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 16 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 90 minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and Michael Wyrick (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: NA
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: Wyrick
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____ at VNPF _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male

15. Est. age of interviewee: ____35__ (years)

16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama ____ French ____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor ____ Fair ____ Good Excellent ____

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes ____ Possible ____

19. Describe bias if other than “No”: _____

Abbreviations: DK = don’t know; FC = Female Chief; NA = not available; NApp: not applicable; REF = refused to answer question; OUT = ran out time for any more questions; M = Maewo island; P = Pentecost island; Van = Vanuatu; Letters of the respondent can be used as abbreviation, thus: SLT said that... = Susan Little Toulmin said that... USD = United States dollars

[Note: items in brackets are comments by the interviewer; or are instructions to the interviewer which should not be read to the respondent.]

INTRODUCTION:

Hello. My name is _____ , and I have come here from _____ [country] , and I am very interested in the female chiefs of Vanuatu. I would like to ask you a few questions about you and about your position as a female chief. If there is anything sensitive that you do not want to talk about or have published, please let me know. If you don’t know the answer to a question, that is fine. Just say “I don’t know.” Is it all right if we talk with you about this?

20. Yes No _____

We would like to record this interview by: (say and check all that apply):

21. Taking notes Video ____ Audio recording Other ____

22. Is it all right to record and publish our interview in these ways? Yes No ____

[If “no” then stop interview or clarify response.]

Thanks!

BACKGROUND:

23. OK, great, let’s get started. First, please tell me your full name: __ **Doreen LEONA (family name) Mwei Amua (kastom name) plus chiefly name, but she has forgotten this name and must ask her mother** _____ [may be 4-5 names]

24. Is one of these names a chiefly title or “chief name”? Sort of; see above
 What is that chiefly name? DL has forgotten What does it mean?
DK
25. Do you get your family name and trace your ancestry back through your mother’s line, or back through your father’s line? **Mother’s. All of Pentecost is matrilineal, and N and E Ambae is matrilineal.**
26. What island do you live on now? Efate
27. Which village or town? Port Vila
28. What island were you born on? Ambae, but grew up in N Pentecost
29. Which village or town? **Born in Lolowai, Ambae, raised in Longton village, Pentecost**
30. What tribe or clan were you born into? Raised in “Galatana” clan on Pentecost (means “Flourishing”)
31. What tribe or clan are you a member of now? Galatana
32. What year were you born in? NA [OR, how old are you?] _____ (years)
33. What do you do for a living? Finance and IT supervisor at VNPF (Vanuatu National Provident Fund; similar to the US Social Security Administration)
34. What is your marriage situation? Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____
 Other, describe: Separated, used to use name “LANGO” as last name but now have dropped this
35. How many children do you have? OUT
36. If you are married or were married, is/was your husband a chief? No OUT Yes _____
37. How long have you been a female chief? since 2007, 9 years years (also **DL killed a pig in 1998 to celebrate her getting a college degree, but this was not a chiefly ceremony**)
38. How were you recruited to be a female chief? mother was a chief and father was an important chief (a “100 pig” highest level chief) (i.e. he killed 100 pigs in his final promotion ceremony) He was one of only 3 “100 pig” chiefs on Pentecost. His 100 pig chiefly title was “Boevudolua”_Because of this background, it was natural that DL would become a FC.

39. What is your grade or level of chief now? DL's level is the bottom level, she does not recall the name of her grade (name of level)

40. Was your mother a female chief? No___ Yes x **When DL's mother became a female chief, she gained the knowledge to make all her daughters female chiefs.**

41. Was your father a chief? No___ Yes x

FEMALE CHIEFS

42. About how many female chiefs are there in your village? DK 42a. On Maewo? about 25-40% of adult females are FCs on Pentecost; DK about Maewo

43. On Pentecost? about 25-40% of adult females 43a. In Vanuatu? DK, most FCs are in PENAMA province 43b. In Melanesia? DK

44. In your village, are there both male and female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, how many of each? Male: ___ Female: ___ **She lives in Port Vila now, here have male and female chiefs, and her nakamal here in PV is open to males and females. On Pentecost the nakamal is open in the front to both sexes, but in the rear there is a sacred ("tambu" or taboo) area that is not open to everyone.**

There are two or more kinds of FCs on Pentecost, including: "kastom" FCs who know a lot about custom matters; and employment FCs who are honored because of their job achievements.

45. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have their own nakamal? No: x Yes: _

DL is not aware of any FC-only nakamals.

46. Are men allowed into this nakamal? No: ___ Yes: ___ NA

47. What do you do in the nakamal? FCs and other women can drink kava in the nakamal and elsewhere in Port Vila, but on Pentecost women, even FCs, are not supposed to drink kava, which is reserved for males

47a. Do the female chiefs use the men's nakamal, instead of having their own? Yes: ___ No: ___ **It is open to both on Pentecost.**

47b. If so, are the female chiefs only allowed to use the front part of the nakamal?

No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: NA

48. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have grades or levels? No: ___ Yes: ___ **Not sure, thinks there are grades but does not know names or how many**

49. How many grades? **_see above_** (may be 1 to 10 or more)

50. What are the names of the levels and requirements for each level, starting with the lowest? (For example, to move from level 2 to 3 you must have a pig-killing ceremony of ten regular and one sacred pigs, serve time for a certain number of years, and settle Kastom disputes.)

50-1. Lowest level name: **___DK_____** Requirements: **__kill 1-2 sacred pigs with circular tusks. Go through ceremonies and isolation where instructed in FC lore. DL thinks that in past some women would go to the level of killing 10 or even 100 pigs, but this does not happen now on Pentecost_____** (does she have to be unmarried to become an entry level female chief?) **No**

DL does not really think of the various FC insignia as grades, but rather as items of honor that must be purchased with cash (common nowadays), or mats (usually famous red Pentecost mats), or pigs, or other valuable items. The insignia include armbands, sacred nemele leaves to be worn on the back as sort of a bustle, other leaves, a single feather in the hair (lower status), multiple feathers in the hair (higher status), a comb in the hair, bracelets, certain patterns on the dress, certain flowers, a coconut leaf worn behind the back, etc.

Each of these insignia has a set price. A sacred circular tusk might cost 25,000 Vatu (about \$250 USD) although this depends on whether it is a full circle and other elements of quality. The privilege of wearing a sacred nemele or coconut leaf on the back, costs 50,000 Vatu. Combs used to be locally made and were beautiful, now they are made in China. Another privilege of a FC is to be able to eat certain “tambu” (taboo) foods in the nakamal, and to be able to go to certain tambu areas in the back of the nakamal. The cost of an entire FC ceremony, to get all the major insignia, is about 200,000 Vatu (about \$2000 USD). When a person who understands the FC insignia sees a FC dressed in custom costume, that person can immediately identify all the insignia and understand what privileges she has.

At the FC pig killing ceremony, no-one is allowed to clap unless they have brought a pig for the FC to sacrifice.

A FC pig killing ceremony (or a male ceremony) can fail. This can happen if there has not been enough planning, if other FCs and persons in the area do not bring in enough pigs and other valuable goods, and if the person being promoted is not popular. The pigs are supposed to be brought in and tied to a line of nemele plants on the ceremonial ground, and this should happen during the opening part of the ceremony, when the tam-tam drum is

being beaten. But pigs and other valuables can arrive up until midnight. If not enough items arrive early in the ceremony, the participants may run to other villages to ask them to bring in items for the ceremony, so it will not fail.

The pig meat is usually baked and distributed, some to the chiefs, and some to the crowd. If some is left over then it will be preserved for eating later, or taken away to other villages, but usually it is all eaten up immediately.

One person at the ceremony will be in charge of counting the size of the crowd. This person will use stalks of nemele leaves to count the number of people, but breaking the leaf stem on the stalk, one for each person.

A typical FC or male ceremony will have about 100 mats brought in. These take a huge amount of time to make.

A club is used to kill the pig. It is passed down in the family. It has carving on the top, usually.

A Kastom dance or other dancing may last all night, after the day's ceremonies are over.

50-2. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-3. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-4. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-5. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-6. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-7. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-8. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-9. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-10. Highest level name: _____ **DK** _____ Requirements: _____

51. At the lowest, entry level, does a woman have to be unmarried in order to become a female chief? No: Yes: Describe **It is not required that she be married or unmarried, but it is better if she is not married, because becoming a FC makes her more desirable in the eyes of men and potential suitors, and she can get a better match. The men, even young "modern" men, will "carefully watch" the young women who are making FC status, and will watch their custom dance.**_____

52. Is it possible for a woman to “skip” some of these grades as she goes up the ladder?

No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe **DK** NA ___

53. Does a woman lose some of her powers as a female chief, if she marries? No: x Yes: ___ Describe **Her powers and privileges stay with her until she dies.** _____

53a. Can a female chief transfer her title to a sister?

No: ___ Yes: x Describe **Possibly. She can “loan” a daughter some of her sacred insignia of female chiefhood (e.g. armbands, feather in hair, sacred nemele leaf worn on back), on the promise that these will be paid for in future, or for the daughter to wear on non-official occasions, as a show or demonstration.**

A FC can bring a daughter or perhaps other close female relatives into chiefly status, but not outside the family. _____

54. How many female chiefs of the highest level are there in Maewo? **DK** _____

55. Is there a “Paramount Female Chief” for Maewo or Vanuatu? No: ___ Yes: ___

Describe: **Not now. But in DL’s grandmother’s time, she thinks there were Female Paramount Chiefs** _____ Name of Paramount F.C.: _____ Contact info: _____

56. At what age do women usually become a female chief? **Make FC status in mid-20s to mid-30s, but do not accumulate enough wealth (mats, tusks, pigs, etc.) to do her FC custom dance until the 40s or 50s** _____

57. If a woman is a female chief, does her daughter automatically become a female chief?

No: x Yes: ___ Describe **But it is more likely** _____

57a. If a man is a chief, does his daughter automatically become a female chief? No: x Yes: ___ Describe _____

58. In your village or area, how many levels or grades do the male chiefs have? **OUT** _____
How do their levels or grades differ from the female chiefs? **Men can go up to 100 pig level, but this is rare and dying out. Men may kill roosters, chickens and crabs, as well as pigs, in their grade promotion ceremonies. Women only kill pigs.**

DL’s father was weak and in a wheelchair when he “killed” his 100 pigs, so he tapped the pigs with his walking stick and the actual killing was done by an assistant. _____

59. Besides pig-killing and dancing, are there other ceremonies that you do as female chiefs?

No: ___ Yes: x If yes, describe: **initiation and training. Men (and women who are not FCs) are not allowed to be present during these times.**_____

60. Do the female chiefs drink kava as part of their ceremonies? No: x, **not on Pentecost, not allowed for any women** Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

61. Do female chiefs have magical powers? No: ___ Yes: x If yes, describe: **Some FCs have black magic skills, this is fairly common on Maewo (the “water” island) and Ambrym (the “fire” island). In the past FCs could connect with spirits.**

Some FCs compose Kastom songs, and sing them in other villages, and get paid to do this. They may also lead dances in other villages._____

62. What is the most impressive magic you have ever seen done by a female chief?
_____OUT_____

63. Do female chiefs ever have contests of magic to show who is stronger?

No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____OUT_____

64. Do female chief magic powers differ from male chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe:
_____OUT_____

65. Some female chiefs state that they can disappear any time they want. Is that true? No: ___
Yes: ___ If yes, describe how it is done: _____OUT_____

66. Do female chiefs have to purchase (buy) special knowledge, magic powers, or rituals? No: ___
Yes: x If yes, describe: **insignia must be purchased, as described above**_____

67. Are there any “Kastom” stories that describe the first female chief, or other things related to the female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, please tell me the story: **DL thinks there is, but has forgotten**_____

68. I understand that on Maewo there is a “Kastom” called “Ole,” where men dress up and sometimes try to drive out illness or evil spirits by hitting people with clubs or stones. And I have heard that in some villages the highest level of Ole is the “Dog-Faced Ole,” who can pant like a dog and drive out serious illnesses from sick people. Do the Female Chiefs ever get involved in Ole? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____OUT_____

69. Are there any sand paintings that describe the first female chief, or other things related to the female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe such a sand painting: **DK, all children of**

both sexes and all FCs learn sandpainting, custom dances, and various legends as part of growing up in the village_____

70. Are there any Kastom mats that relate to the Female Chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____OUT_____

71. What is the initiation ritual for the youngest female chiefs, when they first become a chief?
__isolation in women-only hut, and instruction for a week or more_____

72. Are the numbers of female chiefs growing, staying the same, or decreasing?
____Decreasing_____

73. What do young women like or dislike about becoming a female chief? __Attracts men_____

74. Why are you attending this Female Chiefs Gathering? ___NA_____

75. What will you do here at this Gathering? _____NA_____

76. Will there be another Gathering next year? No: ___ DK _x___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe when, where, how long: _____

JURISDICTION AND POWERS [Key section – be sure to get this section done]

77. In Vanuatu, I understand that most male chiefs are allowed to listen to and decide disputes over crimes, over civil disputes, over land disputes, and over “Kastom” [custom tribal] matters. As a female chief are you allowed to decide all four kinds of disputes? Please explain: ____No, FCs do not adjudicate disputes. They may speak up in land, custom or criminal matters and disputes, and their views will be more respected because they are FCs. But the “judges” in these matters are male chiefs.

If a FC was found to be wearing the wrong insignia, this might lead to an inquiry by the other FCs. But this never happens. Everyone knows what to wear, and they follow the rules. _____

78. How many matters or disputes have you been involved in, as a female chief, in the last year?
__Zero__

79. Please describe for me 2-3 examples of matters or disputes that you made decisions on, as a female chief, in the last year: **None**

80. What methods do you use to resolve disputes? ____NA_____ [some possible ways: hear evidence; hold meetings between the parties; hold meetings between the villages; negotiate chief-to-chief over the matter; etc.]

81. What happens if the groups in a dispute do not accept your decision? ____NA_____

82. Can you give out a punishment for violations? No: ____ Yes: ____ If yes, describe: _____ NA

83. What is the most important case or matter you ever worked on, as a female chief? _____ NA

84. I understand that one of the areas in which female chiefs settle disputes is in Kastom clothing, and who is allowed to wear what. Is that right? No ____ Yes ____ If so, can you show me and describe some items on your clothes/costume today that show what rank you are? OUT

85. Can you show me some other Kastom items you are wearing or carrying? OUT

86. What are your duties as a female chief, besides settling disputes? **__Counsel young women, pass along wisdom, speak out in village matters, help prevent domestic violence, work with relatives like nieces and nephews to educate them.__**

RELATIONS WITH MALE CHIEFS

87. Do the male chiefs in your village or area recognize that you are a chief? Yes: x No: ____ Some do, some don't _____ Describe if not clear: **_In N Pentecost and in Port Vila DL is recognized by male chiefs and males as a FC, no-one disputes this._**_____

88. If some don't, why do they say you are not a "real" chief? _____NA_____

89. Do you ever have cases where it is not clear if the male or the female chief should be in charge of the case? No: ____ Yes: ____ If yes, describe: **__NA; female chiefs do not hear cases**_____

90. Do the local, provincial or national authorities recognize that you are a "real" chief? Describe: _____OUT_____

91. Does the fact that you are a female chief get you more respect from men on your island?

Yes, a lot: x Yes, a little ____ Neutral __ Get less respect __ Get much less respect ____

92. Does the fact that you are a female chief get you more respect from women on your island?

Yes, a lot: Yes, a little Neutral Get less respect Get much less respect

93. I understand that the National Council of Chiefs, the “Malvatumauri,” has refused to recognize any female chiefs as “real” chiefs. Please tell me why this is right or wrong.

OUT _____

94. What arguments does the Malvatumauri use to say that women cannot be real chiefs?

DL doesn't know, we should speak to Hilda Lini, who got a UN Medal for promoting women's rights. She is the sister of the Vanuatu founding father Walter Lini, She wears circular sacred pigs tusks on her arms as a symbol that she is a female chief. _____

95. Have you ever applied to any other national chief's organization for recognition?

No: Yes: If yes, describe: OUT _____

96. How long have female chiefs existed in Vanuatu? **for “long time” -- hundreds of years** _____ (years)

97. Have you heard about female chiefs all your life? No: Yes:

98. In some villages is there a female “club” or group or society that is sort of like a chiefly system?

No: Yes: If yes, describe how it is similar or different: OUT _____

99. Have you heard of “making Lengwasa”? No: Yes:

If yes, describe what it means: _____

100. One person has said that when women have a pig-killing ceremony, it is only done so that the women honor the local men, not because the women are chiefs.

Is that true? No: Yes: If yes, describe: _____

101. Have the ceremonies, duties or nature of female chiefs changed over the last ten years?

No: Yes: If yes, describe: **There is now no more killing by FCs of 10 or more sacred pigs. Cash money is key now, not other valuables. Wealth and cash are a symbol of hard work.**

FCs are often inducted earlier now, when the girls are in their teens, and this is bad, because often they do not really understand what they are getting into and what all the terms mean.

The presence of cell phones in every household means that FC ceremonies and meetings are easier to organize. _____

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S ISSUES

102. The Ministry of Justice has started a program to recruit women in outer islands to monitor the situation regarding domestic violence and women's problems. Are you involved in that program? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: **___DK_____**

103. Do your duties as a female chief involved trying to prevent or resolve domestic violence?

No: ___ Yes: **_X_** If yes, describe: **_We watch out for that and try to prevent that and counsel victims and young men. We teach men how to behave.** _____

104. As a female chief, are you involved in other women's issues? No: **_x_** Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

105. Do you think the situation on Maewo for women is better than on other islands, because there are female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: **_x_** If yes, describe: **___Yes, definitely. By having respected women chiefs, who speak up for women and against domestic violence, DL thinks that violence against women is lower in PENAMA province and in villages with female chiefs. Women can be heard in the nakamal, the home and the village better, since they are FCs.**

There is lots of black magic in Pentecost, especially in the W side. Having FCs can help push away the bad side of magic.

In Ambrym people believe that you must eat all the food on your plate, because if you don't, someone can take the remaining food and use it to put a black magic spell on you. We don't believe in that particular danger on Pentecost. _____

106. About what percentage of women in your village have experienced domestic violence? _____% OUT

LANGUAGE

107. What is the name of the language you speak in your village? **___Raga_(in her village on Pentecost)** _____

108. How many local languages are spoken on Maewo? 6 on Pentecost, DK about Maewo What are their names?

DK _____ [May be about 4 or more; possible names include: Sungawadia/Marino/North Maewo; Central Maewo/Peterara; Baetora; etc.]

109. Are there any written materials in your village language? Yes: x No: _____

Describe: There is a Raga dictionary with 9000 words published by my father who was the head of the field workers for the Vanuatu Cultural Center until he died. But there are very few copies, perhaps only a couple, available. We are trying to publish more. There is a Bible in Raja and a hymnal, but not much else. _____ [e.g., Bible, hymnal, dictionary, orthography (rules of the language), island stories, grammar school materials, etc.]

110. Are there any firm plans to create more written materials in your local language?

Yes: x No: _____ Describe: working on additional copies of dictionary _____

111. About what percent of the children in your village under the age of six, speak only their island language? **100% speak Raga only (in her village in Pentecost).**

0 % Speak Bislama? 0 % Speak English? 0 % Speak French: _____% [Note: percents can add to more than 100%]

112. What percent of the children in your village go to French school, to English school, Bislama school, or something else?

French 30 % English 70 % Bislama 0 % Other (describe) 0 % _____

113. Is it a problem in your village if the children do not speak French or English well, but must go to a French or English school in the first grade? Yes: _____ No: x Describe: **The kids eventually catch up, even though they do not speak a word of French or English when they enter school.**

OTHER

114. What else do you want to tell me about female chiefs? Pig killing is dying out for FCs, but custom dances are still strong. _____

[Now if respondent is not exhausted, you can pursue topics that have arisen during the interview, or other topics. But be sure to take notes and write up the results in detail!]

Thank you very much for all your assistance! I really appreciate it.

PHOTO OF INTERVIEWEE [be sure to get this, with the name tag]

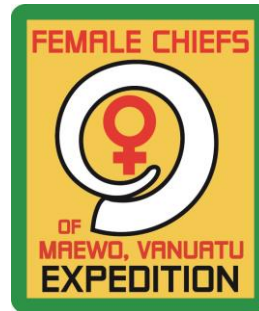
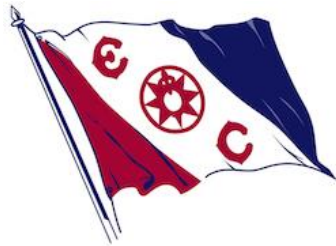
115. Give the female chief a name tag with her name on it. Take a picture of her, including her visible and readable name tag. Insert here a document-res photo of the interviewee. Provide a high res version of the pic to the Expedition Leader.

#end#

FINAL 9 August 2016

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **_Female chief from Pentecost who holds the second rank of chiefly title and who got 4 of her 5 daughters to achieve chiefly rank_____**
2. Full name of interviewee: **_Lolowei Musero Leona, Motari Amera_____**
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: __1__ Name of Month: _Sept____ Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: __20____ minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: **___East of Port Vila, at the house of Doreen Leona, Motari, during a photo session of Doreen_____** Island: _Efate____ Country: **Vanuatu**
6. Interviewed by phone _ mail __ in-person X _ or email __
7. Interview conducted by: __Lew Toulmin_ and _____(names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: __Doreen Leona_____
9. Interview recorded by: video ____ audio ____ other ____ none _x__
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: __NA_____; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: ____NA_____

13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 80 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French _____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

Lolowei Musero Leona stated the following:

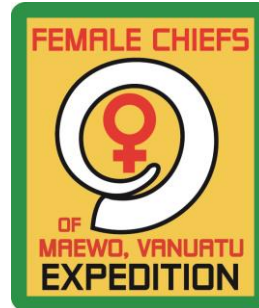
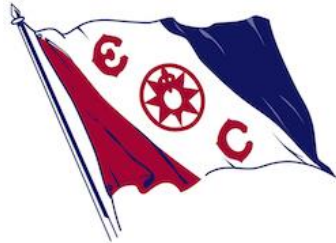
- She is from north Pentecost, from outside of Lonton village.
- She is 80 years old.
- She is the mother of Doreen Leona [who is interviewed elsewhere]
- Lolowei's maiden name is Lolowei Musero, she married a man with a family name of Leona, her chiefly rank is Motari, and her chiefly name is Amera.
- She holds the rank and chiefly title of Motari. She calls herself a "female chief" and is comfortable with that term.
- She has five daughters and four of them, including Doreen, have achieved chiefly rank.
- She helped her daughters achieve their status by gaining and passing on the knowledge of the chiefly system.
- The chiefly titles in the lower tier of the ranking system in her area of Pentecost are: first (lowest): Mwei; second: Motari; third and highest of the first tier: Sal. Women and men can both achieve these three ranks. For all three grade levels, the man or the woman must kill a sacred, tusked pig in a ceremony, in order to achieve the rank.
- In the upper tier of chiefly ranks are five grades that she recalls, and there may be more she has forgotten. Only men can obtain grades in this upper tier. Starting at the bottom, these five grades/titles are: Tari; Livus; Fera; Bofudolua; Vera.
- The husband, brother and father of Lolowei all achieved the rank of Bofudolua. For this grade, the man must kill 100 pigs.
- She does not recall the requirements for the various grades of chiefly rank, other than Bofudolua. [She had difficulty recalling the names of the various male-only ranks.]

- She helped her daughter Doreen cut items from the garden which were symbols of chiefly rank and insignia of various rights and privileges. These are recorded in a video interview with Doreen and Lolowei, but in general they included: palm leaf for a sun shade; leaves placed in a “bustle” behind the lower back; and sprigs of plants placed under an armband. She also helped Doreen put on an armband; circular pig’s tusk, which was one of the tusks from the actual pig Doreen killed at her Motari ceremony (the other one had been sold by her father); and a the comb in the hair, which Doreen stated should have been a hand-made natural comb but was a Chinese-made plastic comb. She also helped Doreen put on and adjust several woven pandanus mats which were part of her Motari costume.
- [I, Lew Toulmin, took various photos of Lolowei Musero Leona and Doreen Leona; these will be appended in the final report. A video interview primarily with Doreen but with Lolowei contributing, with Doreen in Motari chiefly costume was also recorded.]

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **Discussion of Female Chiefs with Alcita Vuti, Acting CEO of the National Council of Chiefs of Vanuatu (NCC, officially called the Malvatumauri)**_____
2. Full name of interviewee: **Alcita Vuti** _____
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 29 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 30 minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and _____ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: NA
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____

13. Other contact info for this interviewee: avuti@vanuatu.gov.vu
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 44 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than “No”: _____

Alcita Vuti stated the following:

- He is the acting CEO (not the titular head, but the acting head of the staff) of the National Council of Chiefs, the Malvatumauri. He is from the Ndui-Ndui/Nanako area of NW Ambae.
- The NCC is established in the Constitution of Vanuatu, to look after custom affairs. The NCC is particularly concerned about any bills or legislation that might affect custom.
- Women have a role to play in custom, but men generally take the lead in decision-making in custom, tradition, culture and land matters.
- The NCC is a national-level organization, but it really works from the bottom up, so that the top level endorses matters brought up to it by the subordinate levels in the structure.
- Starting at the bottom of the structure, the levels are the local nakamal (chief’s house, very significant in land matters; there may be several in a village); the village; the island; the area council; and the national level.
- The national level responds to items brought to it from the area council level. It is the responsibility of the lower levels to bring matters and the names of local chiefs upwards to the national level for endorsement. There are some so-called chiefs that are not really chiefs and have just assumed this title. This should not happen.
- Regarding the matter of whether there are “women chiefs” or “female chiefs” in Vanuatu, vs. other traditional names, this matter is very confusing, things are changing, and they vary widely from island to island. But the question is a very important one that is being considered and discussed now in the NCC.
- Today the NCC has an old, tentative draft list of chiefs and their names. This list does not have any women on it.

- The NCC is pursuing a “road map” development plan to create a comprehensive, accurate list of chiefs, including any women chiefs, land dispute adjudicators, clerks and secretaries and other officials who are involved in custom, land or related matters. [NB: he used the term “women chiefs” himself, explicitly.]
- The focus of the road map is on 4 islands: Ambae, Efate, Tanna and Malo.
- By about Dec 2016 or so, NCC should have a list of officials from the area councils of these islands, for approval by the national level of the NCC. This list may include female chiefs, if the area councils recommend such women, and if they are given proper chiefly custom names.
- NCC is also collecting information on custom land boundaries, at the same time.
- Women are often involved in land and custom land disputes across the country, and sometimes they are allowed to speak in public or in a nakamal about such disputes, and sometimes they must speak in private or through a middleman to give their views.
- In some areas the women support the adjudication process by preparing food for the male participants.
- It is not yet clear if there are any female chiefs who will be brought forward by the area councils for approval by the national level of the NCC.
- On Ambae [his island] women are made “chiefs,” but they are not allowed to speak in front of everyone. Thus they are not the same as male chiefs. Rather some women are given high status as chiefs in order to support their husbands, who are usually chiefs, and they help the male chiefs, accompany them, and eat some taboo foods.
- Regarding steps or grades for females, on Ambae women do have steps or grades, and they get promoted up the grades, but they are not promoted up to be rulers, rather they are promoted to help their husbands and have an appropriate high status.
- On Ambae some women do kill pigs, and have a ceremony to honor them (the women). This is not done to make the women into chiefs like the male chiefs, but to honor the women and give them status as a high profile lady. So just because someone kills a pig in a ceremony, does not make that person a chief.
- The term “making Lengwasa” is not used on Ambae. He does not know this term.
- In the Ndui-Ndui area of NW Ambae, there are four grades of status as a chief: first and lowest: Hehe level, where a man or a woman kills a rooster; second, Mole level, where a man or a woman kills a tusked pig; third, for men only, the Tari level; and fourth and highest, for men only, the Vira or Hapwa level.
- So for the bottom two levels, the women are in fact chiefs and have chiefly ranks, but there are limitations on them.
- This system of chiefly ranks is called the “hungwe” and it is written up in a good book by Michael Alan [sic?] that is in the National Library.
- The purpose of the hungwe system, when done properly, is to serve the people and give them food. But sometimes the system is misused and it becomes a money-based system to build up the ego and presence of one person, a “big man.” This is bad.
- It is possible that in the future there will be women chiefs with all the powers, jurisdiction, rights and titles of male chiefs.

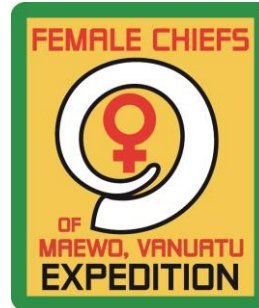
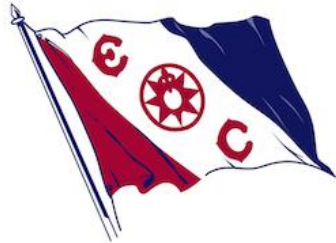
- Current law has made it clear that in the nakamal, men are supposed to be chiefs. But the law also indicates that at the levels above the nakamal, up to and including the area council level, women can be chiefs, and if the area council makes the recommendation, then the national level may endorse that recommendation to recognize female chiefs.
- It is not the case to date that any woman or women have approached the NCC and requested recognition as chiefs. There has been no such approach or decision.
- NCC and the entire system has some challenges, and one is the occasional event where a naturalized citizen or foreigner is allowed to do a pig-killing or is made a chief. This is “crazy” and is not right. This sometimes happens at the village level, but would not be recognized at the national or intermediate levels.
- Michael Alan’s book also includes information on the WW II plane wreck at Nanako near Ndui-Ndui.

#end#

V2, corrected

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: Discussion of Female Chiefs and Notari with Dalsie Baniala, Telecom Regulator of Vanuatu and head of TRR

2. Full name of interviewee: Dalsie Baniala

3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 28 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016

4. Approximate duration of interview: 30 minutes

5. Location of interview: Village: Kerembei Island: Maewo Country: Vanuatu

6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email

7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and _____ (names of persons)

8. Name of translator, if any: NA

9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none

10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: _____

11. Tels for Interviewer: _____

12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____

13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____

14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 38 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

Dalsie Baniala stated the following:

- She is from Maewo, in a village just south of Kerembei on the central west coast.
- She is the head of TRR, the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulator office of Vanuatu. She is the first Ni-Van head of TRR.
- She is not a "notari" or a female chief. She has been asked to take on the title of notari in Maewo by going through the Lengwasa ritual, but she is too busy being head of TRR in Port Vila.
- She was a leading organizer of the two day Arts and Cultural Festival [where she was interviewed], and gathering of notaris, in late August 2016, in Kerembei village on Maewo, which was attended by about 300 participants, several PCVs, other foreigners, visitors, and a team from The Explorers Club, who came as part of a Flag Expedition called "The Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition."
- She strongly feels that the local term "notari" is most reasonably translated as "female chief" or "female Kastom chief" or "female leader." She feels this for several reasons: first, to get the title notari, the young woman must go through a complex 10 day ceremony and ritual, called "making Lengwasa." Men cannot go through this ceremony, it is reserved for women, but it is parallel to the male grade system. Second, that the Lengwasa ceremony involves killing a pig, which is the traditional way that male chiefs rise to higher rank. Third, that it is wrong, as written in the article "Making Lengwasa" written in the 1980s, that the Lengwasa ceremony is designed only to protect young girls and infants from an evil spirit; in fact Lengwasa is a traditional ceremony that raises women to a higher, more respected, rank. Fourth, that there are usually two steps for women for making Lengwasa, and the ceremony is repeated twice, with a pig-killing each time, and that the second step is analogous to the male graded chief system, although the women do not compete like the men do. Fifth, through interviewing an older woman in Kerembei, she has found that there are two women who have been granted a third Lengwasa step. Sixth, through this same interview, she has found that there were in the past at least three more steps for the female notari Lengwasa, but these sadly have been forgotten and are now not practiced. Seventh, she states that many notari

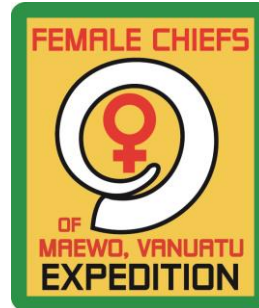
will state in private that they are “female chiefs” or “female custom chiefs,” but in public and especially in the presence of male chiefs, these same women will be too shy or afraid to use the term “chief” for themselves.

- She acknowledges that “female chiefs” do not have the same broad civil, criminal and custom authority and powers of male chiefs, but rather their authority is more in the custom area.
- She states that the only insignia for a very senior and respected notari in Kerembei is a single, long, curved feather in the hair. This is worn currently by one woman who trains the young notari in their songs, rituals and traditions of the notari.
- She believes that notari should be recognized by the NCC and society as “female chiefs” or “female custom chiefs.” She is glad to hear that the NCC is possibly open to having female chiefs on their list of officially recognized chiefs of Vanuatu. She understands that there were no official appeals in the past from females to the NCC to be recognized as chiefs.
- On Maewo there are two types of male chiefs, elected (who focus mainly on political and economic matters) and inherited (who focus mainly on custom matters).
- Maewo leaders are tentatively planning to hold another Maewo Arts and Custom Festival in 2017, in May.
- Any upcoming Lengwasa pig-killing ceremonies are likely to take place during the Christmas school break period.
- The Expedition should interview Dorosday Kenneth, Director of Women’s Affairs for the GoV. [This was later completed.]

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **_Discussion with Director of the Department of Women's Affairs**
2. Full name of interviewee: **__ Dorosday Kenneth Watson _____**
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: **__1__** Name of Month: **_Sept__** Year: **2016**
4. Approximate duration of interview: **__45__** minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: **__Port Vila__** Island: **_Efate__** Country: **Vanuatu**
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: **__Lew Toulmin_____** and _____ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: **__NA_____**
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: **__NA_____**; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male

15. Est. age of interviewee: 45 (years)

16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible

19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

Dorosday Kenneth Watson stated the following:

- She is the head of the Department of Women's Affairs of the Government of Vanuatu.
- She states that "there are many women chiefs in Vanuatu."
- She knows some women chiefs, including Hilda Lini, the sister of Rev. Walter Lini, one of the founders of Vanuatu and its first Prime Minister. Another female chief is Jenny Ligo.
- On Pentecost and Ambae women become female chiefs by killing pigs in a ritual ceremony.
- She is from Uripiv village on the north coast of Malekula island. There women who achieve a lot of outstanding work are given a custom name as an honor, but there are only male chiefs there. So in Uripiv there are not female chiefs, but they do exist elsewhere in Vanuatu.
- In the National Equality Consultation, Hilda Lini made the point that there are female chiefs. Their role and process of becoming a chief is somewhat different from male chiefs, but they are chiefs nonetheless. Some female chiefs cannot speak out publicly in the nakamal.
- The problems encountered by women in Vanuatu regarding chiefs is illustrated by the recent opening for the job of Executive Director of the National Council of Chiefs (NCC). (There is only an Acting Executive Director now; this Acting ED is Alcita Vuti, who is also the Executive Director of the Land Tribunal, which is attached to the NCC.) This job is not the head of the organization, just the director of the staff. So it should not matter if the person is a man or a woman. Because of this I asked a classmate of mine, an excellent and well-qualified woman, to apply for the job. At first her application was accepted and it looked like she would get the job. But now it looks like male chiefs inside the NCC are protesting, and she will likely not get the position.
- The male chiefs are wrong when they say and think that only men can be chiefs. I have read the law on this, which established the NCC in law and in the Constitution, quite carefully, and it does not state anything about the sex of a chief. When I point this out to many male chiefs, they are quite shocked.
- I have asked the male chiefs to put forward their daughters to be female chiefs and community leaders. They need to start early and at home.

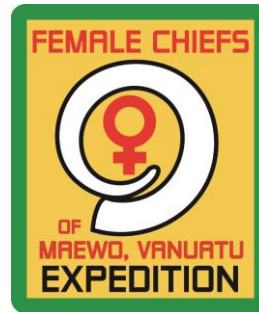
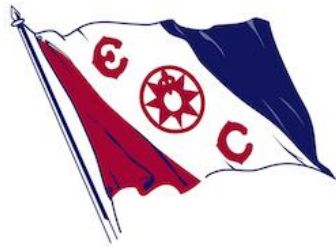
- For a while we had a women’s advocate and gender specialist in the Ministry of Lands, but the position was not supported and no one was willing to press on this matter, because they did not see the need to change.
- She is not a female chief and holds no chiefly rank or title.
- Chiefs are now being asked to do more and more things, in lands, leadership, criminal justice, preventing domestic violence, and so on, and they need more training and more of them need to be women.
- There needs to be a multi-pronged program re female chiefs: male chiefs need to groom their daughters to be female chiefs; we need to document the evidence and extent of existing female chiefs in Vanuatu society; and we need to enforce the national legislation which makes it clear that anyone of either sex can be a chief.
- She always wanted to know more about the second point above – how many female chiefs there were and what their roles are, and where are they located.
- There is a “women in culture” network, but this is rather different from a “female chiefs” group.
- There should be more women active and recognized as leaders in the water sector, since water is so vital.
- There are women active in the Justice sector, in the police, prosecution, children’s protection and other areas; they are helped by the National Family Protection Act of 2008. There is a great deal of violence against women in Vanuatu.
- A good report is by Heidi Tyedmers, on “Conflict Management and Access to Justice in Rural Vanuatu.” There is a Center Against Violence Against Women and the Vanuatu Women’s Center that does good work.
- The “women chiefs” are strong in PENAMA province, especially in Pentecost and Ambae; on Espiritu Santo in the Big Bay area, and in Lele village on Santo.
- Hilda Lini should be consulted about female chiefs; she knows a lot.
- Women must rise up and claim their space and their rights.
- In Samoa, women don’t generally know about female chiefs, and have not yet claimed authority and power.
- Male chiefs sometimes tell me that during some ceremonies, like the circumcision ceremony, women are made “Queen for a Day.” But I ask them, what about all the other days? Why aren’t they given power, titles and recognition on the other days? Why can’t most women be allowed to speak in the nakamal, where most decisions are made?
- Of course “chief” is not a local word, it was introduced by missionaries, the British and the French, and it is a Western word, so that makes the situation challenging.
- John Obedalili, the chief administrator at the Courthouse, did a presentation on “what does it mean to be a chief.” This was given at a summit on law and justice in Vanuatu. The chiefs themselves were arguing bitterly about what the word meant. The male chiefs are demanding more power, and the position is becoming highly politicized. They are becoming more like government administrators, rather than customary chiefs. Often they are not trained for these new roles, such as child protection and fighting domestic violence.
- In Bougainville in the Solomon Islands there are female chiefs.

- If more women are given more responsibility and are made female chiefs, will they be able to attend meetings in the nakamal and speak up on public matters?
- How can the Expedition on Female Chiefs be part of the gender reform process?
- She will forward to me (LT) a study on gender violence in Vanuatu.

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **__Brief discussion of female chiefs with a Member of Parliament__**
2. Full name of interviewee: **__John Silk Sala, M.P. for Malekula island__**
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: **__19__** Name of Month: **__Aug__** Year: **2016**
4. Approximate duration of interview: **__5__** minutes (part of longer conversation about other matters)
5. Location of interview: Village: **__Port Vila__** Island: **__Efate__** Country: **Vanuatu**
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: **__Lew Toulmin__** and _____ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: **__NA__**
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: **__NA__**; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____

14. Sex of interviewee: Female: ____ Male ____

15. Est. age of interviewee: 45 (years)

16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama ____ French ____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor ____ Fair ____ Good Excellent ____

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes ____ Possible ____

19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

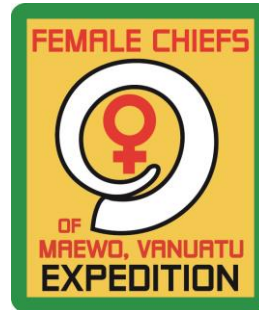
During a discussion of other, public policy, matters, M.P. Sala stated the following:

- He had never heard of the female chiefs of Maewo or PENAMA province, or of any female chiefs in Vanuatu.
- Upon reflection, he recalled that Hilda Lini, M.P., considered herself to be a female chief of Maewo, and she was a champion of women's rights. [She was the sister of Rev. Walter Lini, a founding father of Vanuatu.]
- Many but not all men recognize Hilda Lini as a female chief.
- It would be useful for me to talk to Ms. Lini. [This was later completed.]

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **__Brief discussion of female chiefs and other matters with three male chiefs of Kerembei village, Maewo**
2. Full name of interviewee: **__Names not recorded; videocam SLR failed** _____
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: __27__ Name of Month: __Aug__ Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: __15__ minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: __Kerembei__ Island: __Maewo__ Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone __ mail __ in-person X or email __
7. Interview conducted by: __Lew Toulmin__ and __Theresa Menders__ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: __NA__
9. Interview recorded by: video __ audio __ other __ none x
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: __NA__; in possession of: __(Toulmin's audio on the video SLR failed; this short writeup is done from memory.)
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: __ Male __X__
15. Est. age of interviewee: __40-55; three males__ (years)

16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French _____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor ___ Fair Good ___ Excellent ___

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes ___ Possible ___

19. Describe bias if other than “No”: _____

[Lew Toulmin and Theresa Menders interviewed three male chiefs in the outermost portion of the taboo, upper, chiefs’ nakamal in Kerembei village. This was done while Daniel Huang was videotaping an interview with another chief in the back of the nakamal. Both asked permission to enter this outer portion, and it was received, upon payment of 2000 Vatu (about \$20 USD). Toulmin asked the majority of the questions in English and Bislama, and translated any Bislama answers, which were a small portion of the responses. A summary of their statements follows.]

- This is the “tampu” or taboo nakamal where the male chiefs of the village gather. It has four levels separated by very low wooden logs. Each level represents a higher grade of male chief. [The entire structure was about 80 feet deep and 25 feet wide, with a thatched roof and very low side walls about 3 feet high. Thus the eaves of the structure almost touched the ground, and the structure was tucked into a deep fold of a hill, and was very well protected from storms. The height of the highest, center roof beam was about ten feet. Each of the four chiefly areas was about 15 feet wide, plus a rear area located behind a wall.]
- There are thus four levels of chief possible in the village. Chiefs of a lower level cannot go further back into the nakamal, into the area of a higher grade of chief. Each level involves killing pigs.
- The respondents appeared to say that there was a fifth, even higher level beyond the four, reserved for Rasas (senior chiefs), and there was a space at the back of the nakamal reserved for them. [This was behind a wall in the rear.]
- The chiefs spend a great deal of time in the nakamal, drinking kava and telling “storis”
- Women are not allowed in the nakamal, but because of the permission asked and the payment, Theresa was allowed into the outer area.
- This nakamal was not damaged by Cyclone Pam in March 2015. And the village was not damaged much by the cyclone, perhaps because it was protected by the high ridge to the east.
- Most of the women of Kerembei village and other parts of Maewo obtain the title of “notari” by killing a pig in a ceremony. This title and ceremony do not mean that the women are “chiefs,” “female chiefs” or “female custom chiefs.” The word “chief” in most of Maewo is reserved for men.
- However, the three chiefs agreed that there are some villages in Maewo where “female chiefs” are recognized as such. They were not able to identify these villages or areas. This term is not appropriate in Kerembei.



The three chiefs outside their taboo Nakamal in Kerembei village, Maewo

#end#

**Email Exchange with Benjamin Shing, then Director,
Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination,
Prime Minister's Office, Government of Vanuatu, re Female Chiefs**

This exchange was prompted by an email from Lew Toulmin to friends, colleagues (including Ben Shing) and relatives, announcing the launching of the "Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition," endorsed by The Explorers Club. As can be seen below, Mr. Shing, one of the most distinguished civil servants in Vanuatu, states that there are "female chiefs" in PENAMA province (Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo islands), and is unhappy with the title of the Expedition, which he feels implies that the female chiefs are limited to Maewo.

As a result of this exchange and the Expedition's further research, future articles about the effort will be called "The Female Chiefs of Vanuatu" or "The Female Chiefs of PENAMA Province, Vanuatu" or similar.

Subject:Re: thanks for the valuable input

From: Nebcevanhas Benjamin Shing <bshing@vanuatu.gov.vu>

To: lewtoulmin <lewtoulmin@aol.com>

Date: Sat, Jun 4, 2016 12:14 pm
stret.

Nepcevanhas Benjamin Shing
Director| Dept of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination| Prime Ministers Office,
PMB 9053, Port Vila, Vanuatu | T: +678 23 150 | F: +678 25 481 | M: +678 7741621 | VOIP: 3756 |
E: bshing@vanuatu.gov.vu

From: lewtoulmin@aol.com <lewtoulmin@aol.com>

Sent: Saturday, 4 June 2016 3:08 AM

To: Nebcevanhas Benjamin Shing

Subject: Re: thanks for the valuable input

Hello Ben,

Thanks for your email, and your valuable input and clarification re the female chiefs of Vanuatu. I very much appreciate this information and will incorporate it in future.

Thanks,

Lew Toulmin

-----Original Message-----

From: Nebcevanhas Benjamin Shing <bshing@vanuatu.gov.vu>

To: lewtoulmin <lewtoulmin@aol.com>

Sent: Wed, Jun 1, 2016 11:50 pm

Subject: Re: Launch of Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition, GoFundMe video!

Dear lew,

there are lots of female chiefs in vanuatu. Especially in the Penama province. the other provinces may also have them, but do not call them chiefs, instead they are known more as Tabu(Holy) women and occupy positions of status as sacred women.

you may wan to advise your researchers to be more through in their research before making such assertions, which while well intended, is at best in-accurate.

cheers

Nepcevanhas Benjamin Shing

Annex 4

Interviews Not Supporting the Use of the Term “Female Chiefs” in Vanuatu

- Aileen Weson Liu, Notari of Maewo
- Five Notari of Maewo
- Alice Kaloran, Shepherd Group of Islands
- Joshua Toa of Maewo
- Notari Alamban of Maewo
- A US Peace Corps Notari

14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 35 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than “No”: _____

Abbreviations: DK = don’t know; FC = Female Chief; NAV = not available; NA: not applicable; REF = refused to answer question; OUT = ran out time for any more questions; M = Maewo island; P = Pentecost island; Van = Vanuatu; Letters of the respondent can be used as abbreviation, thus: SLT said that... = Susan Little Toulmin said that... USD = United States dollars

[Note: items in brackets are comments by the interviewer; or are instructions to the interviewer which should not be read to the respondent.]

INTRODUCTION:

Hello. My name is _____ , and I have come here from _____ [country] , and I am very interested in the female chiefs of Vanuatu. I would like to ask you a few questions about you and about your position as a female chief. If there is anything sensitive that you do not want to talk about or have published, please let me know. If you don’t know the answer to a question, that is fine. Just say “I don’t know.” Is it all right if we talk with you about this?

20. Yes No

We would like to record this interview by: (say and check all that apply):

21. Taking notes Video Audio recording Other
22. Is it all right to record and publish our interview in these ways? Yes No

[If “no” then stop interview or clarify response.]

Thanks!

BACKGROUND:

23. OK, great, let’s get started. First, please tell me your full name: **Aileen WESON LIU** _____ [may be 4-5 names]

24. Is one of these names a chiefly title or “chief name”? Yes, sort of. _____ What is that chiefly name? Liu is my notari name, not a chiefly name _____ What does it mean? It means a gray stone found in salt water _____
25. Do you get your family name and trace your ancestry back through your mother’s line, or back through your father’s line? **Mother’s.**
26. What island do you live on now? Maewo _____
27. Which village or town? Naone, in the Suwandia area and language district of Maewo. This is the northern area. The other areas are Suwandaha (central); Sumalha (south central); and Sumahane (far south) _____
28. What island were you born on? Maewo _____
29. Which village or town? **Kerembei, but lived in Naone for a long time**
30. What tribe or clan were you born into? Talao _____
31. What tribe or clan are you a member of now? Talao _____
32. What year were you born in? April 1970 _____ [OR, how old are you?] 46 _____ (years)
33. What do you do for a living? Gardener and housewife _____
34. What is your marriage situation? Single _____ Married x Divorced _____ Widowed _____ Other, describe: _____
35. How many children do you have? 7 _____
36. If you are married or were married, is/was your husband a chief? No _____ Yes x **Not sure what level of chief he is**
37. How long have you been a female chief? I became a notari [or ngotari or n!tari or ngwotari] at 4 years of age; this is common. I did a second Lengwasa ceremony last year. My family group had not done a Lengwasa in a long time, and my grandparents, who had done the Lengwasa, were afraid that everyone would forget how to do it. So I did it a second time. The ritual and ceremony differ from the first to the second Lengwasa, with different songs and different pig-killing. Also, the Lengwasa differs across the four regions of Maewo. Notari is a rank or title, it is not my name. I am not a female chief; I am a notari.

38. How were you recruited to be a female chief? **__My mother had me do the notari Lengwasa ceremony and pig killing at age 4.**_____

39. What is your grade or level of chief now? **__I did the second Lengwasa ceremony, and that gets me a bit more respect, but not a higher grade or title. I am still a notari. I am not a female chief. I am not sure if there are female chiefs on Ambae or Pentecost.**
_____ (name of level)

40. Was your mother a female chief? No___ Yes **_NA_** **My mother was a notari, not a female chief**

41. Was your father a chief? No___ Yes **_x_**

FEMALE CHIEFS

42. About how many female chiefs are there in your village? **There are about 50 notari in my village, out of 55 women and girls. Those remaining 5 may become notari in the future; it is optional and up to them.**___ 42a. On Maewo? **_about 90% of females are Maewo are notaris.**_____

43. On Pentecost? **_DK_** 43b. In Melanesia? **_DK_**

44. In your village, are there both male and female chiefs? No: **_x_** Yes: ___ **There are male chiefs and female notaris. The two work together, with the notaris supporting and helping the chiefs. For example, that is how this Festival was organized.** If yes, how many of each?
Male: ___ Female: ___

45. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have their own nakamal? No: **_x_** Yes: **_** **The notari in this village and area do not have a nakamal now, but may get a nakamal in the future; there was one in the past. Non-chiefs are not allowed into the “taboo” nakamal that is located in the upper part of the village, because that is where the pigs are killed for the male chiefly ceremonies.**

46. Are men allowed into this nakamal? No: ___ Yes: ___ NA.

47. What do you do in the nakamal? **__NA**_____

47a. Do the female chiefs use the men’s nakamal, instead of having their own? Yes: ___ No: **_x_**

47b. If so, are the female chiefs only allowed to use the front part of the nakamal?

No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: **_____NA**_____

48. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have grades or levels? No: ___ Yes: ___ **NA:**
The notari have a senior notari who wears one long curved feather in her hair, she is honored this way because she trains the young notari.

49. How many grades? **_see above_** (may be 1 to 10 or more)

50. What are the names of the levels and requirements for each level, starting with the lowest?
(For example, to move from level 2 to 3 you must have a pig-killing ceremony of ten regular and one sacred pigs, serve time for a certain number of years, and settle Kastom disputes.)

50-1. Lowest level name: **___NA_____** Requirements: **__for the lowest level of notari, one must go through the “making Lengwasa” ceremony, and learn to weave mats, make traditional food, learn custom songs, and learn custom stories. You must kill a sacred pig with tusks. I have not heard about “making Lengwasa” to get rid of an evil spirit. We just do this because it is tradition and to preserve our custom. For a while we were losing our custom and traditions, but we are doing better now. I do not know the details of what goes on in the Lengwasa structure (building). _____ (does she have to be unmarried to become an entry level female chief?) No**

50-2. Next highest level: **__Senior Notari_____** Requirements: **__Train the young notari; see above_____**

50-3. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-4. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-5. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-6. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-7. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-8. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-9. Next highest level: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

50-10. Highest level name: **___NA_____** Requirements: _____

Male chiefs have “Rasas” who are high chiefs; and above them is the Paramount Chief of the island. There are five Rasas on Maewo. Chief Freddie who lives about a kilometer north of Kerembei village is the nearest local Rasa.

51. At the lowest, entry level, does a woman have to be unmarried in order to become a female chief? No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe **NA: Most notari become notari before the age of 6, so they are unmarried.** _____

52. Is it possible for a woman to “skip” some of these grades as she goes up the ladder?

No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe _____ **NA** _____

53. Does a woman lose some of her powers as a female chief, if she marries? No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe **OUT** _____

53a. Can a female chief transfer her title to a sister?

No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe **OUT**

54. How many female chiefs of the highest level are there in Maewo? **NA** _____

55. Is there a “Paramount Female Chief” for Maewo or Vanuatu? No: ___ Yes: ___ **NA**

Describe: _____ Name of Paramount F.C.: _____ Contact info:

56. At what age do women usually become a female chief? **Most become a notari before the age of 6.** _____

57. If a woman is a female chief, does her daughter automatically become a female chief?

No: ___ Yes: ___ Describe **90 percent of women become notaris, so most women are notaris and most of the adult women have young girls who become notaris.** _____

57a. If a man is a chief, does his daughter automatically become a female chief? No: x Yes: ___ Describe **OUT** _____

58. In your village or area, how many levels or grades do the male chiefs have? **OUT** _____
How do their levels or grades differ from the female chiefs? **OUT**

59. Besides pig-killing and dancing, are there other ceremonies that you do as female chiefs?

No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: **OUT** _____

60. Do the female chiefs drink kava as part of their ceremonies? No: **not on my part of Maewo, kave is not allowed for any women** Yes: If yes, describe:

61. Do female chiefs have magical powers? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **Maybe. I don't have any magical powers. Perhaps in the past women notari had magical powers.**_____

62. What is the most impressive magic you have ever seen done by a female chief?

_____ **NA** _____

63. Do female chiefs ever have contests of magic to show who is stronger?

No: Yes: If yes, describe: **OUT** _____

64. Do female chief magic powers differ from male chiefs? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **OUT** _____

65. Some female chiefs state that they can disappear any time they want. Is that true? No: Yes: If yes, describe how it is done: **OUT** _____

66. Do female chiefs have to purchase (buy) special knowledge, magic powers, or rituals? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **The only insignia here is a single curved chicken feather worn by the senior notari who does training. There is a cost for the feather but I don't know it.**_____

67. Are there any "Kastom" stories that describe the first female chief, or other things related to the female chiefs? No: Yes: If yes, please tell me the story: **I am not sure.**_____

68. I understand that on Maewo there is a "Kastom" called "Ole," where men dress up and sometimes try to drive out illness or evil spirits by hitting people with clubs or stones. And I have heard that in some villages the highest level of Ole is the "Dog-Faced Ole," who can pant like a dog and drive out serious illnesses from sick people. Do the Female Chiefs ever get involved in Ole? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **Ole is for men only** _____

69. Are there any sand paintings that describe the first female chief, or other things related to the female chiefs? No: Yes: If yes, describe such a sand painting: **Sandpainting is taught to all children, and does not relate to the notaris or their history. There is face painting that is done during the Lengwasa ceremony that is specific to the notari. My mother does the face painting for some Lengwasa participants and charges 150 Vatu (\$1.50 USD) for each painting. Each one is different.** _____

70. Are there any Kastom mats that relate to the Female Chiefs? No: ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____ **OUT** _____

71. What is the initiation ritual for the youngest female chiefs, when they first become a chief?
___ **I don't know what goes on in the Lengwasa hut.** _____

72. Are the numbers of female chiefs growing, staying the same, or decreasing? ___ **OUT** _____

73. What do young women like or dislike about becoming a female chief? ___ **OUT** _____

74. Why are you attending this Female Chiefs Gathering? ___ **OUT** _____

75. What will you do here at this Gathering? _____ **OUT** _____

76. Will there be another Gathering next year? No: ___ DK _ ___ Yes: ___ If yes, describe when, where, how long: _____ **OUT** _____

JURISDICTION AND POWERS [Key section – be sure to get this section done]

77. In Vanuatu, I understand that most male chiefs are allowed to listen to and decide disputes over crimes, over civil disputes, over land disputes, and over “Kastom” [custom tribal] matters. As a female chief are you allowed to decide all four kinds of disputes? Please explain: _____ **No, notari do not adjudicate disputes. They give good advice to people who are having troubles, especially women and youth. For instance, a notari recently counseled a young boy who was stealing bananas, and tried to have him show more respect. Notari can give advice privately or in a public meeting. But they are not judges or chiefs, who rule on disputes.**

78. How many matters or disputes have you been involved in, as a female chief, in the last year?
___ **Zero** ___

79. Please describe for me 2-3 examples of matters or disputes that you made decisions on, as a female chief, in the last year: **None**

80. What methods do you use to resolve disputes? _____ **NA** _____ [some possible ways: hear evidence; hold meetings between the parties; hold meetings between the villages; negotiate chief-to-chief over the matter; etc.]

81. What happens if the groups in a dispute do not accept your decision? NA

82. Can you give out a punishment for violations? No: Yes: If yes, describe:
NA

83. What is the most important case or matter you ever worked on, as a female chief?
NA

84. I understand that one of the areas in which female chiefs settle disputes is in Kastom clothing, and who is allowed to wear what. Is that right? No Yes If so, can you show me and describe some items on your clothes/costume today that show what rank you are? **OUT**

85. Can you show me some other Kastom items you are wearing or carrying? **OUT**

86. What are your duties as a female chief, besides settling disputes? NA

RELATIONS WITH MALE CHIEFS

87. Do the male chiefs in your village or area recognize that you are a chief? Yes: No: x Some do, some don't Describe if not clear: **In this part of Maewo, notari are not recognized by men or women as chiefs.**

88. If some don't, why do they say you are not a "real" chief? **See 87 above**

89. Do you ever have cases where it is not clear if the male or the female chief should be in charge of the case? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **NA; notari do not hear cases**

90. Do the local, provincial or national authorities recognize that you are a "real" chief? Describe: **OUT**

91. Does the fact that you are a female chief get you more respect from men on your island?

Yes, a lot: Yes, a little Neutral Get less respect Get much less respect

Women notari (including a senior notari) treat each other equally. I am not sure about whether there is more respect from the men for notari. But the non-notari women do look up to the female notari.

92. Does the fact that you are a female chief get you more respect from women on your island?

Yes, a lot: Yes, a little Neutral Get less respect Get much less respect
Yes, from the non-notari for the notari.

93. I understand that the National Council of Chiefs, the “Malvatumauri,” has refused to recognize any female chiefs as “real” chiefs. Please tell me why this is right or wrong.

_____ **OUT** _____

94. What arguments does the Malvatumauri use to say that women cannot be real chiefs?

_____ **OUT** _____

95. Have you ever applied to any other national chief’s organization for recognition?

No: Yes: If yes, describe: **OUT** _____

96. How long have female chiefs existed in Vanuatu? **OUT** (years)

97. Have you heard about female chiefs all your life? No: Yes: **OUT**

98. In some villages is there a female “club” or group or society that is sort of like a chiefly system? **OUT**

No: Yes: If yes, describe how it is similar or different: **OUT** _____

99. Have you heard of “making Lengwasa”? No: Yes:

If yes, describe what it means: **see above** _____

100. One person has said that when women have a pig-killing ceremony, it is only done so that the women honor the local men, not because the women are chiefs.

Is that true? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **It is done to honor our tradition** _____

101. Have the ceremonies, duties or nature of female chiefs changed over the last ten years?

No: Yes: If yes, describe: **OUT** _____

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WOMEN’S ISSUES

102. The Ministry of Justice has started a program to recruit women in outer islands to monitor the situation regarding domestic violence and women’s problems. Are you involved in that program? No: Yes: If yes, describe: **I have heard about this program and there was a workshop by the Ministry of Justice on this topic in Suwandaha region of**

Maewo. [It is not clear if she attended, and she apparently was not an organizer.]

103. Do your duties as a female chief involved trying to prevent or resolve domestic violence?

No: ___ Yes: X If yes, describe: **_Notari try to give good counsel on this topic to women and men.** _____

104. As a female chief, are you involved in other women's issues? No: x Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____ **OUT** _____

105. Do you think the situation on Maewo for women is better than on other islands, because there are female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: x If yes, describe: **_ OUT** _____

106. About what percentage of women in your village have experienced domestic violence? _____% **OUT**

LANGUAGE

107. What is the name of the language you speak in your village? _____ **Suwandia language; this is spoken by three villages, including Naone. Some words of this language have been lost. [Apparently Suwandia is the same as Sungawadia as listed below.]** _____

108. How many local languages are spoken on Maewo? **_ OUT** _____ What are their names? DK _____ [May be about 4 or more; possible names include: Sungawadia/Marino/North Maewo; Central Maewo/Peterara; Baetora; etc.]

109. Are there any written materials in your village language? Yes: ___ No: _____

Describe: **_ OUT** _____ [e.g., Bible, hymnal, dictionary, orthography (rules of the language), island stories, grammar school materials, etc.]

110. Are there any firm plans to create more written materials in your local language?

Yes: ___ No: ___ Describe: **_ OUT** _____

111. About what percent of the children in your village under the age of six, speak only their island language? **100 percent**

0 % Speak Bislama? **_0_ %** Speak English? **_0_ %** Speak French: _____% [Note: percents can add to more than 100%]

112. What percent of the children in your village go to French school, to English school, Bislama school, or something else? **OUT**

French ____% English ____% Bislama ____% Other (describe) __0__% _____

113. Is it a problem in your village if the children do not speak French or English well, but must go to a French or English school in the first grade? Yes: ____ No: __ __ Describe: **My little girl did very well in school when she was taught the first and second grades in local language, of Suwandia. Then in the third grade the school switched to Bislama for the first term and she did fairly well. But then, for no reason, the school switched to English half way through the school year. After that she had problems.**

OTHER

114. What else do you want to tell me about female chiefs? __ **She has never heard of Hilda Lini.**

Daniel Huang asked “If you could solve any big problem facing you and the world, what would it be?” Answer: **I would change our food and diet. Because we have gotten away from our traditional island diet of root vegetables, and are now eating Chinese rice and other modern foods, we have high rates of diabetes and NCDs (non-communicable diseases). Our traditional island, locally grown “kakai” (food) is better!**

Lesline was the young woman who sat beside Aileen during the interview and did not say much. But in response to Daniel’s question she stated that she thought the biggest problem to be solved was “retaining traditional knowledge,” for example, how to cook in bamboo tubes, not just in modern iron pots. But she agrees with Aileen that modern foods are a major problem. She feels that modern communications and the Internet can be used to help preserve local traditional knowledge, but she worries about “blue video” [pornography] and the results of that._____

[Now if respondent is not exhausted, you can pursue topics that have arisen during the interview, or other topics. But be sure to take notes and write up the results in detail!]

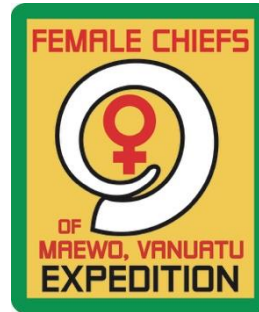
Thank you very much for all your assistance! I really appreciate it.

PHOTO OF INTERVIEWEE [be sure to get this, with the name tag]

115. Give the female chief a name tag with her name on it. Take a picture of her, including her visible and readable name tag. Insert here a document-res photo of the interviewee. Provide a high res version of the pic to the Expedition Leader.

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition
Explorers Club Flag Expedition
Questionnaire for Female Chiefs



1. Focus topic of interview: Five Notari of Maewo
2. Full name of interviewee: Cheryl (a Notari) and four other Notari (female leaders) of Maewo, namely: Muriel, Lia, Bebetua, and Diana (last names of respondents not given or obtained)
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 25 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 50 minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: Kerembei Island: Maewo Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and Sophie Hollingsworth (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: Cheryl ????
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of:
11. Tels for Interviewer:
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any:
13. Other contact info for this interviewee:

14. Sex of interviewees: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewees: Cheryl: 35; others: 40-65 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: Other (describe) (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than “No”: Cheryl requested that this first interview of women on Maewo should not be recorded by video or audio. She answered many of the questions without much referral to the four other women. _____

Abbreviations: DK = don't know; FC = Female Chief; NA = not available; NApp: not applicable; REF = refused to answer question; OUT = ran out time for any more questions; M = Maewo island; P = Pentecost island; Van = Vanuatu; Letters of the respondent can be used as abbreviation, thus: SLT said that... = Susan Little Toulmin said that... USD = United States dollars

[Note: items in brackets are comments by the interviewer; or are instructions to the interviewer which should not be read to the respondent.]

Cheryl and the four Notaris made the following points in response to questions:

- Their way of life is peaceful and non-confrontational.
- There are two ways to become a notari. Most girls or women go through a 10 day period of isolation and training to become a notari. This period can take place quite early in life. If the girl is young enough, a parent or substitute may step in and take her place during the pig-killing part of the ceremony. The girl should be respectful and quiet when chosen for the ceremony. If not, then a substitute may be used. To go through the ceremony, the girl must be on Maewo, but not necessarily physically present at the ceremony site. The entire process is called “making Lengwasa” and it involves 10 days of training, isolation and ritual, and a pig-killing by the candidate girl or woman.
- There is no nakamal for the notari.
- Kava must not be drunk by women on Maewo; that is reserved for men.
- The notari's origin was back in the time when people did not have mats, only leaves to wrap around themselves. These did not cover the women well, and it became taboo to expose so much, so they decided to weave mats and cover up. To symbolize this, a pig-killing was done, to build up the confidence and self-esteem of the women. But women should be humble.
- The patterns on the mats and sashes are a personal preference and design.

- Most women on Maewo become notari and do at least one pig killing. Perhaps only 5-10 percent do not, mainly because they are too old, or move away, or are new to the island.
- About 10 to 20 percent of the notari go through a second “making Lengwasa” ritual, including a pig-killing, often once they have acquired a pig, a garden, and some wealth.
- Mothers can help their daughters become notari, but the ritual cannot be skipped. If the title does not go to the daughter, it can go to a girl in her tribe. There are 10 tribes in this area of Maewo.
- The notari are not female chiefs. The term “chief” in this area of Pentecost is reserved for men.
- [NB: the term notari is sometimes spelled N!tari; ngotari or ngwotari, and it is sometimes capitalized.]

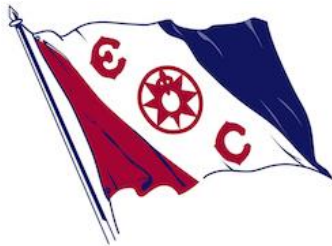
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The five Notari interviewed at Kerembei village, Maewo

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: Brief discussion of female chiefs with a former resident of the Shepherd Group
2. Full name of interviewee: Alice Kaloran, Leifarea
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 29 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 15 minutes (part of longer conversation about other matters)
5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and _____ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: NA
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: 543-3750

13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male _____
15. Est. age of interviewee: 49 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama _____ French _____ Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor _____ Fair _____ Good Excellent _____
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes _____ Possible _____
19. Describe bias if other than “No”: _____

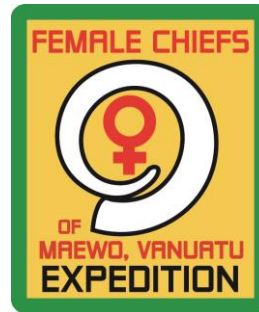
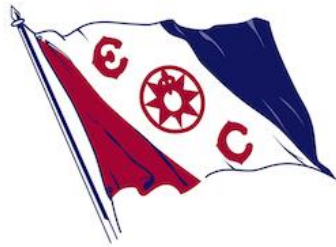
During a discussion of other, public policy, matters, Alice Kaloran stated:

- She was born and raised in the Shepherd Group of islands, north of Efate, in Vanuatu.
- Her full name is Alice Kaloran, Leifarea. The last word is a title that means “she who can speak in the nakamal.” “Farea” is the local vernacular word for nakamal. Virtually all women are not allowed to speak up in the nakamal. However, with her inherited title, she can speak in the nakamal in front of the male chiefs when they are meeting to discuss village issues and disputes. She only did this once, about 20 years ago, and it was a frightening experience. She does not recall all the details of the dispute, but it was a family matter involving a couple who were having marital troubles. Her title is rare and valuable, since it gives her this unusual right.
- Women in her island group do not do pig-killing to obtain their titles, like the one she holds. They inherit their titles and do have elaborate and expensive Kastom ceremonies when the titles are received and then returned, or passed to the next generation, when the recipient ages and cannot fulfill her duties.
- Women in the Shepherd Group are part of the decision and organizing process, especially for weddings, funerals and Kastom matters. But they are not called “female chiefs.” They also advise privately on land disputes.
- There are 16 male chiefs in the Shepherd Group. Kastom practices are similar on the various islands, but there are variations. There is a Paramount (male) chief for the Group.
- Her sister has an inherited chiefly rank, called “Masoi.” This rank allows her to make some decisions on Kastom matters involving women. But she would not be called a “female chief.”

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition

Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: **__Brief discussion of female chiefs Josiah TOA, a driver on Maewo**
2. Full name of interviewee: **__Josiah TOA** _____
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: **__25__** Name of Month: **__Aug__** Year: **2016**
4. Approximate duration of interview: **__10__** minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: **__on the road__** Island: **__Maewo__** Country: **__Vanuatu**
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: **__Lew Toulmin** _____ and _____ (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: **__NA** _____
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: **__NA** _____; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: _____

14. Sex of interviewee: Female: ____ Male ____

15. Est. age of interviewee: 48 (years)

16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French ____ Island language, which is: ____ Other (describe) ____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor ____ Fair Good ____ Excellent ____

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes ____ Possible ____

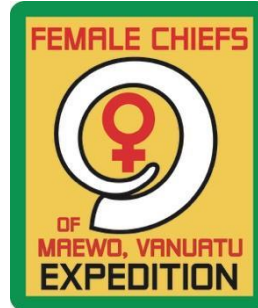
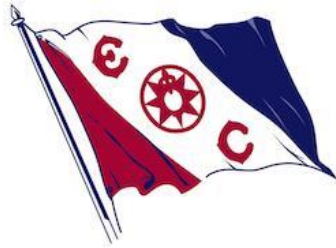
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____

Josiah Toa stated the following:

- There are no female chiefs in this area (central north and west) of Maewo.
- There are "notari" who take care of female matters.
- The notari assist the male chiefs in disputes and other village matters.
- The notaris have two steps or grades.

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition Explorers Club Flag Expedition



1. Focus topic of interview: A Notari of Maewo
2. Full name of interviewee: Notari Alamban
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 30 Name of Month: August Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 60 minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: Navenvene Island: Maewo Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email
7. Interview conducted by: Sophie Hollingsworth
8. Name of translator, if any: Dalsie Baniala
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: _____; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: +19413203815
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: None
13. Other contact info for this interviewee:
14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: 50 (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: X - Rata Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)

17. Quality of language communication: Poor ___ Fair ___ Good ___ Excellent X

18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: ___ Yes ___ Possible X

19. Describe bias if other than “No”: Many of the questions Dalsie answered on behalf of Notari Alamban without even asking her.

Abbreviations: DK = don’t know; NA = not available; NApp: not applicable; REF = refused to answer question; OUT = ran out time for any more questions; M = Maewo island; P = Pentecost island; Van = Vanuatu; Letters of the respondent can be used as abbreviation, thus: SLT said that... = Susan Little Toulmin said that...

[Note: items in brackets are comments by the interviewer; or are instructions to the interviewer which should not be read to the respondent.]

INTRODUCTION:

Hello. My name is _____, and I have come here from _____ [country], and I am very interested in the female chiefs of Vanuatu. I would like to ask you a few questions about you and about your position as a female chief. If there is anything sensitive that you do not want to talk about or have published, please let me know. If you don’t know the answer to a question, that is fine. Just say “I don’t know.” Is it all right if we talk with you about this?

20. Yes X No _____

We would like to record this interview by: (say and check all that apply):

21. Taking notes X Video ___ Audio recording ___ Other ___

22. Is it all right to record and publish our interview in these ways? Yes X No ___

[If “no” then stop interview or clarify response.]

Thanks!

BACKGROUND:

23. OK, great, let’s get started. First, please tell me your full name: Alamban [may be 4-5 names] [**Note: last and other names not obtained.**]

24. Is one of these names a chiefly title or “chief name”? _____ What is that chiefly name? _____ What does it mean? _____

25. Do you get your family name and trace your ancestry back through your mother’s line, or back through your father’s line? Mother’s Line

26. What island do you live on now? Maewo 27. Which village or town? Navenvene

28. What island were you born on? Maewo 29. Which village or town? Nasawa

30. What tribe or clan were you born into? **Talau**
31. What tribe or clan are you a member of now? **Mamatatalav (offshoot of Tastahaulo)**
32. What year were you born in? **February 1966**
33. What do you do for a living? **Kindi/Pre-School Teacher**
34. What is your marriage situation? Single ____ Married **X** Divorced ____ Widowed ____ Other, describe: _____
35. How many children do you have? **4**
36. If you are married or were married, is/was your husband a chief? No ____ Yes **X**
Husband is a kustom chief - Tatfarasingy
37. How long have you been a female chief? **Lengwasa made in 1974** [NOTE: Throughout this interview the word 'female chief' in the questions was replaced with the word 'notari', as this is the term the women (and this woman) refer to themselves by.]
38. How were you recruited to be a female chief? **Chosen to make Lengwasa when she could do the work, learn, and understand Kustom. Made Lengwasa to be recognized in culture; can only teach girls/women kustom practices (songs, weaving, tanis, etc.) when they have made Lengwasa.**
39. What is your grade or level of chief now? **Level 1, but does not really know.**
40. Was your mother a female chief? No ____ Yes **X**
41. Was your father a chief? No **X** - **Father was a Rasa.** [NB: Rasa = senior grade of chief]
- FEMALE CHIEFS**
42. About how many female chiefs are there in your village? **10** 42a. On Maewo? **500**
43. On Pentecost? **DK** 43a. In Vanuatu? **DK** 43b. In Melanesia? **DK**
44. In your village, are there both male and female chiefs? No: **X** Yes: ____ If yes, how many of each? Male: **1 Rasa (Dalsie's Dad)** Female: **0**
45. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have their own nakamal? No: **X** Yes: ____
46. Are men allowed into this nakamal? **NApp**
47. What do you do in the nakamal? **In December, when making Lengwasa an individual hut is constructed exclusively for the ladies making Lengwasa.**
- 47a. Do the female chiefs use the men's nakamal, instead of having their own? Yes: ____ No: **X**
- 47b. If so, are the female chiefs only allowed to use the front part of the nakamal?

No: ___ Yes: X If yes, describe: **They use it but not for making Lengwasa**

48. Do the female chiefs in your village or area have grades or levels? No: ___ Yes: X **Only Level 1**

49. How many grades? **Up to 6 - Only 3 existing at the moment** (may be 1 to 10 or more)

50. What are the names of the levels and requirements for each level, starting with the lowest? (For example, to move from level 2 to 3 you must have a pig-killing ceremony of ten regular and one sacred pigs, serve time for a certain number of years, and settle Kastom disputes.)

50-1. Lowest level name: **Level 1** Requirements: **Kill a pig** (does she have to be unmarried to become an entry level female chief?)

50-2. Next highest level: **Level 2** Requirements: **Get a name**

50-3. Next highest level: **Manding - Level 3** Requirements: **DK**

50-4. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-5. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-6. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-7. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-8. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-9. Next highest level: _____ Requirements: _____

50-10. Highest level name: _____ Requirements: _____

51. At the lowest, entry level, does a woman have to be unmarried in order to become a female chief? No: X Yes: ___ Describe _____

52. Is it possible for a woman to “skip” some of these grades as she goes up the ladder?

No: ___ Yes: X Describe: **Dalsie did not know the details but she believes a female US Peace Corps Volunteer did recently skip some ceremonies and rituals to get her title of notari.**

53. Does a woman lose some of her powers as a female chief, if she marries? No: X Yes: ___ Describe: **You get more powers, would not elaborate.**

53a. Can a female chief transfer her title to a sister?

No: X Yes: ___ Describe _____

54. How many female chiefs of the highest level are there in Maewo? **Only 2 at 3rd Level**

68. I understand that on Maewo there is a “Kastom” called “Ole,” where men dress up and sometimes try to drive out illness or evil spirits by hitting people with clubs or stones. And I have heard that in some villages the highest level of Ole is the “Dog-Faced Ole,” who can pant like a dog and drive out serious illnesses from sick people. Do the Female Chiefs ever get involved in Ole? No: X Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

69. Are there any sand paintings that describe the first female chief, or other things related to the female chiefs? No: ___ Yes: X If yes, describe such a sand painting: **Vleule, history of her mother’s tribe.**

70. Are there any Kastom mats that relate to the Female Chiefs? No: ___ Yes: X If yes, describe: _____

71. What is the initiation ritual for the youngest female chiefs, when they first become a chief?

Making Lengwasa

72. Are the numbers of female chiefs growing, staying the same, or decreasing? **Overall growing. Northern Maewo growing more than southern, doesnt know why.**

73. What do young women like or dislike about becoming a female chief? **Like the education on respect, love, planting, behavior, etc. Dislike spending 10 days in the hut without mats, just leaves and coconut.**

74. Why are you attending this Female Chiefs Gathering? NApp

75. What will you do here at this Gathering? NApp

76. Will there be another Gathering next year? No: ___ DK ___ Yes: X If yes, describe when, where, how long: **2 days in May 2017**

JURISDICTION AND POWERS [Key section – be sure to get this section done]

77. In Vanuatu, I understand that most male chiefs are allowed to listen to and decide disputes over crimes, over civil disputes, over land disputes, and over “Kastom” [custom tribal] matters. As a female chief are you allowed to decide all four kinds of disputes? Please explain: **Women are allowed to contribute their thoughts but do not play any part in the decision.**

78. How many matters or disputes have you been involved in, as a female chief, in the last year? **Most of the disputes**

79. Please describe for me 2-3 examples of matters or disputes that you made decisions on, as a female chief, in the last year: **Last year, apart of Maewo Island Council, village development and decision making for the preschool.**

80. What methods do you use to resolve disputes? NApp

81. What happens if the groups in a dispute do not accept the male chief's decision? **Cannot do anything.**

82. Can you give out a punishment for violations? No: X Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

83. What is the most important case or matter you ever worked on, as a female chief? **Mat weaving; before she made Lengwasa she didn't understand the cultural importance of mats and weaving but now she does.**

84. I understand that one of the areas in which female chiefs settle disputes is in Kastom clothing, and who is allowed to wear what. Is that right? No ___ Yes X If so, can you show me and describe some items on your clothes/costume today that show what rank you are? NApp

85. Can you show me some other Kastom items you are wearing or carrying? NApp

86. What are your duties as a female chief, besides settling disputes? **Weaving mats, kustom stories, leading wedding, funeral, and welcome ceremonies.**

RELATIONS WITH MALE CHIEFS

87. Do the male chiefs in your village or area recognize that you are a chief? Yes: ___ No: X Some do, some don't _____ Describe if not clear: _____

88. If some don't, why do they say you are not a "real" chief? NApp

89. Do you ever have cases where it is not clear if the male or the female chief should be in charge of the case? No: X Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

90. Do the local, provincial or national authorities recognize that you are a "real" chief? Describe: No

91. Does the fact that you are a female notari get you more respect from men on your island?

Yes, a lot: X Yes, a little ___ Neutral ___ Get less respect ___ Get much less respect ___

92. Does the fact that you are a female chief get you more respect from women on your island?

Yes, a lot: ___ Yes, a little X Neutral ___ Get less respect ___ Get much less respect ___

93. I understand that the National Council of Chiefs, the "Malvatumauri," has refused to recognize any female chiefs as "real" chiefs. Please tell me why this is right or wrong. NApp

94. What arguments does the Malvatumauri use to say that women cannot be real chiefs? NApp

95. Have you ever applied to any other national chief's organization for recognition?

No: X Yes: ___ If yes, describe: _____

96. How long have female chiefs existed in Vanuatu? **Doesn't know but her entire life in Maewo.**

97. Have you heard about female chiefs all your life? No: ____ Yes: **X**

98. In some villages is there a female "club" or group or society that is sort of like a chiefly system?

No: **X** Yes: ____ If yes, describe how it is similar or different: **It is more of a recognition of values learned.**

99. Have you heard of "making Lengwasa"? No: ____ Yes: **X**

If yes, describe what it means: _____

100. One person has said that when women have a pig-killing ceremony, it is only done so that the women honor the local men, not because the women are chiefs.

Is that true? No: **X** Yes: ____ If yes, describe: **It is kustom fulfillment.**

101. Have the ceremonies, duties or nature of female chiefs changed over the last ten years?

No: **X** Yes: ____ If yes, describe: _____

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S ISSUES

102. The Ministry of Justice has started a program to recruit women in outer islands to monitor the situation regarding domestic violence and women's problems. Are you involved in that program? No: **X** Yes: ____ Describe: **Never heard of the program or the Ministry of Justice.**

103. Do your duties as a female chief involved trying to prevent or resolve domestic violence?

No: **X** Yes: ____ If yes, describe: _____

104. As a female chief, are you involved in other women's issues? No: ____ Yes: **X** If yes, describe: **Yes, mat weaving but not domestic violence issues.**

105. Do you think the situation on Maewo for women is better than on other islands, because there are female chiefs? No: ____ Yes: **X** If yes, describe: **In Maewo, all of the women come together and work together, that sense of community is not present on all of the other islands.**

106. About what percentage of women in your village have experienced domestic violence? **None in their village.**

LANGUAGE

107. What is the name of the language you speak in your village? **Rata**

108. How many local languages are spoken on Maewo? 5 What are their names? **Rata, Tanorik, Tauoet, Holvanu, Nalemba** [May be about 4 or more; possible names include: Sungawadia/Marino/North Maewo; Central Maewo/Peterara; Baetora; etc.]

109. Are there any written materials in your village language? Yes: _____ No: X

110. Are there any firm plans to create more written materials in your local language?

Yes: X No: _____ Describe: **Dalsie is working on it.**

111. About what percent of the children in your village under the age of six, speak only their island language?

98 % Speak Bislama? 2 % Speak English? 0 % Speak French: 0 % [Note: percents can add to more than 100%]

112. What percent of the children in your village go to French school, to English school, Bislama school, or something else?

Go to school in island language until year three when classes are taught in island language/Bislama mix, in year four classes taught in Bislama.

113. Is it a problem in your village if the children do not speak French or English well, but must go to a French or English school in the first grade? Yes: _____ No: X

OTHER

114. What else do you want to tell me about female chiefs? _____

[Now if respondent is not exhausted, you can pursue topics that have arisen during the interview, or other topics. But be sure to take notes and write up the results in detail!]

Thank you very much for all your assistance! I really appreciate it.

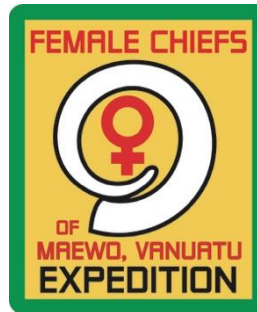
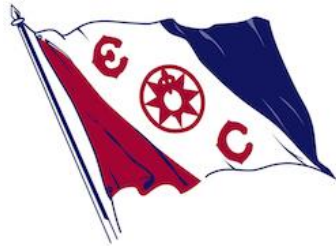
PHOTO OF INTERVIEWEE [be sure to get this, with the name tag]

115. Give the female chief a name tag with her name on it. Take a picture of her, including her visible and readable name tag. Insert here a document-res photo of the interviewee. Provide a high res version of the pic to the Expedition Leader.

Was a little tired of questions and didn't want her picture taken. Sorry Lew!

#end#

Female Chiefs of Maewo Expedition
Explorers Club Flag Expedition
Questionnaire for Female Chiefs



1. Focus topic of interview: A Notari of Maewo from the USA
2. Full name of interviewee: prefers to remain anonymous
3. Date interviewed: Date Number: 17 Name of Month: Aug Year: 2016
4. Approximate duration of interview: 45 minutes
5. Location of interview: Village: Port Vila Island: Efate Country: Vanuatu
6. Interviewed by phone mail in-person or email (emails rec'd after in-person interview)
7. Interview conducted by: Lew Toulmin and (names of persons)
8. Name of translator, if any: NA
9. Interview recorded by: video audio other none
10. Audio/video tape number or name is: NA; in possession of: _____
11. Tels for Interviewer: _____
12. Tel for person being interviewed, if any: _____
13. Other contact info for this interviewee: Peace Corps Vanuatu

14. Sex of interviewee: Female: Male
15. Est. age of interviewee: _____ (years)
16. Interview conducted in: English Bislama French Island language, which is: _____ Other (describe) _____ (Check more than one if translation was used)
17. Quality of language communication: Poor Fair Good Excellent
18. Bias observed in this interviewee: No: Yes Possible
19. Describe bias if other than "No": _____ See immediately below.
- _____

NOTE: There were substantive and terminological issues with this interview. Originally the term "female chief" was used by the interviewer and accepted by the interviewee. And the interview (or portions of it) was to be made public, with an extensive favorable article about the interviewee and her remarkable achievements to be published in *Island Life* or other venues. However, several days after the interview, the interviewer received vigorous emails from the interviewee stating that the term "female chief" was incorrect, that only the term "Notari" should be used, that persons in the village and elsewhere had advised the interviewee that the term "female chief" was inappropriate, that some of the other women were "laughing" at the use of this term, and that the interviewee did not wish any articles to be written about her, nor did she wish to be named in any article or report.

Of course her wishes are being honored here, and her concerns are obviously quite valid.

Her reaction provides very valuable information about the uses of the terms "female chief" vs. "Notari" on Maewo.

Abbreviations: DK = don't know; FC = Female Chief; NA = not available; NApp: not applicable; REF = refused to answer question; OUT = ran out time for any more questions; M = Maewo island; P = Pentecost island; Van = Vanuatu; Letters of the respondent can be used as abbreviation, thus: SLT said that... = Susan Little Toulmin said that... USD = United States dollars

[Note: items in brackets are comments by the interviewer; or are instructions to the interviewer which should not be read to the respondent.]

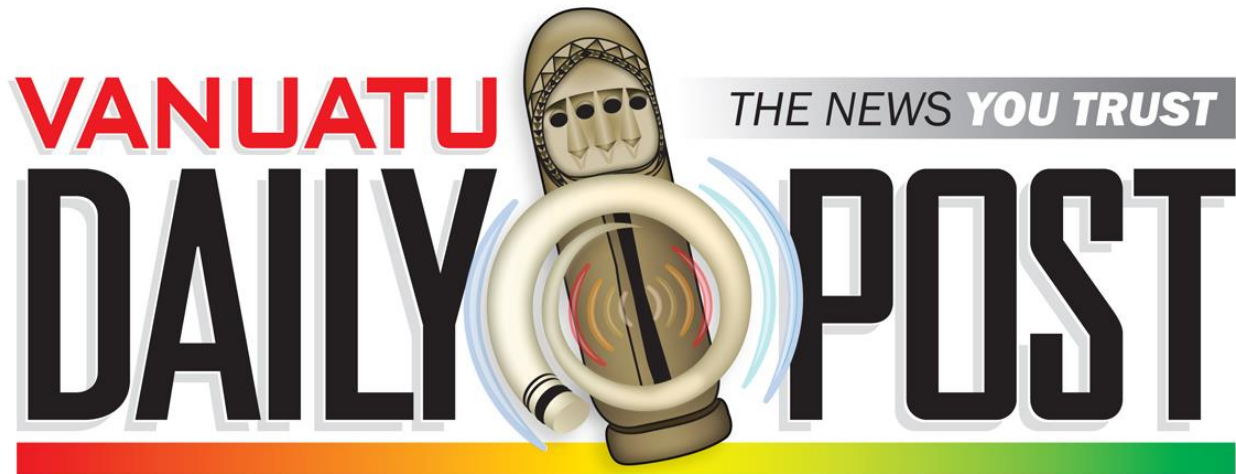
In an interview at Jill's Café in Port Vila, the female Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) stated the following:

- She is a PCV now stationed in Port Vila but previously located on north Maewo.

- There was previously a different female PCV in the same village, and she was made a Notari of the village. [As stated above, the term “female chief” was initially used in this interview throughout, but has now been replaced with the vernacular term “Notari.”]
- This previous female PCV went through the entire, standard initiation and purification ritual to become a Notari. This involved deprivation for a week, mainly not being allowed to move at all. She had to sit in one place, and to eat she could not leave her chair, but food was brought to her. She was not allowed to leave on her own to go to the bathroom, but rather she had to be carried to the toilet by her helpers, then carried back. After all the purification was over, the PCV was allowed to kill a pig in an induction ceremony, and she was then a full Notari.
- A Notari in this village has various privileges, including being able to make and eat food that non-chiefly women cannot touch.
- The interviewee female PCV does not know how many Notaris there are on Maewo or in PENAMA province. She understands that there are Notari on Maewo and in the Banks islands.
- She believes that Notari have existed in Maewo since pre-historic times.
- She states that her village, the nakamal is open to men and women, but there is a sacred area in the rear of the nakamal that even she as a Notari is not allowed to enter.
- She [the female PCV being interviewed] was made a Notari without going through the deprivation and purification ritual. In fact the chiefly induction was a complete surprise to her. As a PCV and then an Extended PCV working for the GoV, she had been installing a successful project for the village, and it had even saved the life of a woman. The Prime Minister and Min. of Health were coming to the village via helicopter to officially dedicate the project. Other persons (including the M.P. for Maewo and other GoV officials) had flown in to the air strip at the north end of Maewo, taken a truck down the island’s spine, and then hiked in the muddy trail over the mountain ridge to the village, since there is no road. On the truck ride, a Rasa [senior Chief] leaned over and whispered in her (the female PCV) ear, “You are going to kill a pig!” This meant she was going to be made a Notari. She was astounded. But that is what happened.
- A Rasa [senior male Chief] had organized this. He also organized some “dwasis” – a special stone ground kava for the ceremony -- which the PCV was allowed to drink, as part of this ceremony honoring her. Normally women are not allowed to drink kava on Maewo.
- She was given the rank of Ngotari [or Notari], and the chiefly names of Mai Mai. This latter means “she can pull things from the wind” – this refers to her ability to get information from out of the air.
- She notes that really the project was a team effort and there were many people involved, all of whom should be honored.

- She said that normally she is pretty much a vegetarian, loves animals, and took very good care of her goats back in the USA. But when she was handed a club by the Rasa to kill the pig, she did not hesitate. She hit the pig as hard as she could, but didn't quite kill it, and it had to be finished off later.
- The pig killing ceremony is on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzkmzVffsJA#t=270.653108> at about minute 3:33. [Note: this live streaming video was placed on public YouTube before this interview took place, and was not put up by the Expedition. The quality is poor enough that the face of the PCV cannot be made out. But the action of pig-killing is clear, and this link is included here for historical reasons.]
- As a Notari, she can eat certain foods that are normally taboo, and she can prepare pig meat, which is generally forbidden. She can wear a certain flower and leaf as a symbol of being a Notari.
- She is not aware of there being a graded structure to the Notari. She has not heard the term “making Lengwasa.”
- Her village is so isolated that when she first arrived, some children screamed and hid, because they had never seen a white woman before. Others thought she was Jesus Christ.
- As a Notari, she now has no set duties or obligations; it is more of a title of respect. She does not and will not adjudicate disputes.
- In her village they do not use the term “chief,” but rather use “Big Man” for male chiefs.
- In her village there are two types of male Big Men: Rasas, who are charismatic, good speakers, and focus on cultural matters; and elected, more political Big Men.
- There is no tension or rivalry between the Big Men and the Notari. They each respect the other type of leader.
- If there is a dispute in the village leading to a “peace ceremony” (a “Tangwata”) then the Notaris will speak individually to the male chief(s) adjudicating and mediating the dispute. The Notaris will likely not speak out openly in a village meeting, but rather will talk one-on-one in the nakamal. Their opinions will be listened to and respected.
- In the south of Vanuatu, if a female PCV does outstanding work and is married to a man from the USA, the man will be given the award or honor by the tribe, not the female PCV. But in the N of Vanuatu, the female who did the work will receive the accolade.
- Re domestic violence, she is not sure if violence is less in the north, where Notaris exist, but thinks it is possible. She knows that there are some very vocal women in the north, especially on the E side of Maewo. One such woman got mad and swore in front of the nakamal, and was fined 200 Vatu (about \$2 USD) as a result. But the woman said that it was worth it.

[Note: in September 2016 an article appeared in the *Daily Post* stating that a male PCV on Ambae island was to be made a chief, via a pig-killing ceremony. In that instance there did not seem to be any hesitation about using the term “chief.” It is not clear if the difference is the fact that the PCV in question is male, that the island is different, or both. The article is pasted in below.]



American Citizen To Be Made A Chief In North Ambae

By Colin C. Cortbus; 3 Sept. 2016

An **American Peace Corps** volunteer is due to be appointed a kastom chief in a North Ambae village next week, after a spectacular pig-slaughtering ceremony, the Daily Post can reveal.

Avery J. Baker, has been in Vanuatu since early 2015, and is currently based in the village of Vuimberuku in North Ambae.

“Some people would say it is a pretty insular place out there in the bush, but as a matter of fact it is not, they are completely willing to share their culture and their lives with anyone who will just come...”, he commented.

He was soon adopted as a son by his host parents. “It is a full on adoption and they are as much my family as anyone back home in the US”.

There had always been “whispers” that he might be appointed a chief as a sign of respect for the work he was doing.

But the decision only became serious when he came close to completing his project to convert the struggling local aid post to a full dispensary.

Not everyone can become a chief, the American stressed, noting he was very fortunate that his adopted father was the paramount chief of the village. “.. I am the 1% of the 1% of people in the world who will ever have this right bestowed upon them...”

A humbly thankful Avery noted that becoming a chief is an “incredible honour”. He says he will endeavour to uphold the principles of being a chief for the rest of his life.

On Friday, September the 9th, Avery will walk up to a hillside guesthouse bungalow he helped build. Next to it there will be a “Tambu fence”, a set of bamboo rods interspersed with flowers.

His adopted father and other, smaller chiefs will come in kastom garb. One of them, the high chief, will shave off a long beard Avery grew especially for the occasion.

After the shaving, baby powder will be applied Avery’s face, “as a symbol of cleansing or just a joke really”.

All together, they will then walk around the “Tambu Fence” once. The ritual is relative to the rank to which the aspiring chief is to be appointed. “I’m going to be a Moli”, Avery says, explaining that this is the lowest rank.

Avery’s Father, the paramount chief, a Sese by rank, circumvented the fence “10 times” in his day. Pig body size, tusk size, and number also increases along with the rank of the appointee.

But because of his junior rank, Avery will only be killing one, smaller tuskless pig.

As a special gesture of appreciation, Avery will be given the skull of a pig with tusks as a gift after the ceremony. In Vanuatu, Avery explains, “chiefs hang these outside of his houses so you can see their rank ... I hope to do that in the United States too”.

At the climax of the kastom ceremony “I will kill the pig... You have to, in kastom, break its skulls with a big stick — or nowadays with the back of an axe... one whack and it’s done”. The pig will be shared solely with relatives, and another pig will be “provided for the public”.

After the pig killing, kastom dances including “saoagouru” will be performed.

Paramount Chief Paul Win Tari confirmed in a phone call with the Daily Post that the event will go ahead on the given day “1pm or half past one”.

Avery says he was “stupefied, just awestruck to find out that not only are you made a chief, you are also made a blood relative recognised by the government, and you are also made a landowner.”

That, Avery admits is “really serious, I feel the pressure of that, I feel the love that being shared with me by these people by bestowing me with this gift”.

Avery and some of his friends are under the belief that becoming a recognised chief via a kastom ceremony might expedite an application for Vanuatu citizenship.

A Citizenship Office official rejected this suggestion, saying the 10-year residency requirement still applies.

jane@dailypost.vu

#end#

Annex 5

Festival Timeline, Maps of Maewo, Sketches and Other Documentation

PROGRAM AND TIMELINE FOR THE MAEWO WOMEN'S CULTURAL AND ARTS FESTIVAL

Supplied by Sophie Hollingsworth

* * *

Gwatag Dodomana: Tambe ragat nonda Tagana

Program - Day One Friday 26th August 2016
Host Community: Kerepei

07:00am - Evri woman, man mo pikinini we oli tekpat, oli kam tugeta long Garvagi wetem oi kalija/kastom dresap blong olgeta.

07:15am - kastom danis blong Naone (man) I lidim parade i go long nasara blong Arts Festival.

7:30am - ol Rasa, ol tatu varas mangas, ol tatu varas ringi, ol lida blong gwotari, mo ol invaeted guest i risivim Salusalu.

07:35am - Ofisal Opening

- Master blong Seremoni - Mr. Ezekiel Boelum
- Opening Prea - Fr. Urick Lui
- Welcome toktok - Mr. Gregory Taranban, Chairman Banganvanua Area Council
- Fres speech - Jif Rasa Ure
- Second Speech - Mr. Manley Tari, Secretary General, Penama Province
- Guest Speaker - Honourable MP Ian Wilson

09:00am - Refreshments - ol invited Guest

09:15am - ol pleiplei I stat

Read tru long 2 deis program.

- Kastom Danis - Naone
- Ngota
- Rongnawo/Kerepai

GNOGNODUA

- Rasrasup
- One valun vitiu
- Manu gagaru
- Ginitiginiti gandi
- Gwasgwas viso
- Gwatag sasa
- Gagaru non garivi
- Ketketi
- Walwal damu
- Sisibi (Naone)

-Sasaran gula men Sigwao Dolu -Sirsir longo
-Valvalu non tamate -Gwosa taveve
-Valvalu -Vano go saro
-Waswas lambe -Sarbatatau

SAND DRAWING

Taitai dung (wota music)
Closing Prayer - PS. Feniz Aru Mavute
4:30pm - day one program I finis.

Program - Day Two Saturday 27th August 2016

08:00am - Masta of Ceremony - Mr. Hendrix Aru

Opening prea - Fr. Lengas Ngwera

SINGA

-Gworo Salvatu	-Rarangi
-Gworo Vei	-Nasu tavigi
-Gworo Gwirigwiri	-Gotova lumbi/tesi
-Gosa Gwiri	-Butbuteki
-Gworo Lung lunga	-Sar toa
-Gworo Soso	-Lisi gotova
-Longo Tavauri	-Lotu gwangi vivio
-Longo langwang	-Lotu rasaki

OFISOL KLOSING

Kastom Danis - ol woman ngota

Spesel toktok - Mrs. Dalcie Baniala

Tok thank yu - Mr. Nanu Bani, Eria Administrata, North Maewo

Presentation blong ol Gifts - Mr. Gregori Taranban, Vice Chairman blong Banganvanua Arts Festival

Klosing Remarks - Mr. Jackson Adin, kaonsela blong Penama

Closing Prayer - Mr. Davis Tari

REFRESHMENT

.....END.....

Timeline of Banganvanua Mini Arts Festival
August 26 -27

Series of Events Day One - August 26

8:40am - Just North of the Kerepei guest house, men from Naone lined up in kastom palm frond attire, followed by invited guests, ngwotari, pikinini (children) and proceeded to sing and dance towards the Kerepei town center.



Ngwotari sing and dance towards town center



Tunnel of palm fronds

9:14 - The processional arrived at Kerepei town center. Men from Naone created tunnel of palm fronds for all to pass through. The two elder Rasa's entered first followed by the invited guests, Rasa Fredde Wilson, ngwotari's, and the pikinini.

-Ngwotari provide leis (made of seeds and beads) to all Rasa's, invited guests, the expedition team, and Peace Corps Volunteers.

9:25am - Opening Prayer and Welcome Speech

Overview of 3 Speeches by - Invited Guest, Fredde Wilson (Rasa), and Ian Wilson (MP) -

-Everything we wear and eat today is because of the women's labor so we must do a better job of respecting women and play a part in keeping our culture alive.

-We have mechanisms for promoting school and church, but no mechanism for protecting our culture

-We are here because many communities have lost their culture and we cannot have what happened to them happen to us.

-All levels of government in Vanuatu need to come together to protect cultural identity

-Imperative to develop a kastom movement - have to go back to the roots

-Maewo cannot become the next lost generation - we must protect our culture

-We must showcase our culture to the rest of the world. As our culture is only thing we have that is different. A sports tournament will not bring people to Maewo, but our unique culture will.

-PM wanted MP to be elsewhere but the MP said that no he had to be in Maewo for the festival. PM stated that if you can get tourism for the festival in the future, there will be government sponsorship.

-MP gave 200,000 vatu INVESTMENT to the Ngwotari

-MP impressed upon the importance of long term relationships, and his desire for the people of Maewo to actively be part of the political process and work together. Closed the speech with the only thing that separates us from other islands is our cultural practices.

9:45am - Refreshments (coconuts and fruit)

10:00am - Identity Games

Game 1 - The young Ngwotari sat in a circle and sang while one girl sat in the middle. One at a time the girls entered the middle of the circle touched the one girl either the head or back. The girl in the middle, with her eyes closed, would guess who it was that had touched her.

Game 2 - The young Ngwotari stood in a circle and held hands while walking clockwise, only stopping on Carol's cue. The one girl in the center, with her eyes closed, would make her way to the circle and guess whom she was touching.

10:17am- The young girls in pairs of 2 held on to each other's fingers one of top of another and sang. The young girls, still in pairs, proceeded to hold each other's ears and move towards each other's faces while making mmmm sound



10:27am - One woman with banana leaf stars strung around her body walked around the community grounds and the ngwotari demonstrated naming of the stars



10:34am - 10 girls sat with legs in front of them and sang

10:37am - The youngest Ngwotari in paris jumped, sang, and danced in a circle. Two minutes later all, of the young Ngwotari joined together jumping and dancing in and out of circle.

10:41am - One pair at a time jumped on one leg across the community grounds.

10:44am - Demonstration of Counting Stones to Learn Math - The primary/secondary school aged Ngwotari stood in a circle with woven bags full of stones. They removed the stones (doing mathematics) and jumped on one foot around their set of rocks. They proceeded to bend down and move one pile of rocks to another while still on one foot and then returned all rocks to their bags.

10:54am - The circle of girls demonstrating stone math morphed into a square and an older ngwotari beat on a coconut.

10:58am - Woven birds brought to community grounds. Older ngwotari sang and hit the birds with a stick while demonstrating bird calls.



11:08pm - Scheduling briefing and break for lunch

1:15pm - Demonstration of Pulling out Spirits (cat's cradles)



1:35pm - Sand Drawing

Wiro (Top Left) - Black Birds - One bird facing north and one bird facing south: representing spying.

Flying Fox/Bat (Bottom Center) - represents sitting and eating together while enjoying each others company



1:55pm - 13 Woman Water Dance

2:00pm - Six of the original 13 water dance women swam in groups of two out about forty feet and returned to shore doing the backstroke.

2:08pm - Walk Up to River

-Pigeon Water Dance

-Rain Dance - Simulated a fight between two groups, one group wanted it to rain and the other did not. The disharmony between the two groups ends up causing more than either group wanted.

Dalsie Technology Discussion and Q&A

Series of Events Day Two - August 27th

Ngwotari spent the morning cooking in the space behind in the community center.

11:37am - Story in the Weaving - explained the complex pandanus pattern in each piece

Right to left:

1. Tambo Lamboo
2. Mantia - Represents the creation of laplap
3. Ban - Use the small holes as a place to stick flowers for decoration



1:10pm - The older Ngwotari (25+) gathered in front of the Kerepei guest house and in a snake like pattern danced their way towards the main community grounds. In working their way to the grounds, the woman at the front the procession handed out sugar cane to many of the spectators.

1:24pm - At the Kerepei community grounds the Ngwotari came together in the shape of a square and continued to sing/dance. The woman who was giving out sugar cane became tired

and asked for water. Another woman got irritated and in a fury, made the sugar cane giver drink all of the water in a rig of bamboo; threatening to kill her if she failed to finish all of the water. The sugar cane giver was knocked down to the floor. This dance is intended to demonstrate the importance of reciprocal sharing within the community. The moral of the story was, there would have been no animosity between the sugar cane giver and the water beholder had the sugar-cane giver been met with equal gifts of food and water in her journey.



1:28pm - Bow and Arrow Demonstration - A rod was placed in the ground and a banana tree stuck on top of the rod. About ten men drew spears and attempted to strike the banana tree. Only one man succeeded. The men then demonstrated distance spearing and free spearing into the air. The bow and arrow practices were described as a sustainable fishing method and for their role in resource conservation: production of the bow and arrow does not entail plastic and can be made locally.

Mens Kastom Tanis - Representation of a Flirtatious Courtship - About 20 men and boys ranging from age 3 to 30 began a kastom dance in a square that transitioned into a cross shape. The cross shape changed direction, by hitting all four cardinal directions, every few minutes. The dance was intended to represent a courtship. In Maewo, the creeping/courtship phase of a relationship is done in secret prior to the wedding. The men in the dance are seen constantly looking away (changing the cardinal direction of the cross), as to not be caught catching a glance at their lady in public prior to the wedding.

Dalsie tok tok

Presentation of Thank You Gifts by Gregori

Closing Remarks

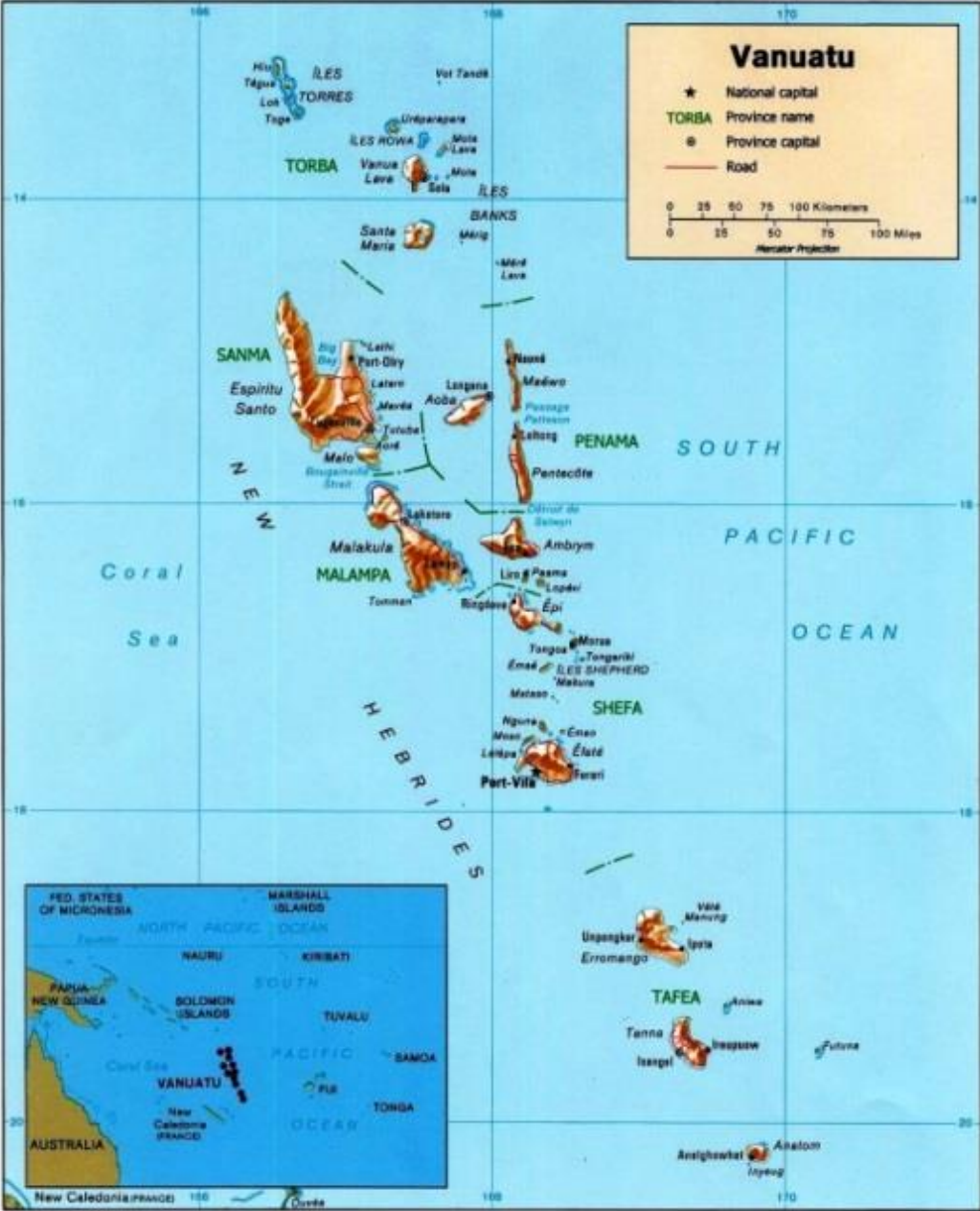
Closing Prayer

The MC read through the program of events from the previous two days.

he Naone village men demonstrated the reverse of their entry dance from Day 1. Using the same frans (palm fronds) and skirts from Day 1, the men congregated behind the community house. Following the closing prayer, they sang and danced their way into the main community grounds and created a tunnel of frans for everyone to exit through. The Rasas, followed by invited guests, ngwotari sign bearers, ngwotari by rank/age, and then pikinini exited the main community grounds and follow the road towards the Kerepei guest house where the procession ended.

.....END.....

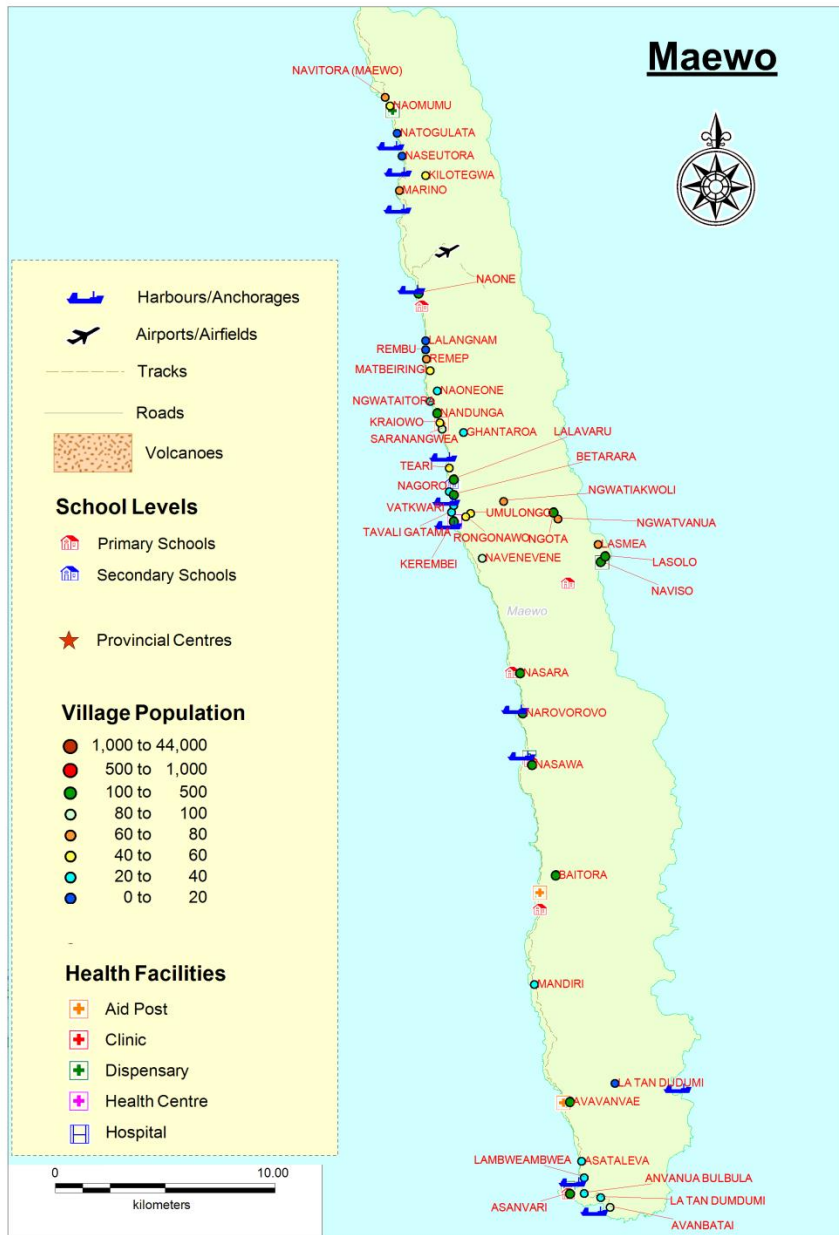
MAPS OF MAEWO AND VANUATU



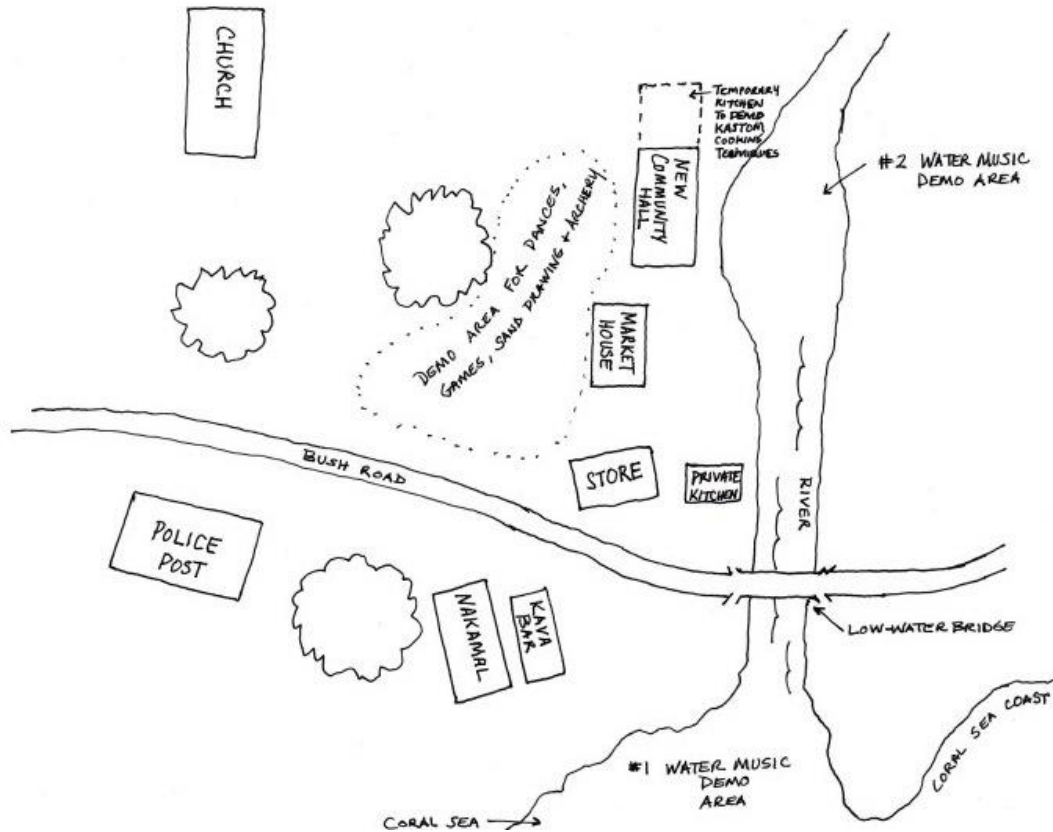
Vanuatu and its position in the southwest Pacific. Maewo is in PENAMA province in north Vanuatu, just NW of the word "PENAMA" in the map above



Maewo (right) and Ambae (lower left),
In north central Vanuatu (from Google Earth)



Map of Maewo – Kerembei village is in the center west



**Sketch of Kerembei village, central west Maewo
by Michael Wyrick**

(Note: North is to the left, as is the Kerembei Guest House,
about 100 meters to the left (north) of the Police Post)

Annex 6

Two Songs About Kerembei Village and Maewo

The Kerembei Boat Song

by

Lew Toulmin, 2016

(Named after the village on Maewo island, Vanuatu, where the Women's Cultural and Arts Festival was held, August 2016, and sung at the Kerembei Guest House, using the tune of the "Mingulay Boat Song," Hugh S. Robertson, 1938)

Sailor, check how tight the winch is --
What care we now, for wind or weather?
For we know that every inch is
Sailin' her closer to **Kerembei**.

Chorus:

*So heave ya ho, boys; let her go, boys;
Turn her head round, into the weather,
Heave ya ho, boys, let her go, boys
Sailin' her homeward to **Kerembei**.*

First of all, there came the lava,
Then appeared the sacred kava.
Our Notari make Lengwasa
With the tuskers at **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Uliveo, Santo, Moso,
Rano, Varo, Atchin, Vao,
None like Maewo, like our high land,
Our own dear island, with **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Wives are waiting, on the banks, or
Gazing seaward, at near Ambae;
Turn her 'round, boys, and we'll anchor
Where the sun sets on **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Mothers holdin' babes a-cryin'
Dawn and dusk now they are sighin'
They are prayin' that we're stayin'
On a home course for **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Longer, longer shall I tarry,
Where our hearts are both blithe and merry.
Turn her 'round boys, and she'll carry
Hearts to hearth, home and **Kerembei**.

Chorus

Rolling Down to Old Maewo

Trad., revised by Lew Toulmin
from "Rolling Down to Old Maui"
July 2016

It's a darned tough life, full of toil and strife
We Notari undergo.
We don't even care, when a cyclone's rife,
How hard the wind does blow.
We're homeward bound! 'Tis a grand old sound!
Our Big Sista will go,
All we care, is for our island fair
Our long, sweet home: Maewo.

Chorus:

*Rolling down to old Maewo, me gals,
Rolling down to old Maewo
We're homeward bound to our sacred ground
Rolling home to old Maewo.*

Once more we sail with a southerly gale
Through the wind and waves and rain.
And those coconut fronds in that tropical vale
We soon shall see again.
For six long months we've been found
In old Port Vila, so
We're glad we're bound from the capital ground,
Rolling home to old Maewo.

Chorus

How soft the breeze of the tropical seas
Now Efate's far astern,
Our local blades in those island glades
Are awaiting our return.
Every day they yell, on their cell,
hoping some day to know
That our ship will sail, before the gale
Rolling down to old Maewo.

Chorus

The kava brew and our lap-lap too
Are the pride of each island chief.
Notari are few, but our hearts are true,
And our magic wards off grief.
We know our power, this is our hour,
To our village we'll go.
We're rolling down to our sacred ground
Sailing home to old Maewo!

Chorus

We'll have a feast of a sacred beast,
With his tusks so white and round.
We'll right all wrongs, and sing our songs,
On our hallowed nasara ground.
When we shed the gore of that sacred boar,
We'll love and kiss our beaux.
With ancient lore, Notari will roar:
"Our island: Old Maewo!"

Chorus

#end Flag Report#