

## **THE NAPIL RURAL TRAINING CENTER, TANNA VANUATU**

Increasing the productivity of traditional farming systems in rural areas such Middle Bush on Tanna, Vanuatu will require concerted extension and training effort. The situation found at Middle Bush is seen as the ‘face of the future’ for much of rural Melanesia. Efforts to increase productivity need to be undertaken with a clear understanding of the local context. Innovative, more appropriate and cost effective approaches need to be adopted. One such approach being trialled by the Vanuatu Farm Support Association (FSA) is the Napil Rural Training Centre (NRTC) located at Middle Bush. This non-formal adult education approach is based on the ‘Tutu model’ that was developed at Marist Tutu Rural Training Centre on Taveuni, Fiji.

The Napil pilot, through the Vanuatu Young Farmers Development Course (VYFDC) is the first concerted effort to replicate the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) model in the Pacific island region. The promoters of the Napil pilot have understood the key principles of the Tutu model. Under difficult circumstances and with limited funding, a successful start-up has been made in applying these principles to the particular situation found in Middle Bush, Tanna. The arrangements established in Napil are seen as pioneering for Vanuatu in terms of the involvement of village based youth in commercial agriculture – particularly with respect to young women.

The Napil RTC has done well in the start-up piloting the Tutu model on a small scale. The achievements made now need to be consolidated for the benefit of the people living in this densely populated location. The benefits accruing to Middle Bush alone would fully justify the effort and expenditure made. Beyond Middle Bush, lessons from the Napil experience can make a significant contribution to future rural and economic development for Vanuatu and the wider Pacific islands region. However, for this to be realised the Napil pilot will need to receive ongoing technical and financial support

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