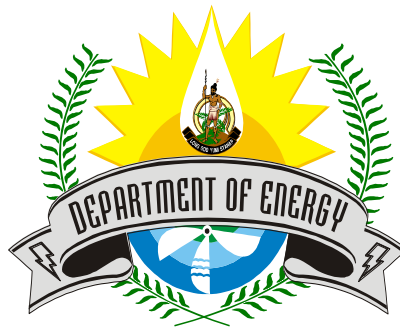


GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

**DEPARTMENT OF
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Project Bulletin Vanuatu Rural Electrification Project

The Vanuatu Government through the Department of Energy is currently engaged on the Vanuatu Rural Electrification Project (VREP) which will be funded by the New Zealand Government through the World Bank. The project with an estimated cost of US\$ 4.7 million is focused on “plug and play” systems in the 5 to 30 Wp range for the project scoping purposes; however larger systems that meet the product criteria (technical specifications, etc.) may also be considered. The Project targets to electrify approximately 17,500 offgrid households nationwide, 230 Aid Posts and 2000 community halls.

To ensure that high quality products are being provided under the Project, that the vendors ensure that adequate after sales service and/or information is available to consumers, and that the used batteries are disposed of safely, the Project will establish a registration program for vendors and develop a product catalogue for solar home systems to distribute to rural users. This Project will subsidize the solar home systems by 50 percent of the retail price of eligible solar systems.

There is little or no maintenance required for the solar system products promoted in this Project. The components of the system are expected to have a lifespan of around 10 years. Depending on the type, the batteries will have a lifespan of 3-5 years or more. They are easily replaceable by the user. The “plug and play” design ensures a simple user connection of components. User education will be carried out and information will be disseminated to the consumers during project implementation via the vendor upon purchase. In addition, the vendor (or local agent of the vendor) will provide an after sales service to explain, teach, and cover any basic maintenance needs associated with the systems.

An Environmental Code of Practice (ECOP) for battery collection and disposal has been developed for the Project, which all vendors will be required to comply with. In addition, during the vendor registration program, the safeguards documents and other regulations will be explained to all vendors and mitigation measures will be developed. Regulations on disposal of solid wastes, including disposal of batteries is also proposed for adoption by the GoV in the medium term. However, at the commencement of the Project, companies/vendors applying for registration will be required to present a plan for collecting used batteries from the products they sell, storing them in centralized locations, and end disposal in accordance with the ECOP.

The Department of Energy in collaboration with the Department of Environment will be running a Q&A session on the VREP project on Tuesday 05/08/2014 at the Department of Lands conference room at 10 am – 12pm. Should you be interested to hear more about the project or have some questions and comments, this would be your opportunity. Alternative, you can contact us on telephone 25201. Hard copies of the draft Environmental Code of Practice for the VREP Project can be obtained from the Department of Energy office located at George Pompedu Building, Port Vila.