Working the Vines: seasonal migration, money, and development in New Zealand and Ambrym, Vanuatu.

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This thesis is dedicated to two important research participants who are no longer with us Jessie Tatau, a RSE worker, husband, Kaylani’s uncle and a good friend. To Dick Eade, formerly of Manpower Vanuatu Associates Vanuatu, who without his support my participants may not have participated in the World Bank pilot scheme. He was a very kind, passionate and talkative man in regards to the scheme; I miss our very long talks. Thank you for your encouragement in this research. Finally, to my daughter Kaylani, you have been a wonderful research assistant, translator, thank you for your patience and adaptability to multi-sited research. I love you my darling xxx.
Abstract

This research contributes to anthropological knowledge of Melanesian international labour mobility, specifically ni-Vanuatu, in the 21st century. A new era of international labour mobility opportunities began for the region in April 2007. This thesis examines the multiple social and economic consequences of ni-Vanuatu participation in New Zealand’s Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE). The RSE scheme was a grower initiated policy to provide New Zealand growers with reliable labour in the horticulture and viticulture sectors. At the same time, New Zealand government officials promoted the RSE as a way forward for economic development in the Pacific region, via remittances sent home. With a lack of waged employment at home, ni-Vanuatu perceive the RSE as an additional source of income that can meet individual and community needs. Nonetheless, there are competing claims to these incomes and workers are in constant negotiation in how their incomes are redistributed among various interests and more importantly, maintaining social obligations through reciprocal relationships.

In this thesis, I explicitly focus on how earnings from New Zealand are recirculated into communities in Ambrym and add that these incomes also provide local New Zealand economies financial rewards. In Vanuatu, RSE earnings have contributed to school fees, new housing, water infrastructure projects, community projects, new businesses and have been included in funding the ceremonial exchange economy. Workers note that they are ‘working for the community good’ and aim to ‘improve livelihoods’. Through various forms of remittances, they have been reaching their ‘development’ specific goals and continue to generate new targets for their families and communities.
Acknowledgements

There are many people that I wish to acknowledge for the support provided during the process of this thesis. Firstly, to my supervisors, Dr Jacqui Leckie and Dr Gregory Rawlings, thank you for the years of support, feedback, words of wisdom, encouragement, and patience. I am grateful for your assistance and will treasure my collaborative times with you.

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<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>APTC</td>
<td>Australian Pacific Technical College</td>
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<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Aid Agency</td>
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<td>DMA</td>
<td>Developing Marketing Associates Ltd</td>
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<td>DVD</td>
<td>Digital Video Disc</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
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<td>ESU</td>
<td>Vanuatu Department of Labour Employment Services Unit</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GFC</td>
<td>Global Financial Crisis</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
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<td>LDC</td>
<td>Lolihor Development Council</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>NZAID</td>
<td>New Zealand Aid</td>
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<td>PACER</td>
<td>Pacific Agreement on closer Economic Relations</td>
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<td>PCF</td>
<td>Pacific Cooperation Foundation</td>
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<td>PICTA</td>
<td>Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>PIF</td>
<td>Pacific Islands Forum</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<td>PSWPS</td>
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<td>SSCO</td>
<td>Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Ltd</td>
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<td>TRSE</td>
<td>Transitional Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme</td>
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<td>TVL</td>
<td>Telecom Vanuatu Limited</td>
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<td>VCR</td>
<td>Video Cassette Recorder</td>
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<td>VNCC</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
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<td>Angkel (maternal) papa (paternal)</td>
<td>Song</td>
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<td>Banana</td>
<td>Wi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big man</td>
<td>Yafu</td>
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<td>Brata</td>
<td>Bataton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bredfrut</td>
<td>Beta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devel, gos, spirit</td>
<td>Temar ne wanten</td>
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<td>Faol</td>
<td>To</td>
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<td>Garen</td>
<td>Orlonor</td>
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<td>Gud</td>
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<td>Jif</td>
<td>Yafu ne vere</td>
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<td>Yam</td>
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<td>Ina</td>
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<td>Nogud</td>
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<td>Pig</td>
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<td>Pikinini</td>
<td>Terere</td>
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Taran tapra (People from Ambrym). The words are associated with the volcano “like when the flying fox take some food, same with the volcano and us” (Ron November 2013)

**Discussion on translation and language.**

I have a number of people to thank in translating and teaching local languages to my daughter and myself. However, three people who gave their time most generously. I want to credit language knowledge and translations to Tiwor and Rona Gemgem and Peter Bumseng from North Ambrym.

While talking to Peter Bumseng we discussed words, their meanings and how they were good at hiding what they meant from strangers learning the language or if there was no name for something in their language, which was more noticeable when workers came to New Zealand in 2007.

Languages from Vanuatu in this thesis will be shown firstly in Bislama then in North Ambrym language.
Currency rates used for the thesis were the current value of the New Zealand dollar and Vanuatu Vatu in 2011. For the conversion to USD, I have used the rate set against the New Zealand dollar 19 February 2014.

NZD = New Zealand dollar
USD = United States Dollar
Vt = Vanuatu Vatu
NZD1 = Vt 68
NZD1 = USD .83
Chapter 1: Introduction and Methods

As the boat rocked, the water would often come over the ship near our seats. This was making me feel ill. There was not enough room on the wooden seat to lie down. I had made a bed with an old sleeping bag, a pillow and blanket on the floor of the ship so I decided to lie down with Kaylani and go to sleep. I awoke at 6.30 with a baby crying opposite us. My goodness my body hurts after being cramped into a small space. I mis-heard my brother when he said the trip took 19 hours, I thought he said 9. Due to the rough sea conditions it took 23 hours, luckily I had groceries in my bag. We arrived in Ranon just after 4 pm. It was a long trip with a 3 year old who wanted off the boat. The boat was very cramped and crowded with cargo, passengers and crew. It is so good to be on land, even though I still feel the rocking of the boat (Field notes 29 April 2011).

In April 2011, I started my fieldwork on Ambrym, a high volcanic island in Vanuatu. The archipelago of Vanuatu consists of 80 islands located in the south west Pacific ocean. It was not the first time my daughter and I had visited Ambrym, but this particular journey by sea did herald the start of fieldwork on the island. I also had another connection with Ambrym, not in Vanuatu but in New Zealand. Since 2007, I had been conducting fieldwork with people from Ambrym working in Central Otago, New Zealand. Otago, including its central region, is one of New Zealand’s historical provinces located in the far south of the country’s South Island (see Map one and figure three). Since 2007 it had been one of the main destinations for ni-Vanuatu men from Ambrym who had been recruited to participate in the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE). New Zealand had introduced the RSE in that year to meet a shortfall in labour availability for the country’s lucrative horticulture and viticulture sectors. The scheme is aimed at sourcing labour for the high demands of New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries. Although this scheme is expected to prioritise New Zealander workers, it also allows New Zealand employers in the horticulture and viticulture sectors to recruit up to 8000 workers per annum from the Pacific Islands (Bailey 2009). This scheme is argued to have a ‘triple win effect’ (Ramasamy et al 2009). First, it benefits employers of the horticulture and viticulture industries by providing them with the labour that they could not source in New Zealand. Secondly, the scheme is designed to encourage economic development for the island nations who participate in the scheme. Thirdly, working for income to generate development has been an important aim and objective of the RSE scheme. I also include a fourth win to this, which is that the RSE benefits New Zealand host communities. This research began in 2007, when I
In that dissertation, I examined the RSE scheme in New Zealand using a micro-level case study in Central Otago. My participants were 22 Ni-Vanuatu men, their supervisors, employers, accommodation hosts and the local community. I asked the question: “What was it like participating in the RSE scheme and why did migrants want to partake in an international labour scheme?” To answer this I spent time working and living with ni-Vanuatu labour migrants in Central Otago and participated in continual dialogue with workers to gain an understanding of what the RSE scheme meant to them. However, to gain a better understanding of the social effects of the RSE scheme; I knew I would have to travel to Vanuatu and conduct field research there.
While visiting research participants in Vanuatu, in 2009, I was invited to do further research by the Lolihor Development Council (LDC), from Lolihor on Ambrym focusing on the effects of RSE work in the villages. To examine these effects this thesis documents the movement of labourers, employers and communities between New Zealand and Vanuatu. The scheme’s origins, directed for increased participation in a global market economy, has also increased flows of cultural knowledge and created new opportunities in both countries. There are multiple consequences associated with international labour mobility and the methods in how workers’ earnings are redistributed at home. It reveals negotiations of culturally significant reciprocal relationships and new obligations created through participation in cross-border labour schemes. Participation in the RSE scheme has proven to benefit livelihoods in multiple locations, but there are competing interests and tensions between various groups in the ownership and redistribution of workers’ earnings.

**Aims**

Labour mobility schemes have received prominent attention in anthropology, development studies, economics, geography, and sociology (Basok 2003; Bedford, Bedford and Ho 2009; Brettell 2003, 2007; Cameron 2011; Maclellan and Mares 2006 (a) (b); Vertovec 2007). This is primarily due to increased interest in migration studies and the need to analyse how migration in search of waged employment plays out in various forms, such as economic benefits, re-distribution of earnings, or social impacts. The focus of most research on the RSE scheme has primarily been on the effects of migrant labourers in receiving countries, reasons for participation, and the amount of earnings at the end of each contract. Labour schemes also have specific effects on the families and communities that do not migrate. This thesis does not attempt to produce an all-encompassing theory of why ni-Vanuatu participate in labour mobility but provides analysis of various factors of influence such as historical labour interactions and practices, present day economic markets and social obligations on Ambrym island based on community and family ties that produce multiple economic and social outcomes. The aim of this research is to combine these factors by applying a multi-sited and multiple perspective approach to labour mobility (see Falzon 2009 and Marcus 1995 for a discussion of multi-sited fieldwork). By also focusing on the families and communities of RSE workers, this research analyses multiple experiences of labour mobility.
Transcending geographical boundaries across the Pacific, this research is situated within the paradigm of economic anthropology. Where I examine how recently gained cash resources from participating in the RSE are incorporated into economic, social, cultural and political exchanges on the island. Rio (2007: 186) refers to a “relational economy” existing on Ambrym; and this thesis demonstrates relationships are connected through reciprocal obligations where exchange and sharing are important aspects of Ambrymese societies and social reproduction (Foster 1995). Through the circulation of exchanges, I argue that RSE earnings contribute to social and economic production in the region. Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma (2002: 192) state:

If circulation is to serve as a useful analytic construct for cultural analysis, it must be conceived as more than simply the movement of people, ideas, and commodities from one culture to another. Instead, recent work indicates that circulation is a cultural process with its own forms of abstraction, evaluation, and constraint, which are created by the interactions between specific types of circulating forms and the interpretive communities built around them.

Circulation is a primary theme that frames this thesis. Aware that workers were moving from one country (and at times regions) to another in search of paid work, it was the appropriation of how people, goods, money and knowledge were circulated that was prominent in this research.

Working in New Zealand has generated incomes that have contributed to local development. RSE earnings are significant in that they provide the finances for individual and community needs. What this thesis shows is that incomes from New Zealand are redistributed throughout communities in various ways. However, there are multiple claims to workers earnings that are embedded in culturally significant reciprocal relationships. This thesis examines how ni-Vanuatu working in New Zealand negotiate individual and community development specific needs in multiple locations. It covers a number of related themes associated with international labour, such as migration, development and remittances, through an ethnographic account of international mobility in rural, and to a certain extent urban livelihoods in Vanuatu. Overall, this thesis highlights various consequences of the RSE in terms of community settlement, living and working in Otago, absence and departure, and the circulation of money, its exchange and contribution to locally specific notions of ‘self-development’.

This chapter begins by introducing the various methodologies employed for this study such as multi-sited research and collaborative anthropology. I discuss the advantages
and disadvantages of fieldwork, and how methods used influenced information gathering. Following this, I highlight the central interconnected themes associated with workers’ labour mobility, (migration, remittances and development). The final section of this chapter introduces my participants and fieldsites in Vanuatu and New Zealand.
Methodology – multi-sited fieldwork

Ethnography is an eclectic methodological choice which privileges an engaged contextually rich and nuanced type of qualitative social research, in which fine grained daily interactions constitute the lifeblood of the data produced. With respects to method, it entails the
The majority of my fieldwork was conducted in Ambrym and Central Otago but I also conducted five weeks research in Port Vila (three weeks in April 2011, and two weeks in August 2011). Because four RSE research participants live in Port Vila, I decided to spend time conducting fieldwork there as well as Ambrym and Central Otago. The first two weeks in Port Vila consisted of making appointments with RSE workers and families in Vila, recruiters and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre to organise my research visa.

Primarily my fieldwork involved following people, goods and money. Falzon notes “[T]he essence of multi-sited research is to follow people, connections, associations and relationships across space” (2009: 1-2)”. This thesis is based on documenting these flows across fieldsites. The collection of information was enabled through extended periods of participant-observation in Central Otago and Ambrym. Anthropologists Kathleen and Billie DeWalt (2011: ix-1) state that participant observation:

is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture.

In regards to fieldwork, and participation observation, anthropologist Caroline Brettell and political scientist James Hollifield (2014: 15) argue “[W]hile it might not be the basis for extensive theory construction, the life history methods has been employed…by anthropologists to access the rich texture of the lived experience of being a migrant and the cultural context of decision making.” The method of participant
observation has enabled myself to obtain information central to decisions of migration, the redistribution of remittances, lived experiences of being an RSE worker and the effects on family and communities. This method was central in gathering information in multiple sites and through observing interactions of RSE workers, families and communities I was able to establish the conclusion drawn here that earnings from the RSE are circulated in various forms through means of reciprocity. Without this observation and follow-up questions regarding what I had witnessed my analysis may not have allowed me to understand the wider context of workers social ontology.

Although participant observation has its advantages, I am also aware of the limitations of this research method. My participation in daily activities and access to information were dependent on a number of factors: relationships with participants in multiple locations, gender, being a white single mother and researcher, a mediator, stranger, friend and a fictive family member. These various roles all influenced the research, I had a semi-structured plan on how to conduct my research and my relationships and interactions with others affected this research and the way it was conducted.

Fieldwork is central to anthropology and the ethnography that I have produced here. Nevertheless, I find that fieldwork in anthropology is taken as a given, something that one does, a requirement of myself as a PhD candidate to spend a minimum of one year in the field, return and analyse the materials, make further investigations and enquiries and produce a tidy ethnography. There have been many debates in anthropology to what constitutes fieldwork and the ways in which it should be undertaken (see Amit 2000; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Clifford 1997; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Marcus and Fisher 1999; Van Maanen: 2011). Although these debates have been useful in conducting and analysing my fieldwork; I feel that the practice of participant observation research greatly depends on the subject and the participants involved, including myself.

One of the advantages of fieldwork based on participant observation is that by living in Vanuatu I began to understand certain practices of ni-Vanuatu while in New Zealand and obtained an understanding of livelihoods on Ambrym. It presented an opportunity to observe how earnings from working in New Zealand were used for individual and

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1 This resulted in two marriage proposals by ni-Vanuatu men.
community needs. While in Vanuatu, I developed a greater understanding of the meanings behind previous conversations and actions of some of the workers. An act of hand signaling was one example of this. In New Zealand to signal a person to approach you, one would move one's hand palms facing their face towards themselves. Whereas in Vanuatu it was the opposite, people waved their hands palm down towards their body. This was mentioned by one of my participants in regards to an incident on the vineyard. One day on the vineyard the ni-Vanuatu workers were laughing at one of the men as he was signaling his supervisor to come to him in the manner he would do back in Vanuatu, and was frustrated that the supervisor was ignoring him. This was not an important incident but it is one still spoken about on Ambrym as learning to do certain actions the ‘Kiwi’ way.\(^2\) Kathleen and Billie DeWalt (2011:5) state that learning tacit language by being in the field is important for the interpretation of data. I had read this prior to fieldwork, but it was not until I arrived in Vanuatu that I realised how important this is.

**Multi-sited fieldwork**

This work has been produced in multiple field sites, or as Hannerz (2003:202) observes, “Being there…and there…and there!” I had been following the lives of RSE participants in New Zealand, and now because of my PhD research I had the opportunity to observe and participate in how this scheme operates in the multiple locations in which it exists, both economically and socially. I have four principal field sites. In Vanuatu they are, Port Vila in Efate, North Ambrym, and West Ambrym. In New Zealand it is Cromwell in Central Otago. North Ambrym and Cromwell were the sites that I spent the most time in and where much of my ethnographic data was collected.

Multi-sited research has many advantages and some disadvantages. Some of the disadvantages are the costs and the length of time spent at each location. I was also reliant on others in regards to accommodation and transportation on Ambrym. Before I left for Vanuatu in 2011, I had organised to stay in Sanesup in West Ambrym with one of my participants and his family. Unfortunately, due to transportation problems with the boat he did not get back to Ambrym in time for me to visit. Finding a balance

\(^2\) ‘Kiwi’ is used here as the New Zealand way.
between field sites can be a concern. In some sites my stay seemed too long and in others not long enough. However, multiple visits were beneficial in these situations.

The information acquired for this ethnography has been gathered by multiple fieldtrips in each location. Through spending time with families and communities in Vanuatu on multiple occasions, I have gained respect and trust from workers that enabled me to access information about their experiences of labour mobility.

The experience of participating in multi-sited research has enabled a greater understanding of the effects of cross-border mobility. In assessing anthropologist Bruno Riccio’s six years 1999-2005 work on Senegalese translocal spaces, Coleman and Hellerman (2011: 7) observe:

"Intimacy is not always lost but can in fact be strengthened through multi-sited research, the researcher and his migrant counterparts share the experience of being multi-sites, whilst it is often the mobility of the researcher that separates him most sharply from his ‘purely local’ informants in ‘classic’ single-site research....In this respect transnationalism research, straightforward as it is, can produce some of the most successful (in conventional terms) multi-sited fieldwork, in which there is enough ‘thickness’ and intimate knowledge of one’s informants to qualify it easily as ‘solid ethnography’, traditionally defined.

The ability to move between sites with participants has given me a deeper understanding of the meanings and experiences of ni-Vanuatu working New Zealand.

**Gender in the field**

By working and living with ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand during my Masters research project 2007–2009, I gained significant trust with the majority of the men who were willing to speak with me candidly about their employment, home life and life in New Zealand.

Gender boundaries were an issue on more than one occasion when pursuing this research. Such issues were dependent on context and location, however, not as noticeable in Cromwell or Port Vila, in Ambrym I soon had to learn what my limitations and boundaries were, especially as a woman. There were clear gender

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3 Respect and trust have been emphasised by participants as significant aspects of life in Vanuatu. Without respect it is difficult to build and maintain connections, see (Bolton, 2003: 4; Eriksen 2007; Rio 2007)
distinctions in many daily activities in Ambrym villages. I also observed this in church, and at different ceremonies such as weddings, funerals and circumcisions. When events happened in Ranon village (my primary fieldsite) I was always invited but when I asked if I could attend a local political meeting to decide who would be the councilor for the Loliho area, one of my participants told me that women were not allowed to attend. Women were only involved in preparing and serving the food for all of the men after they had their meeting.

In formulating questions for participants I considered making them gender appropriate. I had prior knowledge that there were some questions that I could ask participants in relation to me being a woman and also as an outsider. Dewalt and Dewalt (2011) noted that anthropologists face gender specific dynamics in the field such as prescribed gender roles, and limitations and restrictions on questions and access to particular gendered domains. This was made obvious to me after a request from a New Zealand researcher who wanted to know if I had information (or could possibly get information) from my participants on their knowledge of New Zealand prostitution and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). Previously I had wanted to ask my male participants about intimacy and relationships in New Zealand, especially in the knowledge that they were told that they were ‘not allowed these relationships’ (Personal communication, John, November 2007) in New Zealand (during the World Bank pilot study in 2007). Before these questions were asked my relationships with these men changed when they asked if they could call me ‘sister’, which I believed at the time and still do in part, was a way to desexualize our relationship. With my new found status and relationships with the men I felt this subject was now taboo with them. As Coffrey (1999: 25) states: “[F]ieldwork is not accomplished in isolation from the physical and social setting. The adoption of fictive kin and familial-type relationships can reformulate the ethnographer’s sense of self”. In my own formulation of my relationship with workers I avoided topics of a sexual nature. However, it did not stop workers questioning my own personal relationships.

Although it is not the same as child adoption, anthropologists such as myself also find themselves adopted by their host families and communities (Hess 2011). This is important for making the researcher or the guest to the village relational to others. I

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4 This is not unusual in Vanuatu (see Eriksen 2008; Hess 2009; Jolly 1987).
was always referred to as ‘George’s sister’ in Ranon. This also applied while residing in other Ambrym villages. I was always the sister of an appointed RSE worker who was from the place. However, another important fact that Hess (2011: 219) noted was that being adopted as a researcher can have a significant impact on the knowledge that can be shared. This too was made clear to me in Ambrym after conversations started because I was the sister of George or Ron, and in the regulation of places I could visit and what I could be told. Relationality is vital in accessing local knowledge and places. Ambrymese have many methods in explaining concepts and when they do not wish to share information they have ways of disguising it. Ron told me when researchers (such as myself) start learning the language they have other ways of keeping information hidden to restrict access. Ron: “For example you know the name for cow or pig in Bislama and language. So we would refer to it differently to hide it. Perhaps by referring to the shape of the pig and its four legs. We can apply this to other aspects of our lives too” (Personal communication, Ron, Central Otago, December 2014).

Gaining a level of trust with women on Ambrym was not easy to accomplish and is still a work in progress. I wondered if I had higher expectations because I formed relationships with most RSE workers reasonably easy. Perhaps I expected the same bond would happen with their families and communities in Vanuatu. This would be naïve of me, as the relationships I developed with workers were in another location and under different circumstances. I befriended the men in New Zealand, and not only did I become a work colleague, a mediator, and a researcher with them, I became a friend and family member, which was strengthened even further with the birth of my daughter Kaylani, who refers to the ni-Vanuatu workers as her uncles. In Pat Caplan’s (1993) ethnography on the changing dynamics of researcher’s positionality and the gendered self, she argued that the different statuses she had such as being single, a mother and so forth affected the data she collected and the positions she was ascribed in her fieldwork. Similarly, once I became a mother my relationship with the workers changed (Bailey, 2009: 11-14). I experienced a closer bond with participants, through their relationship with my daughter.

5 The concept of place is important in ni-Vanuatu social ontology. For further discussions see Hess 2009 and Taylor 2008.
Insider/outsider

Throughout my research I experienced a changing status in the field, from becoming a mother or becoming a sister, but primarily my relationships with participants altered due to the number of return visits to field sites. The terms insider/outsider are dichotomies that pertain to fixed categories and the positionality of researchers. Although I am aware of the debates on this issue anthropological ethnographies are based on relationships between selves and others (Headland et al. 1990; Merriam et al. 2001, Jackson 1998; Wolffram 2013). These relationships are on a spectrum of continuities rather than binaries indicating fixed subject positions. As a researcher I experienced shifting positions between being an insider and an outsider. In certain contexts, specific environments (Central Otago) I was more an insider than an outsider with workers. This was reiterated on Ambrym, where once again I was an insider with the workers, yet depending on the number of visits, or the situation I changed from an insider to an outsider in daily activities on Ambrym. Paul Wolffram (2013: 208) states “[A]nthropologists can, and frequently do, come to be understood as members of the community. This is not to suggest their outsider status is ever transgressed or forgotten but rather that they come to be understood as human with the local sense.” Furthermore like many anthropologists, Wolffram (2013: 208) notes that “anthropologists too undergo a process of socialisation.” I was often reminded of my outsider status when people from distant villages would arrive and point, stare and laugh at my daughter and myself. My positionality and ascribed relationships with participants affected methods of gathering information (Hess 2011).

Over time my level of trust with ni-Vanuatu workers increased which gave me access to information that had previously been withheld. Initially in 2007 workers were reluctant to discuss employment and accommodation matters with me. After a short period of time this changed, mainly when the workers realised I was not ‘a spy’ from the company or a government agency, as had been thought by some (for a discussion of suspicions of covert spying by anthropologists see Sluka 2007). Once my position with workers became established they discussed employment and accommodation situations with me. I would then, and when appropriate, convey employment or accommodation concerns on behalf of workers to their supervisors, employers and accommodation hosts. Because workers knew their concerns could be delivered with confidentiality
there was less risk for workers to be seen as ‘trouble makers’ and not jeopardising their future participation in the scheme (Bailey 2009; Basok 2002).

It took quite some time for trust to be established with non-RSE workers on Ambrym and was not possible with everyone due to their differing locations. Yet, overtime, through various weddings and church events I did succeed in getting to know people more intimately and noticed a change in their discussions of the RSE scheme and people involved in it. They became more candid in their conversations in regards to community members and working in New Zealand. RSE workers discussed their expectations on how their incomes should be managed and redistributed. Furthermore, they were open and informed me of workers that should not participate in the scheme due to ‘inappropriate spending’ of earnings.

**Interviews, conversations, and interactions**

This thesis is informed mainly from informal conversations. Nonetheless, it is guided by a set of indicative questions. From previous fieldwork experience, I understood that my research would have to be flexible, as new knowledge and settings produced new questions both from myself and my research participants. Prior to conducting interviews, my translator Denise and I discussed my proposed research aims and the interview questions. She was also a participant for my research; therefore I interviewed her first in order for her to better understand the interview processes. We negotiated what she considered were appropriate questions to discuss in the interviews (this did not alter my research aims), and she became a cultural advisor on different social norms and traditions in the region. These included explaining reasons, meanings and interpretations during ceremonies and other events that occurred during my fieldwork. I acknowledge that she was not the only person involved in educating me and my daughter about local cultural knowledge and language. Many in the community were eager to explain daily life and local practices, as well as teach me, and my daughter language and *kastom* (custom).

Denise told me that it would be good to keep interviews brief as many people would prefer this. Although interviews were kept to between 10-30 minute sessions, most were followed with long informal discussions immediately after the interviews and in

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6 *Kastom* is the Bislama term for custom or tradition (See Crowley 2003, Tyron 1987).
daily interactions with participants. The reliance on a translator (cultural broker) was a
new experience for me, as it was for Denise. I am aware of the debates in anthropology
on the issue of using translators (Edwards 1998; Hennink 2008; Temple and Edwards
2002; Winchatz 2006). These debates discuss the reliance on the translator in the field;
such as concerns about information being translated accurately; translators acting as
cultural brokers; and the lack of acknowledgement that translators are given,
considering their importance as researcher assistants in fieldwork. I acknowledge
Denise as my translator because as Hennick (2008: 25) observed “language assistants
play a critical role in conducting research interviews and are therefore central in the
interactive process through which knowledge is created in qualitative research”. Denise
and I both acknowledged being nervous in regards to this aspect of cultural brokering,
and I admit there were some concerns, from both of us, about the data from the
interviews, and whether the questions, research information sheets or consent forms
were explained well enough. However, after on-going contact with most participants,
the information I collected was more than sufficient in order to produce this thesis and I
am indebted to Denise’s patience, honesty and persistence throughout the research
process.

Conversations with participants using a translator or digital recorder often limited the
flow of information. Most RSE workers’ spouses would tell me the same information
during the interviews - that is the interviews where a translator was employed. It was
not until I conducted interviews and conversations without a translator, or digital
recorder, that I sensed that I was getting more ‘detailed’ and ‘unscripted’ information
from RSE workers, spouses and community members. I suspect this was because the
conversations were depicted by my participants as more private. Additionally, I
considered Denise’s positionality within North Ambrym communities as a factor. The
nature of anthropological fieldwork allows for deeper understandings of individuals and
groups (de laINE 2000; Marcus 1998; Okely 2012; Robben and Sluka 2010; Wolcott
2005). Interviewing is only one methodological approach in this research, as the
majority of my data was collected through interacting in daily routines and engaging in
relaxed conversations with participants.

Once I had developed stronger relationships with participants, conversations would
flow better and information would be passed on more freely. For example, most of the
men and women whom I spoke to in the village would tell me ‘gossip’ about the men in
New Zealand and situations of indiscretion in the villages while they were away. These conversations changed when a digital recorder was present, demonstrating that although the digital reorder is a fantastic tool that enables researchers to record and store narratives, it can also be a barrier for gaining important information. I had this problem several times. For example, one wife told me that life was hard for her when her husband was in New Zealand and that she did not want him returning the following season. When we interviewed with the digital recorder she said nothing of the sort and actually contradicted statements she made to me both prior and later in a follow-up interview. To compensate for this I repeatedly asked participants if I could use the data that they gave me during informal conversations, and although they agreed, I emphasised the importance of their anonymity in doing so.

A local translator and a digital recorder may have been more intrusive for my participants as I had seen apprehension from participants concerning the digital recorder in the past. Of more importance were the informal discussions I had with people. Many participants repeatedly told me that my returning to their place on more than one occasion showed my commitment to them, which allowed me greater access to private opinions of the RSE scheme in peoples’ lives.

**Ongoing conversations**

Returning to a field site appeared to give me more status as a person, friend, family member, researcher and member of the community. I realised the importance of returning to the field when I was undertaking research for my Masters degree. During that time John told me “Oh you [are] an anthropologist, so you will get information from us and then we will never see you again”. Many ni-Vanuatu perceive researchers in this way. During that same initial field trip I also received basic information, the questions were answered with similar answers by ni-Vanuatu participants and I detected a lack of depth that something was missing. However, my return to the field site lead to new conversations with people. They would talk with me more openly and I started to develop a bond of trust with many. A similar pattern started to emerge in Ambrym, as I returned to villages for a second, third, and fourth time. In June 2011, I was sitting under a tree watching my daughter playing with several local children in Baiap village when a local man approached me and asked to talk about my research. He was an advisor to the local council in Baiap, (West Ambrym). We spoke for 40 minutes and he shared his views on ni-Vanuatu working in New Zealand. At the end of the
conversation I still had questions about the stories he shared and he replied, “if you come back again, I will talk more with you”, reminding me that trust becomes established with frequent return visits, not necessarily the length of stay. Therefore, repeated visits, and the continuity of contact and interest in participants lives has greatly aided my research. It has also improved my language skills, as many have been willing to help teach me their languages; Bislama and two of the languages spoken in the areas of Ambrym I lived and worked in. Yet, due to the time spent in my main location site, the language of North Ambrym is the language that I have focused my attention on.

Language
This section is probably one of the most important methodological areas to be reflected upon. My limited knowledge of Bislama and North Ambrym language also known as island language by Ambrymese, was undoubtedly a methodological concern. I knew that many on Ambrym could speak English but I had been told by various people from Ranon prior to embarking on this that most people did not feel comfortable talking in English. In regards to speaking English, I was informed by Denise and her friend Rose that various residents felt ‘shy and wrong’ in doing so, and there were some that did not speak English (Personal communication between Denise and Rose 2009). Therefore I decided to learn Bislama, which is one of the three official languages of Vanuatu. Bislama is a pidgin language originating between 1865 and 1930 as a result of the Queensland labour trading era that involved Pacific labourers working in Queensland’s sugar fields and other colonial plantations in the Pacific (Crowley 2003; Tyron 1987). It was used as a form of communication between people from various islands and regions, who spoke different languages, as well as Europeans. Vanuatu hosts a diversity of languages. There are over 100 languages throughout the archipelago (Keesing 1982; Lynch and Crowley 2001; Tonkinson 1982). Prior to travelling to Ambrym, I felt reasonably confident in talking Bislama. I had grasped some of the basics of the language while living with Jen and her family in Port Vila.

I was prepared to conduct my interviews in Bislama, however after consultation with Denise we choose to conduct interviews in North Ambrym language so that participants would feel more comfortable and it had been explained to me that many do not or will not speak Bislama here. This was not the case in West Ambrym where Bislama was often spoken. Marcus (1995: 101) highlighted problems with anthropology and
languages. He argued that multi-sited ethnography has been produced in English and that one of the challenges facing the discipline is that it “will soon have to become as multi-lingual as it is multi-sited”. Through daily interactions and the guidance of my translator, I acquired knowledge of local languages on Ambrym. This was due to my persistence in asking people if they would help me learn the North Ambrym language, though moving through different locations hindered the flow of language learning.

While on fieldwork, I met a PhD student, Mike Franjieh from the University of London, who was conducting research in linguistics, documenting North Ambrym languages. According to Franjieh (2012: 18), there are eight distinct languages on Ambrym. I told him in previous research that I had called their language “Ngeli” a name that was given to me by three participants at the time of writing my Masters thesis. He informed me that this was incorrect. According to Franjieh (2012: 20) “[M]any languages in Vanuatu do not have names but simply locations. North Ambrym then refers to the location where the language is spoken. Asking for the name of the language gives you varying responses and most people say there isn’t one”. Due to inconsistency in names for the language, Franjieh decided to use the name North Ambrym; I do the same in this thesis.

People would often move between Bislama and North Ambrym language while talking with me. This was particularly noticeable at the chiefs’ meeting in July 2011, this meeting was an opportunity for me to discuss the RSE scheme with chiefs and the local community in an open forum and former chairman of the LDC, Nabong, offered to chair the meeting and help with translations. More than thirty people arrived for the meeting. As my fieldnotes (25 July 2011) show:

I started asking my questions in English and my translator would repeat them to the group in Bislama. When the men answered, I say men because the meeting was mainly men who openly participated in the questions of the day, they spoke to me in Bislama. I could understand what they were saying and this went smoothly for the first twenty minutes of the meeting. Nevertheless, as the conversation got more heated between each other in regards to the selection of RSE workers, and the ownership of earnings, local language started being used and used so fast that even my translator could not keep up with relaying answers back to me. However he did manage to continue to relay questions from the men for me. There were so

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7 Literally translates to “our language”.
many conversations happening at one time in Bislama and local language that made it difficult to understand at the time.

Fortunately the use of my digital recorder on that day enabled me to sort through the various conversations. A number of key themes such as the redistribution of workers’ earnings were evident in interviews, which are explored further in the thesis.

**Ethics**

To undertake this research I had to gain approval from a number of authorities in addition to my research participants. Firstly, I submitted a proposal to the Ethics Committee at the University of Otago, which granted ethics approval under reference code 10/150 in July 2010. This proposal outlined what my research was, how I intended to produce and present it. The ethics application process also considered potential and unforeseen ethical concerns and consequences that may occur during the research process. This was submitted and approved in the early phases of this project in 2010.

I also provided the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee a list of indicative questions that were to be addressed by myself to participants, as shown in Appendix A. The research information sheets, consent forms, anonymity waivers, indicative questions and photo permissions forms were translated into Bislama.\(^8\) Participants were given the choice to read and sign these forms in two of the official languages spoken in Vanuatu.\(^9\) I did not give the option of written forms in French, as I do not speak or read French and neither did the majority of my participants. The three participants that were schooled in French agreed to have their interviews in different languages, one in Bislama, one in English, and another in the local language of North Ambrym that was translated for me. The information, consent, photos, and anonymity wavier sheets that were written in English and Bislama are available in Appendix B.

An approval letter from the founder of the Lolihor Development Council (LDC) in Ambrym (to embark on this research), helped me gain consent to conduct this research.

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\(^8\) Because I was still learning Bislama at this stage, my supervisor, Dr Gregory Rawlings and a PhD scholar in Australia, Mark Harradine provided feedback and assistance with these translations. I am grateful to both Greg and Mark for this.

\(^9\) Not all participants could read English or Bislama, therefore I also verbally explained the forms. Due to my knowledge of literacy in the region and previous experience of people’s reactions to forms, I made the decision not to conduct written surveys for collecting information.
from the Vanuatu National Cultural Centre (VNCC).\(^\text{10}\) Once I gained approval from the VNCC I paid a fee of Vt 25,000 (approximately NZD 450; USD 373) for a research visa and signed a contract with them confirming my obligations. There were four main commitments: 1) ni-Vanuatu participation in research and training by giving full recognition of their collaboration; 2) research to provide benefits to the community; 3) research to benefit the nation; and lastly 4) delivering a copy of my research to the centre. The agreement that I signed included me reading the Vanuatu Cultural Research Policy (see appendix C) that clearly outlines my relationship with my participants, the VNCC, and the government of Vanuatu. Throughout the research process I have been collaborating with individuals, communities and government officials in Vanuatu, which has led to an open dialogue for all parties involved in the RSE scheme.

I have continued to work with various stakeholders in this research and have maintained a partnership with participants throughout the research process by sharing my findings and discussing their views in my conclusions. This research has thus been an exercise in collaborative anthropology. Anthropologist Fluehr-lobban (2008: 175) stated, “collaborative research – that is, research that involves research participants/collaborators as partners in the research process is “ethically conscious research”. Having participants informed and involved in this research, publications and conference presentations has been beneficial for myself and participants have told me that they appreciate this form of engagement. Gaining information from participants is also reliant on collaborative relationships. Lassiter (2004: 2) argues that “ethnographers must collaborate with others to build on their understandings of culture in any particular setting: they cannot very well participate, observe, take field notes, or conduct interviews without it.” This approach to research also resonates with the Vanuatu Cultural Centre’s conditions for approval where researchers are expected to collaborate with national fieldworkers and communities.

**Interconnected themes**

RSE workers are migrating to obtain incomes for remittances that are expected to enable development or improved living conditions at home. This section introduces

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\(^\text{10}\) There are in fact many synergies between the ethics principles of the VNCC and the University of Otago on conducting field research.
interconnected themes that are related to labour mobility, discussed throughout this thesis. This section begins with a discussion of migration, its definition in this research, and theories of migration that analyse reasons for labour mobility. Central for this thesis is the inclusion of migrants’ families and communities in decisions related to cross-border labour. This is followed by an examination of remittances, which are the primary reason for migration. Governments involved in the RSE anticipate that various forms of workers’ remittances will encourage economic development via small business investments (Bailey 2009; Ramasamy et al 2008). In chapter three I highlight small business investments made by RSE workers and examine this further in the local context. Studies of labour migration (Basok 2000b; Borovnik 2003; Cohen 2005; de Hass 2009; Massey et al 1993) have noted that economic investments from remittances are limited due to geographic boundaries and environmental factors in investment areas, and also include social and cultural factors such as fulfilling kin and community obligations.

Remunerations from New Zealand enable workers to engage and provide monetary resources to kin and community through recirculation. They are expected to be shared and re-circulated in workers’ communities, for the collective good. It is anticipated that RSE earnings will find their way into villages, islands and nations and cover the complete suite of economic, ritual and social life, not to mention the underwriting “development”.

Bloch and Parry noted that (1989: 3), money “is often credited with an intrinsic power to revolutionise society and culture, and it is sometimes assumed that this power will be recognised in the way in which the actors themselves construct money symbolically”. How RSE earnings are incorporated into home communities to change and improve livelihoods on Ambrym is a theme that flows through this thesis. Additionally, the negotiations of workers’ incomes, how they are used and seen to be appropriated into society, is also a fundamental outcome of the RSE scheme.

Migration

Migration, which until recently was the exclusive domain of domestic immigration policy in industrialised countries, has now become central to the debate on international development and poverty alleviation (Luthria, 2008: 165)
Cohen and Sirkeci (2011: 3) note that the United Nations definition of migration is limited to those that are away from home for more than twelve months, and state “[T]he “length of absence” criteria (i.e., those who migrated went to another country for more than twelve months) complicate understanding of migration and make it difficult to develop a complete and complex picture of international movement”. This definition does not cover short term, circular movements that are the focus of this ethnography. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Labour migration is generally defined as a cross-border movement for purposes of employment in a foreign country. However, there is no universally accepted definition of labour migration”. The description I employ for RSE migrants is temporary circular workers, which I discuss further in chapter two.

Circular migration in Melanesia is well documented by scholars such as (Bedford 1971, 1973; Bonnemaison 1985, Chapman and Prothero 1985, Haberkorn 1992). In Melanesia the phenomenon predates European contact but for the purposes of this study, I examine participating in circular labour migration for financial rewards, alongside the associated social outcomes.

Migration theories analyse the rationality of the migrant’s decisions (Basok 2003; Brettell 2000; Castles and Miller 2009; Cohen 2002, 2005; Massey et al 1993; Raghuram 2006; Schiller et al 1992). These writings were relevant in understanding the various debates of explanations for labour migration. Consideration of whether decisions to migrate are based on the individual, the household, the community, the nation, or more broadly on global interactions, are methods often used for analysis. This thesis examines labour migration within a broader community context. Cohen (2002: 4) acknowledges that although migrants are individuals they are also:

members of households...embedded in social networks that are rooted in kinship and friendship, that connect households locally and beyond, and that are maintained through cooperative and reciprocal ties....they are also members of communities which further influence outcomes.

This study highlights these relationships and outcomes. What is more, migrants in this study are not travelling as isolated individuals but are moving in closely related

community groups, which influence patterns of migrants’ social and economic behaviours (see chapters five and six).

There is no singular explanation for migration and as anthropologists Katarina Ferro and Margot Wallner (2006: 10) have cautioned “[T]he decision for migration can never be explained in a mono-causal way since there are always more objective and partly subjective experienced factors put together as reasons for migration.” Similar to Cohen’s observations with Southern Mexican migrants, “migration was a move made in the name of the family and the household” (Cohen and Sirkeci, 2011: 36). Acquiring earnings for various individual and community needs are the main motives for workers in this study to participate in the RSE scheme. What is more, through continued participation in the scheme workers motives and objectives rarely deviated.

Pauline Barber and Winnie Lem (2012) argue that grand theories of migration are limited in their scope. This thesis is informed by an eclectic range of theoretical sources (Basok 2003; Brettell 2000; Brettell and Hollifield 2000 Castles and Miller 2009; Cohen 2004; Massey et al 1993; Raghuram 2006; Taylor 1999). Basok has been influential in my previous and current writings as her work on the Canadian Seasonal scheme has many parallels to my current work on RSE workers and the fact that the RSE is modelled on the Canadian agricultural scheme (Bailey 2009). Similarly Cohen (2002, 2004, 2011) has undertaken considerable fieldwork documenting migrant labour from Mexico and outcomes on sending communities. Both authors have explored links of migration and development in their ethnographies. Caroline Brettell and James Hollifield (2000, 2014) have written extensively on the use of theory in anthropological studies of migration and Castles and Miller (2009) Massey (1993) and Raghuram (2006) have been extensively cited in migration literature especially in regards to various migration debates. Here I have applied a community-centred approach to migration inclusive of individuals and households. Ni-Vanuatu labourers were encouraged to participate in the RSE scheme for the ‘greater good’ of their communities, therefore they need to be put at the forefront of this study.

An important point that Raghuram (2006: 14) addresses is the fact that academic disciplines affect theoretical approaches and methods. The theoretical approaches and methods that I have employed for this research would differ from a purely economic or policy focused analysis. Of more importance to this analysis here is Brettell’s (2000: 36) observation that migration is a move made in the name of the family and the household. Acquiring earnings for various individual and community needs are the main motives for workers in this study to participate in the RSE scheme. What is more, through continued participation in the scheme workers motives and objectives rarely deviated.
observation that it is the articulation “between the place whence a migration originates and the place or places to which he or she goes” that influences theoretical approaches to mobility. Munck (2009) observes that migration is normally studied from the perspective of the receiving country, whereas through multisited research I have also included research in the migrant sending country. Following the flows of people, money, goods and ideas between New Zealand and Vanuatu has enhanced knowledge of these connections in locally specific places and spaces.

Differentiating purposes for migration can be difficult. This difficulty arises from the way migrants act when moving and the various situations that they face. For example, workers have had to change how to spend their earnings because of circumstances either at home or while in places such as New Zealand, such as unexpected costs that have arisen. What is more, rarely did participants in this fieldwork state one sole reason for their participation in the RSE, however when first interviewed in 2007, all 22 workers stipulated they were selected by and working for their communities. Participants emphasised that decisions of migration were community orientated, yet as shown in chapters two, four and six, some village members were dissatisfied with selection processes and how earnings are redistributed once migrants return.

Barriers to participate in labour migration are explored in chapters two and four, and associated costs to participate are an important factor. Travel expenses in the Pacific region are expensive and financing these costs is difficult for Ambrymese when there are limited opportunities for cash incomes (see chapter three). These costs are increased by workers transitional stays in Port Vila (see chapter four). In the case of Tuvaluan and I-Kiribati RSE participants Bedford, Bedford and Ho (2009: 6) noted not only high costs and irregular transport as a barrier but there was “an unwillingness of either government or a non-government agency to provide a credit facility for workers who cannot afford to pay the upfront travel costs.” Participants in this study also have concerns in accessing credit and as shown in chapter two they are willing to endure high interest rates on loans to participate. Anthropologist Michael Kearney (1986: 331) stated “most anthropological work on migration takes the form of migration and _ ” for the purposes of this thesis the relationship to migration is money and development via earnings from labour, which are referred to as remittances.
Remittances

Remittances are normally referred to as money sent to a migrant’s home community. Cohen and Sirkeci (2011: 99) state “[A]nything a migrant sends to his or her sending home is a remittance”, however, there are various forms; this study discussed three forms of remittances. The most common form is cash remittances. These are usually sent home via banking institutions. The second is material remittances, goods that are sent home. RSE workers annually pay for a shipping container to send home items, such as mattresses, furniture, appliances, linen and various other material goods. The third is social remittances. Peggy Levitt (2001: 11) defines social remittances as “the ideas, behaviours, and social capital that flow from receiving to sending communities.” Migrants are expected to leave their host countries with new forms of capital, experience and knowledge. However, skills and knowledge from participating in offshore labour is not necessarily easily transferred to migrants’ communities and vice versa.

International studies have shown that remittances play a large part in the economic sphere of developing countries. Global remittances for 2012 were estimated to be USD 529 billion of which at least USD 401 billion went to developing countries. Kunz (2009:160) observes that there is “a new global remittance trend” in the name of poverty reduction and development. Like others (Bakewell 2007; Harris 2005), she notes that in the past migration was seen as “a completely distinct area of concern from development, or as the outcome of lacking or failed development” (2009:162). In the past, migration was argued by some studies, to be problematic (Massey et al 1993; Reichart 1981). Now perspectives are more mixed; multilateral and national government agencies are viewing migrant remittances as a potential source of economic development. This is referred to as the migration-development nexus (Hear and Sørenson 2003). Using remittances from the RSE for economic development is one of the scheme’s central objectives.

Remittances from the RSE scheme are now the second largest source of foreign income for Vanuatu after tourism. In 2012, Vanuatu’s Labour Commissioner, Lionel Kaluat, estimated that the scheme had brought in Vt 3.8 billion (NZD 54 million; USD 44.82

Individual workers have told me, that during the 2011/2012 season they took home between NZD 7000–11,000 (USD 5810–9130; Vt 476,000–748,000) each. It has been predicted that sending workers to New Zealand and Australia for seasonal employment will eventually become the main source of foreign exchange in the near future (from the time of writing; 2014). Seasonal workers’ earnings are transformed into cash and material remittances. There was emphasis on remittances ‘encouraging island progress’ on Ambrym. Many island leaders depicted remittances from the RSE as a form of supporting development as remittances are seen to recirculate throughout the island.

There are debates that argue that labour migration results in dependency on remittances (Bertram and Watters 1985; Cohen 2001; Connell 1980, 2006; Reichart 1981). In his research on Mexicans working in the United States of America, Joshua Reichart (1981) coined the term “the migrant syndrome” that is often used in migration-remittance dependency theories. This thesis acknowledges these theories, but does not specifically address migration and remittance dependencies as I argue that ni-Vanuatu are not completely dependent on the RSE scheme but use it as an additional source of income. Dependency theorists such as Reichart (1981) and Binford (2003) argue that the costs of migration outweigh benefits, whereas I argue that any costs whether economic or social have been outweighed by benefits, which is evident in workers returning for several consecutive seasons (not because of failure [Cassarino 2004], but due to positive outcomes from their work in New Zealand). However, in the future, this situation might change, and the research would need to be revisited.

**Potential for development through migrant earnings**

“So one apple is supporting a bunch of people around the world”
- Orchardist Stephen Darling 26 May 2012

It is under the expectations of potential economic development in the Pacific that the RSE policy has been promoted. Findings from international migration schemes show that labour migration significantly contributes to development (Basok 2007; Cohen 2004; Rigg 2007; Toyota *et al* 2007). The policy analyst for the Migration Policy Institute, Dovelyn Agunias (2007) has noted that temporary work schemes have

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reemerged as a potential tool for addressing economic needs. Governments involved in the bilateral agreements regulating the RSE scheme expect workers to contribute significant investments to be used for ‘development’ in Pacific island nations, even though this does not necessarily fit orthodox policy assumptions, which in the Pacific region are often framed within the modernisation paradigm (Gegeo 2002; Patterson and Macintryre 2011). Gegeo observed (2002: 403) that in the Solomon Islands, “development that is meaningful to rural people must be built on knowledge resources villages already have, and strategies they know for expanding that knowledge”. People on Ambrym have knowledge of various forms development and as I show in chapter six, local forms of development are more meaningful to RSE workers and their immediate kin than those introduced by outside agencies (although many development goals do overlap).

There is much debate about whether labour migration encourages development (Basok 2000; Bakewell 2007; Binford 2003; Ellerman 2005; Bedford, Bedford and Ho 2009; Massey et al: 1993; Reichart 1981). These debates have focused on whether migrants’ remittances lead to dependency or development. The term development is ambiguous; and often has a narrow focus. This thesis looks at how earnings from New Zealand contribute to development in broad terms; from small scale house decorating to large church and community projects. Development is not only evident in the built environment but also in relationships created or maintained from reciprocal and obligatory processes.

The definition of development is central to migrants themselves as they ask development for whom? and what kind of development? (for further discussion on notions of development see Crewe and Harrison 1998; Connell and Brown 2005; Gegeo 2002; Rousseau and Taylor 2012; Sahlins 2005; Sahlins 2005a; Sillitoe 2000). Development is a largely contested term (Escobar 1997) seen as a form of earlier colonisation (Crush 1995; Escobar 1997) enforced on other non-western cultures. What development means and how it is achieved is largely context dependent.

Encouraged by a David Gegeo (2002), an earlier objective I had was to discuss the meaning of development in a local context. Immediately I recognised this would prove to be a daunting task and I was presented with a multitude of meanings of the term. For example, when talking with the LDC development was often spoken in regard to the
global context and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Yet during casual conversations with community members development was spoken with respect to local immediate needs such as school fees,\textsuperscript{14} constructing wells and contributions to community projects. Constructed notions of development in the global and local context do overlap. Nonetheless, this thesis concentrates on development on Ambrym depicted by RSE workers and their families as ‘improvements in livelihoods’, produced through school fees, water supply, housing and small businesses and opportunities of participating in community social obligations, as well as continuing existing and making new reciprocal relationships (for example, creating links with New Zealand communities or participating in customary exchanges or rites of passage).

In July 2011, I attended a meeting at the market house in Ranon. The guest speaker was John Salong from Ambrym, who was directly involved with the initial recruitment of the Ambrym men to New Zealand in 2007. He argued that for the Lolihor communities to develop they “[M]ust work together for a better life – Omankukar tone ruan gerwuten”. There were four main themes that he used to explain this development:

1) Water supply must be good for every village; 2) the medical clinic is too far away, needs to be moved to the coast for access; 3) transport is not working, needs improvement and lastly 4) Additional ways to earn money, such as tourism, work in New Zealand and Australia for better education, solar light, better water, housing, market house. We need to generate some income (Salong; meeting with LDC communities; July 2011).

Although Salong only briefly mentioned New Zealand’s RSE scheme, he did emphasise how men who had gone to Australia were coming home with “good cash” and emphasised that these overseas employment opportunities would help with Ambrym’s development.

Discussions of remittances have been identified as a way forward for development (Bedford, Bedford and Ho 2009; De Hass 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010; Kapur 2009; Luthria 2006b; Nyberg-Soronsen 2002; O’Niel 2003). In the context of circular migration schemes, it is the remittances sent home that are intended to be the basis of new found development for sending countries. Sociologist Luin Goldring mentions that

\textsuperscript{14} Studies of migration and remittances in the Pacific (Borovnik 2003; Connell and Brown 2005; Macellan and Mares 2006) emphasise the majority of migrants earnings contribute towards school fees, which is argued to be an investment for future generations.
“...different types of remittances contribute to various aspects of development” (2004: 800). She argues that broad definitions of development such as social, community, political and economic need to be brought into the analysis.

Labour migrants are noted for the important role that they have in development. As Bedford, Bedford and Ho (2009: 4) observe, “Migrants are seen to be ‘agents of development’ for their home societies as they not only supply economic remittances but also return with social and human capital in the form of additional skills and knowledge that may benefit home communities”. Nonetheless, the different remittances that workers take home may not reflect the social, political, economic or environmental dynamics that first encouraged them to participate in the scheme (Borovnik 2003; De Hass 2009; Mahmud 2009).

Participating in New Zealand’s labour market is providing ni-Vanuatu with financial and material resources. The RSE scheme has provided an avenue to source waged work to be delivered at home. The RSE programme has increased incomes in Vanuatu. John Gibson observed “…participation in the scheme has raised household per capita income back home by almost 40%”.15 Increased incomes are not the only factor in monitoring development in the region. Gibson and McKenzie (2014) have focused on wider development impacts for Tongan and ni-Vanuatu RSE workers, concluding that the RSE program has delivered the goal of encouraging economic development. Nonetheless, I agree with Tanya Basok (2000: 79-80) who suggested that “while international migration can contribute to economic growth, this growth is limited”. This limitation should not be seen as a negative outcome because as a result of the RSE, livelihoods have been changed in many ways, whether it has been in the ability to get married or participate in a kastom ceremony (as a recipient or contributor), sending kin to school, starting a small business or contributing to family or community obligations.

The success of the RSE scheme can be viewed in the offices of the Vanuatu Department of Labour in Port Vila where pictures of RSE and Australia’s first Pacific Workers Seasonal Program (PWSP) workers and employers adorn the walls. The pictures tell success stories of how workers lives have been changed by both the RSE and PSWAP schemes; such as Richard who built a permanent house, Kevin who

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bought a bus, and Stephen who installed a solar powered water supply system. These tell the stories of the successes achieved by many thousands of ni-Vanuatu who have participated in the RSE scheme. In the past, migration and remittances were considered to be a contributing factor to dependency on incomes from migration sources (Bertram and Watters 1985, 1999; Ellerman 2005; Kunz 2009). Today they are seen as a tool for development. This thesis demonstrates that RSE workers are participating in labour migration to obtain earnings and engage in development specific goals and island obligations.

Participants
My participants consisted of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers, their families and communities, Ambrym island development councils, two members associated with the Vanuatu Department of Labour, labour recruiters, agents and loan providers. I also spoke with representatives from the New Zealand Department of Labour, New Zealand employers, growers, accommodation hosts, supervisors, work colleagues and community members that are associated with ni-Vanuatu workers in the Central Otago region. All of my participants were aged between 18 and 74. The ni-Vanuatu workers I refer to are all men, and live in Port Vila on the island of Efate, and various villages in Ambrym. Most of my New Zealand participants were located in the Central Otago townships of Alexandra, Cromwell and Roxburgh.

I have used pseudonyms for the majority of participants, other than those who have given me permission to use their real names. For those who were happy for me to use their real names, pseudonyms have been used in the likelihood that their conversations or actions could reveal the real identity of third parties who wish to remain anonymous. Ni-Vanuatu participants granted me permission to use their names. An RSE team leader told me that as most workers have two or more names, there would be no problems in using the names given in New Zealand.16 I have chosen not to do so as their identities will be easily recognisable by others from the region. I am aware that there will be times where individuals might be recognised from either their actions or words, but I have changed other identifying details in the thesis (locations, third parties, events) to reduce this likelihood.

The Lolihor Development Council (LDC)
The Lolihor Development Council (LDC) in North Ambrym was involved in the selection process of the Ambrymese RSE workers in 2007 and in the allocation of funds and community led projects that resulted from RSE earnings. The LDC was established in 1993 with the aid of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to encourage cooperation between villages in North Ambrym (Personal communication, John, November 2007).\(^\text{17}\) It includes representatives from 12 villages in the Lolihor district in North Ambrym (see figure 37).\(^\text{18}\) The council is a forum that addresses issues such as education, water supplies, health care, fund raising and financial management. Previously this council was run solely by men, but now it is run entirely by local women. This change was made in 2006 due to the mismanagement of funds. In 2007, workers stated that the women from the council told them to go and work in New Zealand, and that it was ‘good for them.’

I had meetings with current and past members of the LDC and was informed of how they wanted to use RSE earnings to contribute to future development goals for the region. The perception of the LDC and its wider role is relevant to people in North Ambrym communities. Views of the LDC are often contested and from my observations, there is both a perception of community spirit at the same time as community distrust towards the council,\(^\text{19}\) especially in regards to RSE earnings. Working in New Zealand has provided the council with funds for development in Lolihor. Nonetheless, the appropriation of workers earnings by the council has also raised questions of legitimacy.

From 2009, the process of recruitment shifted from the LDC and employment applications and approvals are now made by staff employed in Port Vila by the Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Ltd (SSCO) from New Zealand. Changes in recruitment procedures have resulted in a change in power relations among the LDC and RSE workers (discussed further in chapter six). Workers no longer require the

\(^{17}\) Anthropologist Penelope Schoeffel (1997: 2) highlights that there have been a significant number of development projects initiated by aid agencies in Melanesia, nonetheless they have often failed to consider traditional and cultural aspects that can influence outcomes. Available from: http://hdl.handle.net/1885/41806. Accessed 4 September 2014

\(^{18}\) The LDC is one of three councils in North Ambrym; the other two being, the Lonali and Wawanfanhol councils.

\(^{19}\) This distrust stems from a history of fund mismanagement from previous Lolihor Council members.
approval of the council to travel to New Zealand as they can now apply directly to New Zealand employers.

**New Zealand employers**
Since 2007, RSE workers from Ambrym have primarily been employed by Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Ltd (SSCO). This grower owned company established in 2006 is based in Alexandra, Central Otago. SSCO provides labour to a number of growers throughout the region as well as Marlborough and Canterbury, New Zealand. In 2009 the company began recruiting workers directly cutting out the recruiter who had been supplying their labour.

Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Ltd is the second largest employer of RSE workers in New Zealand. Ni-Vanuatu workers in this study are employed by SSCO and then contracted to James Dicey Manager of GrapeVision. GrapeVision specialises in vineyard consultancy development and management. Since 2007 GrapeVision has annually employed between 22-35 ni-Vanuatu RSE workers. Management from companies, such as Seasonal Solutions Co-operative and GrapeVision have invested time and money in RSE workers. James Dicey and Craig Howard (general manager of SSCO) travel regularly to Vanuatu, to meet with workers and their families and communities. Employers have contributed to projects such as water infrastructures and health care clinics in Vanuatu, on the islands of Ambrym, Malo and Tanna. Relationships established through working in New Zealand have transcended international boundaries and broadened networks both in New Zealand and in Vanuatu.

**Host families**
While in Vanuatu, I had four host families, Jen and Ron hosted our stay in Port Vila. On arrival to Port Vila I was met at the airport by Jen, Simon (Jen’s brother) and two of her three children. I had met Jen on a previous visit. Her husband Ron, an RSE worker, had organised that I stay with them before travelling to Ambrym. Jen and Simon assisted me with orientation in Port Vila.

During my time in Port Vila I met with three participants who did not return to New Zealand, local RSE recruiters, staff from the Vanuatu Department of Labour, and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, school teachers from Vila East School and Jen’s church.

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20 Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Ltd also has involvement in other projects in Vanuatu.
congregation. I had intended on staying in Port Vila for four weeks, however early in April 2013, Jen received a phone call from her husband in Cromwell to say that they were returning to Vanuatu earlier than expected. Therefore I shortened it by a week, as I had prearranged to be in Ambrym prior to RSE workers returning home.

Prior to embarking on the journey to Ambrym, George my Bataton (brother), arrived in Port Vila. He had business in Port Vila and had arranged our trip on the LC Brisk to Ambrym. George and his wife Denise hosted us for the majority of my fieldwork in Ranon village during 2011 and 2012. Fortunately, George knew how to contact every person that I planned on interviewing. They had offered to be my guides to the different villages that I needed to visit and I asked his wife Denise if she would be a translator for interviews with the spouses of ni-Vanuatu workers. My previous visit to Ambrym in 2009, led me to believe that not all of the participants were comfortable in speaking in English with me, and when I first arrived in Ranon in 2011, my abilities in Bislama21 were rudimentary and not advanced enough to have an in-depth conversation about my research project.

I also had hosts for shorter stays in West Ambrym in the villages of Baiap (2011) and Sanesup (2012). The experience of residing in multiple locations gave me an opportunity to note the different challenges and needs that RSE workers from Ambrym have. It gave me an understanding of how working in New Zealand and the allocation of their earnings has affected families in urban and rural areas of Vanuatu.

**Fieldsites**

**Vanuatu**

The RSE is the first bilateral labour mobility scheme between New Zealand and Vanuatu. Vanuatu has been the largest supplier of New Zealand destination labourers in the RSE scheme (Bedford 2013). Vanuatu is situated in the Pacific Ocean, just over 2000 kilometres north-west of New Zealand and is comprised of over eighty islands. Vanuatu, previously known as the New Hebrides,22 was colonised jointly by France and Britain in 1906 as a condominium, which was an unusual and somewhat chaotic

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21 Bislama is one of the three official languages in Vanuatu (see Crowley 2003; Tyron 1987).
22 Although Vanuatu was previously called the New Hebrides (named by Captain Cook in 1774 and remaining in place until 1980), for consistency in this thesis I will be using Vanuatu for all periods.
venture (Lini 1980). The archipelago of Vanuatu encompasses a diverse range of cultures and languages (Keesing 1982; Lynch and Crowley 2001; Tonkinson 1982).

Since independence in 1980, Vanuatu has been left with the legacy of both Britain and France, particularly evident in language policies (French and English are both official languages alongside Bislama) and education systems (Bolton 1999; Hindson 1995; Jolly 1992; Miles 1998; Rawlings 1999; Silitoe 2000; Van Trease 1987, 1995). In 2009 (when the most recent census was conducted) Vanuatu had a population of 234,023. The majority (78 per cent) of ni-Vanuatu live in rural areas, predominately working in agriculture and subsistence farming. Although subsistence farming is still a dominant way of life in Vanuatu, the appeal of waged labour has grown significantly since colonisation. Vanuatu has a low unemployment rate due to 79 per cent of the population living in rural subsistence. Despite the low unemployment rate, this does not reflect underemployment. Writing in the early 2000’s, Anita Jowitt (2001: 55-57), observed that definitions of employment, unemployment and underemployment are “problematic” in Vanuatu. Placements in these constructed categories are ambiguous as not everyone meets the loosely defined criteria. There are limited paid employment opportunities throughout the archipelago. Cox (2007: 6) stated “[V]anuatu has the lowest formal-sector employment in the region.” In 2006 figures from the World Bank showed the formal employment rate for the working age population in Vanuatu was 14.7% (Luthria, 2006a: 39). The RSE scheme provides an opportunity for ni-Vanuatu to participate in waged labour.

International labour is not new in Vanuatu and chapter two discusses previous labour experiences and vitally, many important differences of ni-Vanuatu in the 19th and 20th centuries. These historical labour engagements have some similarities with the RSE, although as discussed in chapter two, a small percentage of ni-Vanuatu did not return to their homes during the 19th century labour trade era. This has not occurred with the RSE scheme. The RSE policy enforces constant monitoring of workers by employers and labour department officials, which reinforces circular labour mobility, where workers participate in successive contracts and return home after their contracts have expired. Initially, workers flying in large groups were escorted to Auckland

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International airport by an employee of SSCO, to ensure all migrants complied with RSE regulations to return home.

**Port Vila**

Port Vila, located on the island of Efate, is the capital city of Vanuatu. According to the 2009 Vanuatu National Census of Population and Housing, the population of Port Vila was estimated to be 44,040 (Vanuatu Statistics Office: 2009:3). Many ni-Vanuatu travel to Port Vila for employment, education, such as secondary school and university, or from what I was told by some of the men, for ‘adventure’ and ‘curiosity’, to see what was out there. The two cities of Port Vila and Luganville in Espiritu Santo (north-west of Port Vila), were founded as commercial centres and became the two central trading ports in the country (Bedford 1971; Brookfield, Glick and Hart, 1969; Haberkorn, 1989; MacClancy 1981; Rawlings 1999; Rodman 1999; 2001; Scarr nd., c. 1967). Often these two towns are referred to as places where one can get paid work (Bedford 1971; Mitchell 2004; Rodman 1999).

Between 8am and 7pm, Monday to Friday, Port Vila is an active city. Observing many ni-Vanuatu walking around Port Vila, watching television in the shops, and sitting around the grassed area on the harbour did not come as a surprise to me, as it had been noted in ethnographic accounts of town life (Cattoni *et al* 1998, Mitchell 2004). Jean Mitchell (2004, 2011) has addressed the topic of unemployed youth walking around town. Prior to engaging with RSE workers I had read Mitchell’s work and viewed Cattoni, Mullins and Wood’s (1998) documentary *Kilim Taem* that addressed youth unemployment in the capital. At the time (2007), I had hoped the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme would relieve the dissatisfaction over the lack of forms of employment opportunities among urban youth in Vanuatu by giving them an opportunity to work abroad for comparatively high wages. However, it has not necessarily been these young people that have been selected for the RSE scheme.

I was informed by New Zealand employers that the men they observed walking around Port Vila, ‘doing nothing’, were unlikely candidates for the scheme. There was a general perception expressed by New Zealand growers that current agricultural workers in Vanuatu would make for good horticultural labourers. New Zealand growers did not want to employ ‘unemployed urban youth’ if they had no experience working in agriculture. Therefore, RSE applicants from rural areas were more successful.
On Route
After spending a short period in Port Vila where my time was spent meeting RSE workers’ families, government officials and RSE recruiters it was time to travel to Ambrym; the first destination of Ranon village. To get there I travelled by cargo ship from Port Vila, a 19 hour journey that took 23 hours due to rough seas. When I organised this, it was because I wanted to travel the same way between islands as most ni-Vanuatu do. It was the cheapest form of transportation, but not necessarily the most pleasant as noted in my field notes at the beginning of this thesis.

Pictured above is the LC Brisk that we traveled on to Ranon. Less than one month after the trip that brought us to the island the LC Brisk underwent mechanical failure and caused major disruptions to the travel plans of returning and departing RSE workers, as well as other Ambrymese that relied on it for inter-island transportation.
Ambrym
The majority of my fieldwork in Vanuatu was spent on Ambrym, which is located in the middle of the Vanuatu archipelago (figure two, map two). In the 2009 housing and population census of Vanuatu, the population of Ambrym was recorded at 7,275. (Vanuatu Statistics Office: 2009:3). Vanuatu is divided into six provinces. Ambrym is part of the Malampa province that consists of 17 islands. The name Malampa is a combination of the three main islands of the region; Ambrym, Malakula and Paama. There are three main inhabited areas of Ambrym: North Ambrym, West Ambrym and South-East Ambrym.

Ambrym is both black (from the volcanic soils) and green (from the tropical forest that covers it). It is known as the ‘Black Island’, ‘Mother of Darkness’ or ‘Island of fire.’ It has a notorious reputation for sorcery (still practiced today). Both its magic and its two active volcanoes, Mount Benbow and Mount Marum, add to the tourist appeal of the island, despite the small number of visitors who arrive each year.

The reputation for sorcery on Ambrym is very strong throughout the country. Patterson (2002b: 126) illustrated perceptions of the North Ambrym area, when she wrote “sorcery is perceived by North Ambrymese to be a major factor in the recent government classification of this, the most populous part of the island as a ‘backward area’ and indeed one of the reasons why one cannot reach it by air, unlike the west and south-east of the island.” Visions of Ambrym as being a ‘backwards’ and ‘primitive’ location are evident in writings of early missionaries (Patterson 2002b). Patterson (2002b: 127) who observed that Ambrymese use of sorcery at a time where Christian missionaries were attempting to implant their practices in the region “earned the island the epithet ‘the mother of darkness’. The practice of sorcery still remains and in many areas of Ambrym and is capitalised on to draw in tourists to the island.

In 1913 violent eruptions from Mount Benbow forced many from South West and South East Ambrym to move to the northern parts of the island. As a result of this many were displaced, and settled in various locations. Some moved to North Ambrym but the area most known for the displaced Ambrymese after the eruption in 1951 is Mele-Maat in Efate (Eriksen 2008; Lindstrom 2011(a); Mecartney 2000; Mitchell 2002; Tonkinson 1984). Here I met with many people from Ambrym, many of whom were related to my participants. People from South West and East Ambrym have much in common with
their northern counterparts but they too have their distinct differences that were made apparent in observation and in discussions. Rio observed “[I]n every island and every language district of Vanuatu people postulate that they are essentially different from other groups” (Rio, 2007:7). Often I would be told stories how one area of Ambrym was better than the other, especially in work ethics and the ability to earn money on the island. My main base was in Ranon village located in North Ambrym, however I also had two short stays in West Ambrym to conduct fieldwork.

**North Ambrym**

North Ambrym covers a large area, containing many villages (see figure 37). My main base was Ranon. When we first approached Ranon, we were greeted by many people as the boat brings goods and loved ones to and from the island. My host family had a cooked chicken and several plastic bottles of kava (*Piper methysticum*)\(^{24}\) for those working on the ship, which was continuing on to Espiritu Santo. From where we disembarked I turned to face the sea, where I could see the outlines of three other islands. In order of appearance from south to north; Malekula, Ambae, and Pentecost.

Our house was a three minute walk from the beach, making it easy to carry our luggage. It was an ex-plantation house, made of concrete, consisting of three bedrooms, a bathroom, and a small kitchen for washing up. My host had used RSE earnings to build an inside bathroom area. Only the toilet area was used (mainly at night) with a bucket for flushing as there was no running water, and to my knowledge the shower has never been used. The house is located on the main path of the village, and had regular foot traffic from those frequenting the shops, church, and the beach, or walking through the village to visit others. Living on this road meant that I was able to meet people quickly and would have frequent interaction with community members. It also seemed however that everyone wanted to watch my daughter and myself, which limited whatever private time that I wished to have with her. As Elenore Smith Bowen (1964:15) stated in her ethnography, “I was very conscious of being stared at.” We did receive

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\(^{24}\) Kava is produced from the roots of the *piper methysticum* plant. Most Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons at approximately 3pm the sound of kava being pounded can be heard throughout Ranon village. Although not mentioned in detail in this thesis, small amounts of kava are sent to Santo for sale. This generates a small but limited cash resource for Ambrymese growers. However, kava from the island of Pentacost is rated as higher quality by most workers. Pentacost kava is sold in New Zealand and retailers with online websites actively promote sales to RSE workers. See [http://justpacifictrading.com/Kava-Products-Information-.php](http://justpacifictrading.com/Kava-Products-Information-.php). Accessed 24 June 2011.
constant stares and giggles from others. At the beginning of my fieldwork these stares were from everyone, but after the first few months the stares were generally from people visiting from other villages attending marriages or funerals.

According to Rio (2007: 11-13), Ranon has its origins in planting and the church:

This was the centre of the copra plantation, marked out by stores, warehouses and sleeping barracks for the work-crews, up until 1980....The various hamlets in Ranon have been set up as people settled here to work on the plantation....After independence in 1980 the plantation was distributed out to those holding customary ownership to the ground.

Life with plantation owners is still discussed today. I was informed that in the past, European plantation owners attempted to control people's movements in Ranon before independence. To enforce this the plantation owner barricaded parts of the property. This will be discussed further in chapter three as it has significance on the relationships between ni-Vanuatu and outsiders, especially in labour exchanges.

Because of the volcanic soil, crops in gardens grow rapidly. From the gardens our diet consisted of yam (yam/rem), taro (taro/oper), banana (banana/wi), island cabbage (aelan kabis-liwel), tomatoes (tomato), pawpaw (popo/beta anvo), capsicums (pima), cucumbers (kukumba), breadfruit (bredfrut/beta) and mangoes. However, as will be discussed further in this thesis store bought goods (particularly tinned tuna, corn beef and rice) are becoming increasingly important to people's diets and cash is required to purchase these goods. There are two stores in Ranon. The one that we lived beside was the Lombato Co-op store, where residents in the village could sell their own goods. The other was the Solo Store located on the beach front.

Fresh meat and fish are not sold in the stores. With the exception of pigs and chicken, our family ate fresh meat mainly after ceremonies where we were allocated portions. We had our own pigs and chickens, with George selling the latter. Fresh fish was difficult to catch and we rarely ate this. More often than not we consumed tuna in a can. Rio commented on the lack of fishing in the area “[F]ishing is much neglected in these parts, and older people complain about how lazy people are. There are, however, no reefs outside Ranon, and Ambrym’s population is mainly directed towards inland agriculture and not towards maritime resources” (Rio, 2007: 13). I had been informed that there was a lack of good fish and many that were available were inedible. In contradiction to these statements, in July 2011, I had friends arrive on their boat who
told me that close to our cove they had the best fishing that they had had in their time traveling in Vanuatu. They gave my host family bags of freshly caught tuna. I did observe occasionally locals fishing in the area; however, there did not seem to be a demand for buying and selling fish.

![Fishing boat in Ranon — Source: Author](image)

There is a small amount of tourism in the North and bungalows are available for tourists. Most of the tourists that do stop in Ranon, arrive by yacht with plans to go to the Mount Marum volcano. They generally only stay for a 12-24 hour period and rarely walk around the village. Tourists I spoke to told me that they did not walk around villages and their only engagement with people involved purchasing or exchanging goods for fresh local produce (this was the same on many of the islands in Vanuatu and other places in the world), which is characteristic amongst yachtyies. Some stated it was because fear of intrusion, and others because they were concerned that they would be charged to look in the villages. The only time I saw large groups of tourists was for the annual Back to my Roots festival, held in Olal, north of Ranon in August.
West Ambrym
The island’s main airport, post office and police station are located in Craig cove, West Ambrym. Like the northern region it is comprised of various small villages. It is the main trading area for tourists, as it is the cheapest place to travel to climb the volcanoes. Passenger ships such as Efate Queen arrive here on a weekly basis. I made three trips to west Ambrym, where I stayed in Baiap and Sanesup villages. The first trip to west Ambrym was to meet and talk with people involved in or connected to RSE workers. I conducted three interviews with spouses and had numerous conversations with chiefs, community members, and a local ni-Vanuatu man who has made it his responsibility to document the RSE scheme and the impact that it has in the region. Although most studies do not make major distinctions between South West and North Ambrym there are key differences. The first is language and the second is the limited fresh water supplies and food sources. Three research participants come from different villages in this region. I was able to visit these villages during my excursions to West Ambrym.

Central Otago - Cromwell
In addition to Vanuatu, this research also involved continued research in New Zealand, which first started in the small Central Otago town of Cromwell in 2007. Otago is one of the historical provinces of New Zealand, in that unlike the North Island where there has been a lot of regional boundary changes, the provinces in the South Island have remained largely intact since the mid 19th century (Eldred-Grigg 1996). Even after the formal abolition of the provinces in 1875, there remained a strong sense of regional identity. The name ‘province’ continues to be used to describe distinctive regions in the South Island. Central Otago is a region within the wider province of Otago. It has a climate characterised by four distinct seasons, including hot summers and cold winters that are ideal for viticulture and horticulture.

The first wine-making grapes were planted in Central Otago in 1864 and the first commercial wines in the region were produced in 1987 (Bailey 2014). Prior to vineyards, Central Otago was the site of a gold rush, merino sheep farming, and fruit production. Since the late 1980s, the Central Otago landscape has been transformed by the change from the investment of merino wool to the prime site for the production and

25 Also see http://www.otagowine.com/otagowine/history.html
consumption of Pinot Noir wine. The streets nearby my field site reflected the changing landscape, with names such as Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Drive and Riesling way. The region has become especially famous for its Pinot Noir wines. According to the Central Otago Winegrowers Association, ‘The Pinot Noir variety accounts for more than 85 per cent of vineyard plantings, with Chardonnay, Pinot Gris and Riesling making the majority of the rest’.²⁶ Pinot Noir is second to Sauvignon Blanc in New Zealand in terms of wine production. The growth of vineyards in the Central Otago region has resulted in new tourism ventures involving wineries.

The marketing of wine trails and concerts using wineries as venues has increased significantly in the region. Since 2000 there has been an annual celebration of Pinot in the region called the ‘Central Otago Pinot Noir Celebration.’²⁷ Cromwell is one of many rural townships that ni-Vanuatu reside in for seasonal work. Its location is central to the other main townships of Central Otago such as Alexandra, Queenstown, and

Wanaka. According to the 2013 national census, Cromwell has a population of approximately 4,143 people.\textsuperscript{28} The population is predominately European with a low unemployment rate, calculated at 3.6% by Statistics New Zealand in 2013.\textsuperscript{29} As I have previously mentioned:

In most rural areas, where the majority of horticulture and viticulture industries are situated, there have been low levels of unemployment, therefore sourcing labour has been difficult, and growers have lost crops due to lack of labour, especially during harvest time (Bailey, 2009:34).

The move from rural to urban work and the increase in horticulture and viticulture businesses has led to a shortage of rural labour nationwide in New Zealand. Growers have had to rely on itinerant backpackers who are often viewed as unreliable and often do not stay for a complete season (Bailey 2009). In the late 1990s and continuing into the 2000s declining national and regional unemployment resulted in chronic labour shortages in the horticulture and viticulture sectors across New Zealand, and in particular Central Otago. It was at this stage that the government and local growers started to look to the Pacific to meet their labour needs.

The RSE scheme provides growers with an available and reliable source of labour (Bedford, Bedford and Ho 2009; Bailey 2009; New Zealand Department of Labour 2010). Along with a discussion of mobility and development, this thesis also shows how migrant labour is motivated by constraints and incentives for various stakeholders involved in the RSE scheme.

\textbf{Chapter outlines}

Following this introductory chapter, chapter two provides the background for the RSE scheme and examines circular labour mobility. I provide a brief history of labour in Vanuatu to the present day, demonstrating how there are some comparative influences. Included in this chapter are the processes and costs that ni-Vanuatu workers encounter in order to participate in this waged labour scheme. In chapter three I offer an ethnographic account of Ambrym Island and explore various ways in which income is generated. Money is scarce on Ambrym and due to local business practices intersecting


with economic and social realities and obligations, obtaining large amounts of wealth is difficult and, as I show in chapter five, sometimes unwanted.

Chapter four discusses participation in the RSE scheme from 2007–2014. It explores concepts of work and participation and non-participation in the RSE scheme. I provide employers’ perspectives of the RSE scheme and discuss changes in ni-Vanuatu working conditions in New Zealand. Chapter five gives an account of pastoral care responsibilities. This covers various aspects of life in New Zealand, contact with those at home in Vanuatu and how the absence of workers affects those that stay. I draw on Cohen’s (2004) observation that with access to labour mobility, a ‘culture of migration’ can become integrated into the communities that are sending migrants. Additionally, I show how workers reintegrate back into their communities in Vanuatu, as well as their temporary community in Central Otago.

In chapter six, I analyse the relationship between notions of money, its circulation and use in understandings of modernity and development among Ambrymese. I introduce the LDC council and discuss its connections to the RSE and the local community. Workers are encouraged to participate in the RSE to contribute earnings to local development agendas. However, there are competing interests in the ownership of earnings and, because of a chequered history with the council, workers are hesitant to contribute earnings to the LDC. Interactions with New Zealand people have been blamed for declining contribution of earnings. Therefore I discuss New Zealand influences with workers at home and away.

In chapter seven I discuss the dual economies in Vanuatu and how they affect workers’ decisions for participation in the RSE. Workers earnings are redistributed throughout Ambrym through kastom ceremonies. Money earned during RSE work is recirculated. In this chapter I highlight weddings on Ambrym, as many workers have used their earnings to wed and contribute to the weddings of kinsfolk. I also argue that RSE earnings are allowing new relationships to emerge and aid in maintaining reciprocal obligations. These relationships are being maintained through the various remittances that workers return with. I look at the processes of sending remittances and how different remittances are incorporated into lives on Ambrym.

In conclusion, due to the lack of cash resources on Ambrym, participation in the RSE allows ni-Vanuatu an opportunity to source waged labour for individual and community
needs. Wages primarily are spent on education and remaining earnings are redistributed throughout Ambrymese communities in various ways. There are competing claims to incomes and this affects how financial remittances are used and determine the various material remittances sent home. I do not suggest that labour mobility is changing cultural norms or values on Ambrym, but rather that remittances from the RSE are an additional form of cash and material resources that are supplementing and supporting reciprocal exchanges and creating new educational resources in the region (as shown in chapters six and seven. The RSE has become a source of income for ni-Vanuatu that has enabled various forms of ‘self-development’ as a result.
Chapter 2: Ni-Vanuatu Mobility and Current day Mobility Schemes: Background.

“Going off to work somewhere else is merely an episode of their lives” (Sillitoe, 2000:163).

The social effects of labour mobility schemes and access to waged labour are central to this thesis. This chapter explores these key areas. The first section of this chapter discusses New Zealand’s RSE scheme and the Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) (Bailey 2009), which originated in the early 1960s (Basok 2002) and has been used as a model for New Zealand and Vanuatu. Although the Canadian program has its flaws and limitations, it is depicted as one of the most successful schemes of its kind (Luthria 2006a and b; Maclellan and Mares 2006b; Plimmer 2006). The SAWP’s success is largely attributed to the bilateral memoranda of understanding (MoUs) that specify expectations and conditions for sending and receiving countries. SAWP and the RSE allow workers to return in consecutive seasons, which produces circular labour mobility, thus, minimising migration ‘risks’ such as overstaying work visas (Basok 2000a; Vertovec 2007). Overall, bi-lateral labour mobility schemes have been depicted as relatively successful for migrant workers, their families, communities, employers as well as the sending and receiving host nations (Bailey 2009; Basok 2002; Luthria 2006a and b). In relation to the RSE scheme, up until now (2014), the bilateral agreement New Zealand has with Vanuatu has been successful for both countries, the horticulture and viticulture industries and RSE workers themselves.

Mobility itself is a practice that many ni-Vanuatu participate in and was evident before European colonisation. European trade in the Pacific introduced new goods, markets, services, opportunities for waged mobility and cross-cultural relationships. Plantations were established by Europeans in the Pacific during the 19th Century (Adams 1986, 1990; Bedford 1971; Howe et al 1994; Jolly 1987). The geographer Ray Watters (2008: 59) stated “[T]he most important institution of Western capitalism in the region has probably been the plantation”. Plantations, both in the islands and in adjacent countries such as Australia needed workers. This led to the emergence of the labour trade in the
Pacific, which changed social practices and ideologies of labour and mobility in the region. During the labour trade era, from 1863 until 1906, 39,931 ni-Vanuatu were recruited (or coerced into) to work in Queensland (Price and Barker, 1976: 115). This period still has significant meanings to many throughout the Pacific and is often depicted by participants as running parallel to the RSE scheme. What is more, the historical Queensland labour trade influenced Australia’s response in 2007 by initially not taking part in a labour mobility scheme in the Pacific (Bailey 2009).30

European colonial endeavors also ran parallel to the labour trade era. Sociologist Hein De Hass observed that globally, “processes of colonization and capitalist development created a new demand for cheap labour, which set in motion rural-rural and, particularly, rural-urban migration patterns which significantly differed from pre-colonial population mobility” (2009: 8). When the Pacific labour trade ceased, employment opportunities for ni-Vanuatu were dependent on colonial endeavors. British and French settlers competed for land and labour during much of the condominium’s rule (1906-1980). From the 1960s, through to independence in 1980, prospects for waged work came from a diversification of market economies, such as fisheries, plantation work, and manganese mining in Vanuatu (Bedford 1971; Haberkorn 1992). In addition to the national labour market, work in New Caledonia has been an attractive option for many ni-Vanuatu. From 1870 until the present (2014), large numbers have travelled to New Caledonia in search of work. This was also encouraged by the close ties with French governments, who issued work permits in the condominium era and even French citizenship to ni-Vanuatu born in New Caledonia. Since independence in 1980 there have been limited opportunities and access for ni-Vanuatu to work abroad (with the exception of New Caledonia). New Zealand’s RSE scheme presents an opportunity for ni-Vanuatu to engage in work offshore and actively participate in new systems of economic, social and cultural life. Numerous ni-Vanuatu emphasised how beneficial it was to have been given this opportunity. Even ni-Vanuatu that did not participate in the scheme, expressed their gratitude for this new prospect, as they had witnessed and benefited from the economic and material exchanges that resulted from RSE earnings.

30 This changed in 2009 with the establishment of the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS) by the Australian government.
Two years after the RSE scheme started, Australia introduced the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS) in 2009. This allowed Pacific Island workers to work in Australia’s horticultural industry. Compared with the New Zealand scheme, the Australian scheme still has very low numbers and has been criticised for not encouraging more workers to participate (MacLellan 2009). PSWPS ceased in June 2012 and was replaced by the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) on 1 July 2012. Because of the success of these schemes, labour recruiters in Vanuatu and the Vanuatu Department of Labour intend to increase sending numbers of ni-Vanuatu to Australia and New Zealand to enable further access to waged labour that will encourage economic development for ni-Vanuatu in the future.

The RSE Scheme

RSE Background
In 2005, a New Zealand *National Horticulture and Viticulture Seasonal Labour Strategy* was developed to overcome problems caused by labour shortages (MacKay, 2006: 16). This strategy emphasised recruiting workers from other countries to fill the shortfall in New Zealand. In 2006 a series of discussions, publications and conferences were held addressing labour shortages in these industries, economic growth in New Zealand, and a potential labour mobility programme involving the Pacific. That same year the World Bank published a report titled: *At Home and Away: Expanding Job Opportunities for Pacific Islands through Labour Mobility* (Luthria 2006a). This report drew attention to the challenges that the Pacific region is facing, such as population increases, low economic growth and limited employment opportunities for a growing number of ‘restless’ young people in the region (Bedford 2006). Luthria (2006a) argued that labour mobility schemes would help finance economic development in the Pacific islands, through financial remittances.

In June 2006, the Pacific Cooperation Foundation held a conference at Te Papa Museum in Wellington, titled *The Future of the Pacific Labour Market*. Papers were presented on labour mobility within the Pacific and the shortage of workers in the horticulture and viticulture industries in New Zealand. Both reports discussed above were represented at this conference where population growth and job opportunities in the Pacific region were the main themes. Additionally Jorge Acetytuno, the team leader for the Canadian Foreign Worker Program, promoted their scheme as a successful model for New Zealand to follow (Bailey 2009).
Tanya Basok who has completed extensive research about the Canadian (SAWP) scheme for over a decade observed that, “[M]any policymakers and scholars who study labor migration view SAWP as the best-practice model”. Arguably, this conference was one of the many areas where the RSE policy in New Zealand was formulated. As Vince McBride, (then) executive director of the Pacific Cooperation Foundation, stated “[T]he information provided through two days of interaction between all of these parties helped convince the New Zealand government that the time was ripe for it to open up the New Zealand labour market to seasonal workers from the Pacific” (cited in New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007: 18). Four months after this conference was held, the RSE policy was announced at the 37th Pacific Islands Forum in Nadi, Fiji in October 2006, by New Zealand’s Prime Minister Helen Clark (Bailey 2009) and New Zealand was offering a labour scheme aimed at citizens from countries of the Pacific Islands Forum. The objectives of this scheme were to recruit workers for New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries, while simultaneously promoting economic development for participating Pacific Island nations. The RSE scheme officially commenced on 30 April 2007. Prior to this, a pilot scheme was run in Central Otago. The pilot scheme was sponsored by the World Bank and eleven of my ni-Vanuatu participants were involved in this. The pilot project was said to be a success by SSCO, rating the project “as 120% successful” (Bailey, 2009: 50). The results of this pilot project influenced the intake of ni-Vanuatu employed in Central Otago once the RSE began in 2007.

Pacific Islands peoples have participated in Australian and New Zealand labour markets at various stages for over 150 years. This was dependent on the demand for labour in the receiving countries, as they, Australia and New Zealand, needed unskilled and semi-skilled workers to do the jobs that their own citizens generally would not do. Peter Mares and Nic Macellnan labelled these jobs as the three D’s, ‘Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous’ (2006 b: 2). Pacific Island access to employment has been restricted in New Zealand since the economic crisis of the mid 1970s and even longer in Australia

32 The Pacific Islands Forum consists of 16 Pacific Island member nations: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
New Zealand has been affected by the global financial (GFC) crisis that began in 2007–8. The country has experienced higher unemployment figures as a result. The GFC has had mixed effects on the RSE in New Zealand. In fact, the cap of 5000 RSE workers in 2007 increased to 8000 in 2008. Charlotte Bedford (2013:21) found that the global financial crisis (GFC) did affect numbers in the 2009/10 season:

The GFC impacted directly on both the New Zealand and Australian seasonal work programmes. With the onset of the GFC late in 2008, rising domestic unemployment in New Zealand led to a tightening in the conditions for employers seeking seasonal labour via the RSE scheme, and overall reduction in the number of seasonal workers requested by employers for the 2009/2010 season.

The drop in numbers was low and temporary. As shown in table one, numbers of Pacific seasonal RSE workers increased again for the following season.

To date Vanuatu has been the largest supplier of New Zealand labourers under the RSE scheme (see figures in table one).

Table 1: Number of Pacific RSE workers 2007–2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>1,228</td>
<td>1,021</td>
<td>1,219</td>
<td>1,162</td>
<td>1,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>1,355</td>
<td>1,142</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>1,698</td>
<td>2,342</td>
<td>2,137</td>
<td>2,352</td>
<td>2,412</td>
<td>2,794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Sources: Bedford, C and Bedford, R (2013) and New Zealand Department of Labour

Eligible Pacific Island nations
Earlier I stated that the RSE policy enables greater access to the New Zealand labour market for people from specific Pacific island countries. All Pacific island countries involved in the RSE scheme are members of the regional organisation known as the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), previously known as the South Pacific Forum, which was...

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established in 1971 to provide a venue for Pacific island nations to meet and discuss issues pertaining to the region. The issue of Pacific labour mobility had been raised many times by Pacific leaders at the annual forums. In 2005, the Pacific Islands Forum endorsed “The Pacific Plan” formulated in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. This plan highlights four particular characteristics of the Pacific region that need to be improved: economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security (Boxall 2006; Henderson and Watson 2005; Plimmer 2006; Roberts et al 2007; The Eminent Persons’ Group Review of the Pacific Islands Forum, 2004: 32-35). In addition to the Pacific Plan are free trade agreements between Pacific Island nations.35

The main trade agreements in the Pacific region are: the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER)36 and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) under the Cotonou agreement with the European Union (Holland and Koloamatangi, 2006: 101-120). Although welcomed by many island states, it was argued that Pacific Rim countries could do more than include trade agreements for the region.37 In contrast to the Pacific regional free trade agreements, Papua New Guinea’s Foreign Minister, Sir Rabbie Namaliu, stated:

We believe that permitting increased labour mobility should be part of Australia’s and New Zealand’s commitment to implementing the Pacific Plan. It is one way to demonstrate to our Leaders that they are serious about assisting Island countries to develop their capacity and their economies (Namaliu cited in Plimmer, 2006: 62).

The lack of available labour markets in the Pacific limits economic growth and development. Economic, political and social barriers such as high transportation costs, the lack of international demand for Pacific island produce, as well as many islands exporting the same products, cannot be improved by new trade agreements. Although scholars such as Hau’ofa (1994) have rightfully rejected Eurocentric assumptions of Pacific islands as being too small and remote for larger participation in the global markets, many of these barriers are realities that participants in this study cannot ignore.

In addition to these factors and limited income opportunities in the region, political

37 These trade agreements have been debated and contested in the region (Holland and Koloamatangi 2006; Kelsey 2004; Kiloe 2009; Morgan 2012; Narsey 2004; Scollay 2008).
leaders, such as Namaliu, have promoted labour mobility as an alternative source of economic growth. Initially, what were called the five ‘kick-start’ states 38 (Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) were selected for the scheme (Bailey 2009; Bedford 2009; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007; Rohorua et al 2009; Mares 2009). Fiji was excluded from the scheme, due to a military coup d'état in 2006 (Bailey 2009).

New Zealand’s ‘special relationship’ with the Pacific Islands has contributed to the RSE policy. The Minister of Immigration at the time, David Cunliffe (2006: 12) stated, “[N]ew Zealand enjoys a close and unique relationship with other countries in the Pacific. This relationship is based not just on the fact that we are neighbours, but also on our constitutional and historical ties”. Although New Zealand has a relationship with most Pacific island nations, in the past it was closer with the Polynesian region. This is in part due to New Zealand itself being located in Polynesia, past colonial links with Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau and ongoing trading and political relations with islands in this region. Because of its political and economic relations in Polynesia, New Zealand governments have previously encouraged labour migration from this part of the Pacific (Crocombe 1992, 2008; Spoonley and Bedford 2012). There are differences in New Zealand’s relationship with Polynesian nations, for example, the Cook islands and Niue are in free association with New Zealand. 39 Tokelau is classified as a territory of New Zealand.

Immigration New Zealand has two categories for Pacific people to live and work in New Zealand. The Samoa Quota (1970) allows up to 1,100 Samoans to apply to work and live in New Zealand annually. The Pacific Access category (2002) permits up to 75 citizens from Kiribati, 250 from Tonga, and 75 from Tuvalu to apply for residency each year (Lee, 2009: 9-10). 40

New Zealand has previously created targeted work schemes for Pacific Island nations (see Bailey 2008). The noticeable difference between the RSE and past work schemes was the offer from the New Zealand government to extend the opportunity to all Pacific

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38 These islands were given the term “kick-start states” by the New Zealand Department of Labour.
39 These states are self-governing but New Zealand has a responsibility for their foreign relations and defence. Residents of the Cook Islands and Niue (as well as the territory of Tokelau) are New Zealand citizens. They have unrestricted rights of entry into and work in New Zealand (Firth, 1989).
Island Forum member countries. Other than Fiji, Melanesian countries had been excluded from New Zealand labour migration schemes in the past. The introduction of this circular labour mobility scheme has created new relationships on government, community and individual levels that have economic, political, and social implications.

**Circular labour**

RSE recruits are temporary circular workers. They are given the term ‘temporary’ because of the legal time restrictions placed on them in New Zealand, and circular because of their ability to return to New Zealand for successive seasons. Studies of circular labour or circular migration emerged in sociology, with J. Clyde Mitchell’s (1961) work on labour circulation in Southern Africa in the mid-20th Century; and in Vanuatu through the works of Bonnemaison (1985); Bedford (1971); Chapman and Prothero (1985); Haberkorn (1992). A key characteristic of circular migration is that workers have the opportunity to migrate for consecutive seasons. In terms of circulation for Melanesian societies, Chapman and Prothero (1985: 9) observed:

> the basic principle of circulation, in both its customary and contemporary forms, is a territorial separation of obligations, activities and goods....On the one hand is the security associated with the ‘home’ or natal place through access to land and other local resources for food, housing, materials and trading items; through kinship affiliation; through the presence of children and the elderly; and through common philosophies, values and beliefs. There is, on the other hand, the wider locational spread of opportunities and associated risks involving local political and religious leaders; kinsfolk; marriageable partners; items for exchange or trade, ceremonies and feasts; and the introduced goods and services of wage employment, commerce, medicine, religion, politics and entertainment.

The RSE fits into customary practices of mobility, exchange and travel. The aspects that Chapman and Prothero illustrated above demonstrate that place, kinship, common ideals and values are central to migration processes. By working in New Zealand, RSE workers are able to meet social obligations, expectations and exchange practices in Vanuatu. Circular labour has been claimed to produce multiple wins for labourers and their employers (Agunias 2007; Ramasamy *et al* 2008)

**Temporary visas and absence**

Under the contractual agreement there is no option for RSE workers to migrate permanently to New Zealand. RSE labourers must leave New Zealand within three days of either their work visa or contract expiring (Bailey 2009). With a temporary and
specific purpose visa, a RSE workers’ length of stay is largely determined by their employers. Some workers leave earlier than the seven months of their visa and rarely have their visas been extended. In my conversations with employers and community members, I have found that their temporality is normally only discussed in the context of their time in New Zealand (for a season of seven months). Even though most workers are home in Vanuatu for only five months a year, their return home to Vanuatu has never been doubted as a temporary status. This temporality is noted in time of absence, not in a sense of belonging. As no matter where ni-Vanuatu are, or how long their absence from home is, they are still of place (Hess 2009). Nonetheless, while in Vanuatu, there are conflicting opinions from workers in regards to time. For example, workers often spoke of only being home for a short time, and others complained about being in Vanuatu for too long and were eager to return to New Zealand. This does not necessarily negate the importance of place.

Philip Martin stated “there is nothing more permanent than temporary workers” (2007: 14). He argued that when labour scheme migrants begin to become familiar, employers and workers begin to take risks with overstaying visas. This has not happened with the RSE scheme. For RSE employers visa enforcement is predominately financial. Immigration New Zealand set a NZD 3000 (USD 2490; Vt 204,000) bond per worker to be paid by RSE employers to deter workers overstaying visas. These security bonds are used in similar schemes in Canada, Greece, Israel and Singapore, regulating employers and employees through financial means (Agnunias 2007; Basok 2002; Yeoh et al. 1999). If found to have overstaying workers, employers would lose their bond and potentially have their status as an RSE employer revoked (Bailey 2009). Fears of workers overstaying their work visas have been unfounded. Few workers have any intention of moving to New Zealand permanently. Between 2007–2013, less than one percent of RSE workers have overstayed their visas. The scheme enables them to improve and diversify livelihoods practiced and valued in Vanuatu.

Many current international labour mobility schemes in Asia, Canada, Europe, and the Middle Eastern regions have existed for decades. These schemes have emerged as a result of local labour shortages. As I alluded to earlier, Central Otago has a low

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41 Personal communication with Anne Masoe, Senior advisor for the RSE scheme, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 11 September 2013.
unemployment rate and there is not enough available local labour to engage in the regions’ horticulture and viticulture sectors, prompting demands for offshore recruitment. Labour mobility schemes such as PSWPS, RSE, and SAWP are designed for labourers to be able to return home and come back in the following years. They are not designed for permanent migration. Canada’s SAWP program that the RSE is modelled on, expressly prohibits permanent residence and has very low numbers of migrants overstaying their work visas (Basok 2002; Mares and Maclellan 2006b; World Bank 2006). SAWP is based on bilateral agreements between Canada, Mexico and a number of Caribbean countries (Aceytuno 2006; Basok 2007). Bilateral agreements mean that there is a general agreement on the form of labour that the sending and receiving countries will use. These agreements enforce obligations and regulations that growers and labourers have with their governments.

Circular Migration in Vanuatu
Circular labour mobility is not a foreign concept in Vanuatu. Internal mobility was and is still common practice and predates European colonisation (Adams 1984, Bedford 1971, 1973; Haberkorn 1992; Huffman 1996; Tonkinson 1982). Mobility is linked directly to identity, personhood, and notions of emplacement in Melanesia (Bedford 1973; Bonnemaison 1996; Haberkorn 1992; Hess 2009). Mobility has resulted from marriages, natural disasters, warfare, and the search for land. In addition to gaining access to new resources, (material or knowledge based), circular migration, was and still is, depicted as a ‘rite of passage’ (Bailey 2009; Bedford 1973; Haberkorn 1992).

Pre-Contact Mobility
Implantation is without no doubt the first among Melanesian values. But if place makes people, it is roads that make places. The island peoples have conserved the memories of their origins; they are as much people of voyage as of roots, people of place as much as people of roads (Bonnemaison, 1996:35)

Ni-Vanuatu mobility occurred prior to European contact. Kirk Huffman (1996: 184) illustrated there was significant cultural and economic trading between islands prior to

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European contact. Pre-contact trading and exchange involved, women, pigs, mats, yams, nambas (traditional penis sheath), belts, dyes, kava and various other material goods as well as traditional knowledge (Huffman, 1996: 185; Luders 1996). Warfare and possibly sorcery were also reasons for migration (Patterson 2002a). In regards to Ambrym in pre-contact times, Patterson (2002a: 204) noted that ‘a certain unity was provided to the region by intermarriage and the ritual yam cycle’. Tonkinson (1982: 45) stated there was “an equally strong impetus to marry out, to engage in exchange, to forge alliances and to seek equivalence as well as advantage through reciprocity”. Bonnemaison (1996: 36-37) stressed the importance of movement creating “pathways of alliances”. Tonkinson (1982: 44) also observed “there was considerable communication and diffusion of new elements, such that trade in lore was as common as that in material goods”. Knowledge trading is still practiced today. Zagala (2004:34) notes “the ability to limit and control the circulation of knowledge is generally respected in Vanuatu”. The length of movements between islands varied depending on circumstances and conditions. Although circular migration existed pre-contact, expansive circular labour migration originated from European contact.

**Historical Labour Practices in Vanuatu**

In order to understand how external labour mobility practices are understood there is a need to examine the history of labour migration in the Pacific region. Evidence suggests that internal trading was interrupted with the advent of ‘blackbirding ships’ and missionaries from the 1860s onwards (Huffman 1996). Bedford (1971: 58) suggested the need for labour by Europeans changed the characteristics of pre-contact mobility in Vanuatu to circular wage mobility. This modified migration practices and facilitated new forms of social change and exchange between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans. Relationships with European traders, planters and missionaries changed the social practices of mobility and the ideologies of waged labour.

The following sections provide an historical background for Pacific island labour in the Pacific, specifically in Melanesia. There are three distinct contact periods that are considered including the sandalwood era, the labour trade, and work based migration during the condominium administration. These three eras have had significant impacts on economic, political and social structures in Melanesia and more importantly these periods feature in how many ni-Vanuatu perceive Europeans today, affecting contemporary ideas and relationships of labour.
Sandalwood Era (1820s-1860s)

Sandalwood was discovered in the Pacific islands in the late 18th century, Fiji being the first site in the Pacific where sandalwood was cut. Val and Fortune (2000: 211) noted that American traders exploited sandalwood in Fiji between 1803-1816. Sandalwood was first discovered in the southern parts of Vanuatu, (Erromango) by the Presbyterian missionary, Peter Dillon in 1825 (Davidson 1970; Shineberg, 1967: 16; Van Trease, 1987: 12). The sandalwood trade encouraged new relations between Europeans and Pacific Island peoples.

The search for sandalwood was a response to the for demand in trade commodities “[T]he Sandalwood trade of the Pacific Islands owed its existence, equally, to a domestic revolution….This was the substitution of tea for ale as the national beverage of England” (Shineberg, 1967: 2). Tea had become popular in English society, and Chinese tea dominated the market. This trade also extended to the British colonies, such as those in Australia, who had also become large consumers of tea (Shineberg: 1967). Rising tea prices in China encouraged European merchants to search for products that could be directly traded with Chinese suppliers, and sandalwood was in high demand in China. As Shineberg (1967: 7) observed “[T]here were times in the early Pacific trade…when sandalwood commanded such high prices in China at so little outlay that it seemed as good as a gold-find to colonial merchants” (Shineberg, 1967: 7).

Van Trease (1987: 14-15) observed that the initial failed attempts to establish “a working relationship with the people of Erromango” between 1829-30, and the fall in sandalwood prices in China, contributed to a temporary withdrawal in sandalwood extraction by Europeans. However, in 1840, Europeans returned for sandalwood, and this time the demand for this commodity lead to a regular European commercial presence in the region, as Shineberg (1967: 15) wrote:

> The importance of the sandalwooders in Melanesia was that, unlike other white bearers of gifts who had occasionally been seen or heard of, they came back, and in numbers. Moreover, owing to the discovery of the fragrant woods on his lands, the natives of the sandalwood islands found himself in a bargaining position: he could now command a regular supply of desired goods.

The European traders need of sandalwood, provided ni-Vanuatu an advantage in their dealings with merchants, especially in terms of acquiring the European goods that they
accepted as payment. Not only did this trade represent the beginnings of frequent interactions and relationships between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans, it also formed new relations of labour, trade and exchanges of social and material culture.

Ni-Vanuatu started to travel and move around the archipelago to gain access to valued foreign goods and sandalwood became an important addition to Melanesian economies. Trade goods such as iron, tobacco, guns, metal tools, cloth and various other European possessions were used as payment for labour. After a brief period of this contact and trade, ni-Vanuatu became more experienced in trading and demanded specific goods in return. For example, ni-Vanuatu on the island of Espiritu Santo demanded pigs in return for sandalwood, and traders went as far as Fiji to obtain them (Shineberg, 1967: 155; Van Trease 1987: 15).

Exchanges between ni-Vanuatu and European traders had social and economic effects on everyday practices in Vanuatu. The introduction of European goods became significant in daily routines for many ni-Vanuatu:

> From the large number of iron tools exported to these islands between 1841 and 1865 one might have expected that traditional stone implements were in a short time completely replaced in some areas....There is no doubt that the introduction of metal tools amounted to a technical revolution in these islands. The hours of labour in the heavy work of subsistence agriculture – in clearing and fencing gardens- and in canoe-building, house-building, tool making and fishing, were very much reduced (Shineberg, 1967: 159-160).

European goods ultimately reduced labour times for both men and women, which also changed social practices such as methods of cooking, clothing, and storage. Shineberg (1967) argued that new goods resulted in loses in traditional manufacturing practices. The introduction of European weaponry such as guns, further altered political and leadership structures in the region (Shineberg 1999; Van Trease 1987). The material items obtained from Europeans were introduced into ceremonial and local economies.

Most labour migration reported for this era, involved the islands of Tanna and Efate (Shineberg: 1967; Bedford: 1971). Shineberg (1967: 215) stated that the sandalwood era ended “when tea began to be imported from Ceylon in the last quarter of the nineteenth century”. There was no demand for sandalwood in Ceylon, and so the Pacific trade declined. There were differences between the sandalwood era and the labour trade era that followed in that the number of workers required increased for
indentured contracts in Australia (rather than the more informal agreements within the Vanuatu archipelago). Most employment for the sandalwood trade was located within the archipelago, whereas the during the labour trade, thousands of workers were sought for Queensland’s cotton and then sugar plantations, on contracts of three to four years.

**Labour trade era (1863-1904)**

The era that has been significantly highlighted is the labour trade, from the 1860s-1906s. (Barker and Price 1976; Bedford 1971; Corris 1970, 1972, 1973; Graves 1983, 1992; Moore 1978, 1990, 1993, 1995; Munro 1995; Scarr 1970, Shineberg 1999). The labour trade had its beginnings in the late stages of the sandalwood era, the 1840s. Bedford (1971: 63) noted that “in 1847 sixty-five New Herbrideans from southern islands were taken to New South Wales to work on graziers’ properties but it was not until 1863 that the ‘labour trade’ was actively promoted”.43

The American civil war caused a worldwide shortage of cotton in the 1860s making way for new opportunities in the Pacific as Munro and Firth (1990: 5) observed:

> plantation systems only became widespread in the region in the early 1860s when the American Civil War disrupted the textile industries of Britain and Europe, resulting in the rapid spread of cotton plantations in places as far afield as Samoa, Tahiti, Hawaii, Fiji and Queensland.

There was an attempt to grow cotton in Vanuatu in the 1860s but due to difficulties in labour recruitment, market conditions, irregular shipping, hurricanes and malaria it did not succeed (Bedford 1971). Instead labourers from Vanuatu went to Fiji and Queensland, Australia to work on sugar and cotton plantations and to New Caledonia for mining and ranching. Ironically, as the American Civil War was in part being fought over slavery, at the same time an alleged new “slave trade” (using indentured labour), was developing in the Pacific (Video interview, Molisa in Moore: 1995).

Using labour from the Pacific islands was controversial. Shineberg noted: “[W]hen traders began to ship Pacific Islanders to foreign places as cheap labour for European enterprises, an immense controversy erupted” (1999: 4). From the arrival of the *Don

43 On 14 August 2013, in Queensland, Australia, a commemoration was held to mark 150 years, since the arrival of the first ship of labourers from Vanuatu, who arrived on the *Don Juan* in 1863. Moore, Clive  http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-14/an-blackbirdding-special/4887692. Accessed 1 September 2013.
Juan in 1863 there were protests and debates on the morality of using indentured labour (Saunders, 1988: 149). This occurred at a time where slavery was being abolished in European colonies only to be replaced by controversial indentured labour programs in the Americas, Indian Ocean and the Pacific (Banivanua-Mar 2007; Miles 1987; Munro 1995; Northrup 1995). This was a practice of labour that had its origins in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and had evolved as a method to provide labour under restrictive contractual conditions. Northrup (1995) called it “[I]ndentured labour in the age of imperialism.”

Commercial sugar production began in Queensland in 1862 and its cultivation largely determined the need for labour. Australian growers became dependent on being able to recruit from the Pacific (Graves 1992) and this also altered work opportunities for Ni-Vanuatu. Moore (2001:167) observed prior to 1880 “[I]slanders could be employed in any pastoral or maritime industry in the colony, but thereafter they were restricted to the sugar industry along the east coast”, which led to a significant increase in Melanesian labourers in the Queensland region. During this period Melanesia became a ‘labour reserve’ for Australian, Fijian, and New Caledonian planters and ranchers (Denoon, Smith, Wyndham, 2000: 174). Most Pacific Island labourers were on three year contracts and “[B]etween 1863 and 1906, Pacific Islanders were the staple labour force in Queensland’s sugar industry” (Moore, 1990: 144).

**Recruitment and ‘Blackbirding’**

Participation of people from the Pacific islands in the labour trade, whether willingly or coerced, has been the central focus of much academic writing of this period (Bandler 1977; Bennett 1976; Corris 1970; Jolly 1987; Moore 1990, 2001; Shineberg 1967, 1999). One of the most serious offences of the labour trade was that Pacific islanders were kidnapped from their islands and forced to participate in the trade. This is commonly termed ‘blackbirding’.

In 2007, while the participants of this research were in New Zealand they organised a concert for the local community. Part of this concert involved a series of dramas. Their aim was to educate New Zealanders about Vanuatu’s history. The play depicted four waves of foreigners arriving in Vanuatu. The first were explorers, then traders, followed by European labour recruiters/blackbirders, and finishing with missionaries.
Absent from this drama were scenes of the colonial era. However, this period is not always distinguished by my participants as being separate from the labour trade. For many ni-Vanuatu it was seen as an extension. The labour trade scene is as follows:

**Narrator:** “Then there were blackbirders. They came to take the natives to work in the sugar plantations in Queensland. It was terrible because some of them came with guns and grabbed all of the natives and took them to Australia to work on the plantations”.

**Enter ni-Vanuatu man:** He comes to the beach, sees a boat and notices someone is missing. He starts yelling for the person to come back. More people from the village join him and they all start to wail for the man who has been taken away.

**Narrator:** “This is what the blackbirders did. They dressed up like priests and held services on the seashore and grabbed all the communities. And what happened, they took the whole village to the sugar plantation in Queensland”.

At the end of this scene, the men performed this song:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bislama</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yu putum mi long aboat</td>
<td>You pull me to the boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mi no want to go</td>
<td>I don’t want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He no tell mi to go to Queensland</td>
<td>He didn’t tell me to go to Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long a long a suga kane</td>
<td>To the sugar cane⁴⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The actions to this song showed the men being tied to each other by rope and being led away to the plantations, while their families were on the beach wailing in distress. I was informed that this particular play was performed in Australia by some of the participants in this study prior to the RSE scheme. It was performed in various locations between Brisbane and Cairns over a period of three weeks “mainly where other ni-

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⁴⁴ The song and the translations provided here were written by the director of the play. I am fully aware that this is not a standardised version of Bislama. However, I was told they sang it to the audience in a way that it would need no translation. I have typed exactly what he wrote.
Vanuatu lived…as it [blackbirding] is still in our hearts and memories, what was done” (Ron, 25 April 2012). Shineberg (1999: 9) observed “[M]emories of the labour trade play an important part in the collective identity of the peoples of the independent nations Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands”. In an online video resource, ni-Vanuatu historian Anna Naupa (2005) stated:

The Blackbirding period is still fresh in people’s memories. This is because of oral tradition. Because stories are passed on from generation to generation, some are funny, some are sad. But pretty much everyone in Vanuatu has one or two ancestors who was affected by or involved in the labour recruiting period.45

These dramas were balanced out with stories of adventure. There were stories of the treatment ni-Vanuatu received from Europeans. Some plantation owners were good and many ni-Vanuatu stayed for long periods of time; others less so. These stories influenced perceptions of first-time RSE workers. For example, Ron said when they first came to New Zealand for the RSE, the labour trade era was firmly in their minds and they were concerned about how they would live and be treated by their employers. This was also shared to me as a concern of many RSE workers’ spouses.

It is estimated that up to 60,000 people from the Pacific participated in the labour trade. It has been alleged that during this period many people were forcibly removed from their villages and islands (Bandler 1977; Naupa 2005). There is evidence that many ni-Vanuatu were misled and deceived in historical labour ventures (Bandler 1977; Moore 1990). Nonetheless, there were ni-Vanuatu who freely consented to working in Australia. For some, it was an activity or an adventure that they willingly participated in. Evidence of workers re-entering the labour trade suggests willingness to participate.

Historian Clive Moore argued “[W]e lack respect for the intelligence of the people of the Pacific if we think they allowed themselves to be kidnapped off their own beaches by a handful of white men in rowing boats” (1993: 88). In regards to blackbirding, however, Moore (1981, 1993) acknowledged there might have been incidences of ‘cultural kidnapping’. Moore explains that Europeans:

had a cultural advantage and although physical kidnapping may have only been a brief phase, the phase ‘cultural kidnapping’ has been used to describe the way in which the labour recruiters took advantage of the islanders’ naiveté over the value of their labour and the low value of their wages and the goods in which they were paid (1993 :90).

His explanation of ‘cultural kidnapping’ recognises indigenous agency. As Jolly (1987:123) stated, although Moore “…formulates a concept of cultural kidnapping to express the idea that Melanesian volition does not negate the facts of exploitation and cultural advantage on the part of Europeans.”

There are distinct periods in the labour trade. At the beginning of the trade, Islanders were taken by force and deception was often involved in recruiting labour (Adams 1986; Bedford 1971; Corris 1973; Moore 1990; Munro 1995; Shineberg 1999). However, recruitment practices changed over time. Moore (2001: 169) observed that later in the trade, Melanesians actively sought to participate. Nonetheless, the practice of blackbirding has somewhat overshadowed accounts of those who were recruited willingly and returned to Australia on new contracts of indenture.

**Ambrym in the labour trade**

Mary Patterson (2002a: 207) observed that people from Ambrym played a major role in the labour trade and were keen to participate:

> From the earliest years of contact with labour traders, Ambrymese were enthusiastic recruits, first in the plantations of the archipelago itself, in New Caledonia and Fiji, and later in Queensland. In the first ten years for which records for Queensland exist (1863-1872), Ambrym provided more recruits than any other island except Efate, the one on which the capital, Port Vila is situated; they are indeed, the only northern islanders listed at all in this period.

This era is still widely spoken about in Ambrym. Many participants spoke to me about this period, and the stories they have heard about their relatives’ journeys from Ambrym to Queensland. Three mentioned that they never knew what happened to those presumed to have been taken during this era. Simon told me “My Dad’s brother, he went to Queensland and we do not know what became of him. If he has a family he does not know us, our life here. *Mi sorri tumas* (I am very sorry) for them” (Interview, Simon, Baiap village, 2012). RSE workers have also told many stories about Queensland relatives that have visited Ambrym and the new connections of lost relatives that they have made.
In September 2013, in an interview on *ABC’s Lateline* in Australia with Emma Alberici, Clive Moore estimated that between 15-30 per cent of Melanesians were kidnapped.\(^{46}\) The language of kidnapping, coercion and deceit was widespread during the labour trade and this discourse continues to be emphasised in contemporary media coverage of this period (Dorney 2011; Shineberg 1999). It was not until the 1970s that ni-Vanuatu agency in the labour recruitment process was recognised (Corris 1973; Munro 1995). As Campbell observes:

\[\text{[T]here was thus a good deal of voluntary and well-informed compliance in the trade. However, insofar as labourers had a choice, Queensland was a much preferred destination. This was because wages were higher and there was sufficient legislative control both of the recruiting process and of employment conditions in Queensland to make the industry tolerable, even advantageous (Campbell, 2003: 129).}\]

Therefore, some not only chose to participate in labour migration during this era, but also choose their destinations that no doubt were influenced by stories of returned labourers. Many ni-Vanuatu returned to Queensland on more than one occasion. Moore (2001: 169) argued that “[T]he rerecruiting and “time-expired” labourers (those who entered second or subsequent contracts) made up a considerable proportion of the numbers.” However, even though the decision to participate appeared to be individually driven it may have been circumscribed via other forms of cultural coercion. For example, I have previously noted, initial participation in the RSE for some ni-Vanuatu, was an obligation to the community. In regards to historical practices of labour mobility I was advised there were circumstances where chiefs, or the respected big men of villages, sold or offered men as labourers to recruiters for a price, or encouraged men to participate for the ‘good of the village” (Steven and Simon North Ambrym 2011; Lal and Fortune 2000).

Labour recruiters looked to island people that demonstrated influence over others (considered to be chiefs by academics and participants of this study), to assist in enlisting workers (Shineberg, 1999: 82; Lal and Fortune 2000). Many chiefs sold or traded their own people as labour for stick tobacco, guns and other desired European goods (Steven and Simon, North Ambrym 2011). Other influential factors included were family members, individual agency and community decision making processes.

that would have encouraged ni-Vanuatu to travel abroad for work. Despite ethnohistorical debates in Pacific history and anthropology, ni-Vanuatu and South Sea Islanders in Australia today view the Queensland labour trade negatively in terms of coercion, deceit and exploitation where Melanesians were kidnapped and forced to work in appalling conditions akin to slavery in Australia. These collective memories of the labour trade have consequences on ni-Vanuatu perceptions of offshore work conditions to this day. People act on their perceptions and these in turn have made people cautious in their approach to the RSE, at least in the first year or two of the scheme’s operation.

Potential recruits and their families have sought assurances from the authorities that the stories passed down from previous generations about the 19th and 20th centuries experiences of ni-Vanuatu who worked the cane fields of Queensland are not in any way analogous to conditions in present day New Zealand and its RSE scheme. In 2007, participants informed me that during the labour trade period communities choose people to go, as they also do for the RSE scheme. This was done under the premise that the labourers would return and do ‘good’ for their community. In addition to obligatory reasons for participating in the labour trade, observing what other labourers brought back to the village and hearing the stories these travelers told, encouraged or discouraged people in participate in the RSE.

**Women in the Labour trade**

Focusing on the “forgotten Women”, Jolly (1987), engaged extensively with the historical nature of gender in the labour trade. She suggests that there was a gendered bias that needs to be analysed in the recruitment of ni-Vanuatu women during this period. Participation in labour migration brought about new social boundaries and practices between genders, as Jolly argued: “…we need to consider not just that small but significant minority of women who went to the distant plantations, but also those women who remained in the villages and the impact labour recruiting has had on broader patterns of relations between women and men” (1987: 130). Marilyn Strathern (1988: 77) observed in Melanesia, cash crops and migration for labour were dominated by men, whereas women were “prominently concerned with the subsistence base.” Additionally, Jolly argued that Sa speaking men from the island of Pentecost located to the north of Ambrym, deliberately stopped women from learning *Bislama*, as a means to prevent female participation in the labour trade (1987: 134). Shineberg (1999:92)
echoed Jolly’s observation that “[A]lthough female workers were in demand in New Caledonia, they were difficult to recruit in the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands, because, in general, their menfolk would not allow them to leave”. Female participation increased as the labour trade became more familiar and the demand for domestic workers in Queensland increased. Nonetheless, female recruitment depended on the place that ni-Vanuatu women originated from (Shineberg 1999).

During the initial phase of recruitment of the labour trade, Moore (2001: 169) estimated that six per cent were women. Women from Vanuatu who participated in labour recruitment during the 19th century were often characterised in various ways such as prostitutes, runaways, victims of kidnapping, and married women accompanying their husbands (Jolly, 1987: 126-128). Ni-Vanuatu women’s participation in the trade was severely restricted by kin and community groups. However, the absence of kin networks to support ni-Vanuatu women in Queensland, made them vulnerable. As Kay Saunders (1982: 32) argued “[M]elanesian women found themselves in an environment that was extremely hostile and savage, where they were unprotected’ by the traditional mores that secured their integrity”. This was one of the justifications for ni-Vanuatu kin and communities not permitting women to enter the labour trade.

Even though the RSE scheme has been produced in a different era and context, similar to Jolly’s (1987) findings on female participation in labour in South Pentacost, women in North Ambrym also experience barriers to the RSE scheme. Women from North Ambrym are dissuaded from entering the RSE scheme and only large groups of men that live and work together in New Zealand, depart from the region.

**Ni-Vanuatu in Queensland**

The employment of Pacific Island labourers over European workers was a problem throughout the 19th century that caused discontent and complaints from European Australians. In addition to islanders, trade unions targeted the influx of Asian migrants, alleging that these foreign workers were taking available employment from local European workers and that Asian people were immoral in character. Saunders (1988: 153) found evidence of this through a letter to Queen Victoria from John Douglas and his liberal colleagues in 1871:
The existence of such a class [Melanesians] is calculated to have a deteriorating influence on all our institutions – civil, religious and political...for this unintelligent labour of aliens or semi-civilised races is incapable of exercising the rights of citizenship.

Island labourers endured racism throughout this era and with the mindset of many European Australians of this period, Pacific labourers were treated with little humanity. European racism was not limited to Asian, Indian and Pacific workers; Indigenous Aboriginal peoples also suffered violent treatment (Evans 1988). The racist and sometimes violent treatment from Europeans was met with resistance. This was evident in Moore’s analysis of the Mackay Racecourse Riot in Queensland 1883, where Melanesians resisted the Europeans’ violent treatment of them, which initiated conflict between the groups (see Moore 1978).

**Demise of the labour trade**

The labour trade era ended at the beginning of the twentieth century, when Queensland ‘became a state of the commonwealth’ (Moore, 2013: 8). One of the first pieces of legislation passed by the newly formed Commonwealth was the Immigration Restriction Act 1901. Birch argued that the reason for this legislation was to stop the ‘Asiatic Labourer migrant’ (1965: 198). This was seen as the first step of ‘the White Australia policy’ (Birch, 1965: 198). That same year, *The Pacific Island Labourers Act in 1901* authorised the deportation of Melanesians and brought the labour trade era to an effective end (Mercer, 1995: xii). There was to be no recruiting of Pacific labourers after 1904 and deportation started in 1906 (Corris, 1972: 237). Some 4,269 Pacific Island labourers were deported back to Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands in the first decade of the 20th century (Corris, 1972: 243).

A number of ni-Vanuatu did not want to return to Vanuatu (Corris 1973) and there were exemptions in the act of 1901 that allowed selected workers from the Pacific to remain in Australia. Exempted were “those born in Australia and islanders who had been continuously resident there since 1879 or earlier, crews of ships, and those who might be granted temporary certificates of exemption under the provisions of the Immigration Restriction Act” (Corris, 1972: 237). There was an amendment to this act in 1906 that provided an exemption to the “aged and infirm, those who had been living for 12

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months or more with partners with whom they could not return, holders of free land, and those who had lived for 20 years in Australia” (Corris, 1972: 242). The official number of islanders granted permission to remain in Australia were 1654 (although the number of ni-Vanuatu who remained in Australia was much higher).48

Figures for the number of Melanesians who remained in Queensland were difficult to calculate as many hid from Australian authorities to avoid repatriation (Mercer and Moore 1978, Moore 1990; Shineberg 1999). Mercer and Moore (1978: 90) estimated that between 1500-2000 Melanesians stayed in Queensland after thousands of others were deported. Corris (1972: 238) observed:

For many Melanesians in Queensland their island homes held no attraction. Many had attended schools and churches in the sugar towns, had steady jobs, had raised families there, and achieved security and standards of comfort which were unimaginable in the islands.

Furthermore, as Bedford (1971) has shown the length of absence affected ni-Vanuatu migrants who returned home. Many came home to find their possessions and even their families had gone. Some labourers went home to nothing and had to rely on others, losing all income earned to repay the debt of gratitude. “[I]n such circumstances a man had little chance of succeeding in the traditional hierarchy. Many disillusioned, recruited again; others sought to change the structure of society” (Bedford, 1971:68). After the labour trade ended, many of those who returned to the archipelago sought new lives through working for European planters in Vanuatu.

**Vanuatu Plantations and Colonial Influences on Labour**

When the overseas labour trade was terminated in the early part of the twentieth century it did not mean the end of labour recruiting, merely its redirection. Labour was needed to work on the plantations of the British and French settlers....These plantations first produced maize, coffee, cotton and bananas but increasingly specialized in coconuts for copra production (Jolly, 1987: 133).

Plantations emerged in Vanuatu at the same time as the offshore labour trade operated. Initially, ni-Vanuatu preferred to trade with Europeans, rather than plantation work. This was especially the case in the sandalwood era, and as I stated earlier that period also brought about more frequent mobility for ni-Vanuatu in seeking paid employment,

whether this was in the form of goods or money. With regards to plantations in Vanuatu, Ron Adams (1990: 140) observed “[C]ash-cropping came to Vanuatu in 1863 with the establishment of the New Hebrides Cotton Company”. In 1868, the company that had been set up on Aneityum Island in south Vanuatu, ceased due to failure because “the Aneityumese never really took to growing cotton along with their yams and the venture folded in 1868” (Adams, 1990: 140). According to Van Trease (1987: 19-21) the numbers of European planters increased in the 1860s due to high cotton prices because of the American Civil War. During that same decade, Queensland was a large supplier of cotton and sugar, and was ‘regarded potentially as a second Louisiana’ (Saunders, 1988: 150). However, world cotton prices dropped again in the 1870s.

Bedford (1971) and Adams (1990) suggest that ni-Vanuatu living in coastal areas who had been trading with European merchants for a generation were the first groups to work on European plantations. Adams (1990: 142) noted as early as the 1880s that ni-Vanuatu were producing and marketing their own copra. “The demand for produce from tree crops, especially copra, encouraged Islanders to develop their own lands rather than work for foreign plantation owners” (Bedford, 1971: 284). Ni-Vanuatu cash crop production reduced the availability of plantation labour that could be recruited internally in the archipelago (Adams 1986; Brookfield and Hart 1971; Shlomowitz and Bedford 1988).

The formation of European plantations in Vanuatu during the late 19th century did attract some ni-Vanuatu labourers. European settlers hoped that the end of the Queensland labour trade would mean that large numbers of ni-Vanuatu workers would be available for local plantations. This did not eventuate however and there were labour shortages for many European plantation owners (Adams 1990; Bedford 1971; Brookfield and Hart 1971). In discussing Vanuatu’s internal labour trade during colonisation, Shlomowitz and Bedford (1988: 65) noted during the period of 1908-1941, 37,871 indentured contracts were entered into. Ni-Vanuatu demand for waged labour was circumstantial. Economic necessities such as bride price influenced participation in plantation labour and the diversification of the indigenous economy. European employers assumed ni-Vanuatu workers sought ‘target’ incomes and once acquired would return to their villages (Bedford, 1971: 30).
Social and agricultural structures in the archipelago have been given as explanations to account for the difficulty in recruiting ni-Vanuatu workers. The notion of ‘subsistence affluence’ was held responsible for the shortage of willing ni-Vanuatu labour for plantations in various regions of the archipelago (Bedford, 1971: 44-45). The term subsistence affluence is used in Melanesia to explain societies as self-sufficient (Conroy 2012; Yari 2003). Adams (1986) highlighted this in a report he sourced by the High Commissioner to the Colonial Office in November 1911: “[A]s the local storekeeper at Dip Point, Ambrym, where there was hardly any recruiting, commented in 1911, “the natives here have plenty of copra and are too well off to engage themselves to labour” (cited in Adams, 1986: 48).

Adams (1989, 1990) has covered the development of Vanuatu plantations and labour in great depth. There was much competition between the British and the French for labour (Adams 1986; Bedford 1971; Bolton 1999; Miles 1998). Bedford (1971) and Adams (1986) highlighted that the French had a clear advantage over the British in recruiting labour for their plantations. For example “the 1872 Pacific Islanders Protections Act made British planters liable to fines and imprisonment for unlicensed recruiting” (Adams, 1986: 45). The expense in obtaining a licence made recruiting challenging, so much so that planters threatened and in some cases put their plantations over to the French and recruited under the French flag (Adams, 1986: 46). The inability of British settlers to recruit outside of the archipelago put them at a disadvantage. Unlike the British, the French permitted labour recruitment in and outside the region and used women to attract labourers:

> French recruiters had greater successes than their British counterparts in fulfilling their quotas – the lure of women, wine, and the provision of guns and ammunition on French plantations were powerful attractions to many New Hebridean recruits (Bedford, 1971: 74).

The need for women on plantations was justified by the French on the basis that men could not be expected to be on the plantations for long periods without them. Bedford (1971: 82) estimated that 20 per cent of ni-Vanuatu women were employed on French plantations, but after reported abuses of ni-Vanuatu women on French plantations their recruitment was more closely controlled and monitored. Unlike the British who

49 The New Hebrides convention of 1906 stated that labour recruiters of all nationalities had to obtain licences (Bedford, 1971: 74).
appointed labour inspectors in 1908, the French did not employ them until 1912, as a result of a Joint Court decision (established in 1910) (Adams 1986). Scarr (1967: 232-234) argued that regulations on labour and recruiting were difficult to prosecute in the Joint Court because of the pre-existing national courts.

**Condominium 1906-1980**

During the condominium period people continued to be recruited to work on plantations (and abroad in the mining sector in New Caledonia). France and the UK disagreed over methods of labour recruitment. Presbyterian missions frequently asserted that recruitment and working conditions were abusive and coercive.

The three administrative systems, the British, French and joint condominium were complex and contested among various stakeholders, such as government officials, traders, planters and ni-Vanuatu (Miles 1998; Rodman 1999; Van Trease 1987). Huffman (2005: 30) called the condominium “the world’s strangest form of colonial government” and often the condominium was referred to as “Pandemonium” (Plant, 1977: 12-14; see also Lini 1980; Molisa et al 1982; Rodman 1999).

The condominium was formed at the end of the labour trade era. In addition to Queensland being closed to Melanesians seeking waged employment from the 1900s, the condominium also restricted ni-Vanuatu mobility. The main concern for colonists was movement in and out of the administrative centre, Port Vila (Bedford, 1971; Rawlings 1999; Rodman 2001; Sillitoe 2000). Ni-Vanuatu were permitted in the main centre only for work.

The two main urban centres in Vanuatu (Port Vila, on Efate and Luganville in Espiritu Santo) are associated with employment because of their colonial past. During the condominium ni-Vanuatu were only permitted in those areas for the purposes of work. Mitchell (2004: 360) noted that:

> Formal regulations and colonial practices restricted the movements of islanders to and from town for a number of years, and having work was a precondition for islanders to be in

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50 The Joint Court was established after the “ratification of the Protocol negotiated between Great Britain and France in 1914” (Van Trease, 1987: 63). This was delayed until 1922 and the Joint Court was to be responsible for land rights, giving the British and French sovereign rights over their respective citizens and civil and criminal jurisdictions over ni-Vanuatu (for more see Rawlings, 2001: 4-6 and Rodman 2001: 40-45.
From the beginning it was participation in wage work that gave islanders the right to be in Port Vila.

If ni-Vanuatu were found to be unemployed for a period longer than 15 days and not legally resident then under Joint Regulation No 1 of 1918 ‘Unemployed Natives Regulation’ they were sent home to their villages.

Ni-Vanuatu were not encouraged into the urban areas but their labour was needed for the expansion of European commercial development (Moore 1990). Port Vila became known as a ‘white only space’ (Rodman, 1999, 2001; Stillitoe 2000). There were restrictions of movement, such as that provided by *Joint Regulation No. 6 Movement of Natives by Night*. The association of Port Vila and Luganville as places to seek paid employment is still strongly embedded in the minds of most ni-Vanuatu.

**Port Vila, Efate and Luganville, Espiritu Santo**

Due to European settlement Port Vila and Espiritu Santo became new destinations for ni-Vanuatu. Haberkorn, (1992: 806) observed, “[U]rban development in Vanuatu, like elsewhere in Melanesia, has been clearly associated with European colonial expansion during the nineteenth century.” Port Vila became the first urban settlement in the archipelago, then later during World War II Luganville emerged as the second (and heavily French influenced) urban area on Espiritu Santo. “[T]hese towns were established as centres of commerce, administration, education and largely white urban settlement” (Rawlings, 1999: 73). Additionally, like many Pacific Island colonies World War II had a significant impact in Vanuatu. The greatest impact on labour and mobility was generated through compulsory conscription. Bedford (1971: 90-91) observed that the establishment of military bases in Santo and Efate “introduced a new phase of mobility patterns” and “[D]emand for labour was so great that in 1942 the Resident commissioners permitted compulsory conscription of the New Hebrideans for work with the armed forces”. Like elsewhere in the Pacific, interactions with Americans were vastly different from experiences with other white European people.

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51 Which was not repealed until 1973 in Joint Regulation No. 47 of 1973 (New Hebrides; Australia National University, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau [2001]).

52 Joint regulation 16 of 1940 “New Hebrides Defence Powers Regulation” was amended in 1942, to enable conscription of ni-Vanuatu that were not engaged in labour (New Hebrides; Australia National University, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau [2001]).
For example, Americans in the Pacific were described as generous with the goods that they gave freely to island communities.

Not long after the war ended, more opportunities for waged labour emerged. There was a further diversification of the economy with the establishment of a frozen fish industry, South Pacific Fishing Company (SPFC) in Espiritu Santo in 1957 and a manganese deposit mine in Forari, Efate in 1961 (Bedford 1971; McClancy, 1981: 118). Also during this time, “Kampanis” co-operatives began conducting communal labour to obtain goods such as building materials for houses, trucks and other commodities to begin their own business ventures “to be independent of European traders” (McClancy, 1981: 120). Bedford (1971: 109) recorded 11 ni-Vanuatu co-operatives in 1963, noting they had increased to 98 by 1969. These co-operative societies were under British Residency supervision and many communally organised co-operatives ceased after they acquired or attained specific objectives.53 McClancy (1981: 120) argued that many co-operatives, ni-Vanuatu and European failed due to debt but succeeded in the 1970s because they were largely organised by ni-Vanuatu who “utilized existing social structures instead of imposing a different one” such as those from the British or French. During this period, New Caledonia was a favoured destination for migrant workers because of its high wages. Located just 540 kilometers south-west of Vanuatu, New Caledonia was and still is a popular destination for ni-Vanuatu to seek waged employment.

**Independence**

On 30 July 1980 Vanuatu achieved independence. The British were eager to relinquish power to ni-Vanuatu; however the French were reluctant (Campbell 1989; Jupp and Sawer 1979; MacClancy 1981). Campbell noted there was increasing “indigenous assertiveness” towards the colonial condominium since the 1960s (1989: 208). As a result of the condominium state, and strong support for independence, which was occurring throughout the Pacific region at the time, two main political parties were formed; the Na Griamel, supported by the French, with its leader Jimmy Stevens; and the Vanua’aku Pati, assisted by the British, under the leadership of Walter Lini. The Nagriamel movement began in Santo in the 1960s, initially opposing European planters

53 The French also supervised ni-Vanuatu co-operatives.
taking land (Patterson, 2011: 64). The movement spread through most areas of Vanuatu under the claims of preserving custom land.

The Vanua’aku Pati, which emerged from the New Hebrides Cultural Association founded in 1971 (Van Trease, 1995:20), also had its origins in Santo:

[O]riginally named the New Hebrides National Party (NHNP), it was formed in Santo in 1971 by members of the Anglican and Presbyterian clergy, junior British Administration bureaucrats and teachers. In 1977, in line with its nationalist agenda, the NHNP was renamed the Vanua’aku Pati (Our Land Party) (Morgan, 2008: 120).54

During the 1970s the Vanua’aku Pati gained momentum, and its agendas were focused towards independence for the archipelago (Miles 1998; Van Trease 1987)

The Vanua’aku party was headed by Walter Lini who was recruited by Donald Kalpokas and Peter Taurokoto who fought for political independence and centred their campaign on the importance of kastom (Miles 1998; Vurobaravu n.d). During the 1970s, ni-Vanuatu increased their demands for political change and inclusion through protests, conferences and various church groups, using land alienation as a unifying cause (Van Trease, 1987: 207-208). Elections were held in 1979, the Vanua’aku Pati was victorious and a date for independence was set in 1980. The country’s first Prime Minister Walter Lini is considered the father of independence in Vanuatu.55 The road to independence was not without complications. Although the British were prepared to leave the condominium ‘peacefully’, it was met by opposition from France who backed the Nagriamel movement (Patterson 2011a: 63).

After failing to gain a seat in the 1975 elections for the Representative Assembly in Santo, the Nagriamel claimed “electoral fraud, Steven issued the Nagriamel Federation Declaration of independence” (Patterson, 2011: 71). This declaration was never recognised but the Nagriamel continued to gain support. Once again with the Nagriamel being unsuccessful in the 1979 National elections, what was called the ‘Santo Rebellion’ broke out in early 1980 (Patterson 2011a; Shears 2012; Van Trease 1987). This involved a second declaration of independence whereby Nagriamel managed to

54 For more information on early political parties see New Hebrides The Road to Independence (Plant 1977).
55 To celebrate his contribution to the nation, Father Walter Lini Day is an annual public holiday in Vanuatu, celebrated on 21 February. This also marks his death, 21 February 1999.
gain control of South Santo from May to August 1980. After independence on 30 July 1980, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu mobile forces were sent to Santo and ended the rebellion, arresting those involved (Van Trease, 1987: 246-258). Stevens was backed by a US based libertarian group, the Phoenix Foundation, ‘who were attempting to establish a tax-free utopia on Santo’ (Patterson, 2011: 63) and who were also covertly financed by French plantation owners (Beasant 1984; MacClancy 1984; Shears 1980, 2012). The French government did not want lose its authority in Vanuatu and this was further supported by ni-Vanuatu who identified themselves as Francophone. Events before and after gaining independence have affected peoples, places and identities in Vanuatu.

**Independence: Celebrations in Ranon**

Independence celebrations in Vanuatu are well attended. I have attended two of these, one in Ranon, and the other in Fansar, north of Ranon. Independence celebrations in North Ambrym are focused on speeches by local politicians and chiefs, and the festivities included a football and volleyball tournament. Both celebrations I attended people emphasised the importance of local community unity. The Vanuatu flag dominated the landscape at both events, symbolically highlighting the importance of this national day.
These historical, political, and social practices, from the labour trade, the condominium era and the struggle for independence, cannot be separated from this research. Even today, (2014), they have a relational affect, in the minds of the Pacific labour migrants and their communities as well as foreign donors. In 2005, the Australian government cited the labour trade as a reason for not pursuing a seasonal work scheme with Pacific island nations (Dobell 2006). Australia’s former Foreign Minister Alexander Downer stated: “I don’t like the idea of guest workers. I don’t think we should go back to the schemes that used to exist back in the 19th Century where cheap labour was brought in from the South Pacific, particularly into Queensland…” (Downer 2005, cited in MacLellan and Mares 2005: 28). This historical analysis provides context to ni-Vanuatu labour experiences. Past experiences and perceptions of labour interactions between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans were often spoken about by participants. These events and stories of kin are embedded in the histories and minds of ni-Vanuatu and often invoked in storytelling. When driving past sugar plantations in Queensland, or enjoying the consumption of the sweet cane in its raw form on Ambrym, the knowledge and stories associated with these histories are now evoked in myself. New stories are
being formed through experience of participating in the RSE scheme and these too will be told to later generations.

**Vanuatu Employment**

This is the first time Vanuatu has been involved in a labour mobility program with New Zealand. The Vanuatu Department of Labour has been involved in marketing ni-Vanuatu workers for the RSE scheme and established a promotional website *Work Ready Vanuatu – Happy to Work Hard for you.* The website consists of many testimonials of employers and workers in both New Zealand’s RSE scheme and Australia’s PSWAP project. The main objective of the website is to encourage growers to select ni-Vanuatu workers. In previous research (Bailey 2009), I argued that only men who were perceived as ‘good’ were recruited for the RSE scheme; a stance that has resonated in Vanuatu. Ni-Vanuatu labourers have developed a reputation of ‘being good, hard and loyal workers’ (Discussions with employers, Central Otago, 2008).

There are limited formal employment opportunities in Vanuatu. The majority of paid employment is located in Port Vila and Luganville. Many ni-Vanuatu seek employment in these places only to discover that there are few or no jobs available in these areas. Furthermore, wages in Vanuatu are often associated with low, poor working conditions: “[F]or employees (ni-Vanuatu from Pango and elsewhere) wages are generally low, hours long and labour laws (regarding contracts, equipment, clothing, holidays and severance pay) are often not adhered to or enforced” (Rawlings, 2002: 45). This was repeated to me by participants who reside and work in Port Vila, especially by workers in the construction industry. In 2013 the minimum wage in Vanuatu was Vt 26,000 (NZD 382; USD 317.06) per month.  

Unemployment does exist in Vanuatu; however the term underemployment is more appropriate for the country (Jowitt 2001). If the unemployment figures of Vanuatu were to be used here (in 2009 Vanuatu’s National unemployment rate was 4.6 per cent) they would not reflect the realities of rural and urban discrepancies in the archipelago. For example, subsistence farming is categorised as employment and the Vanuatu

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Millennium Development Report (2010: 9) noted that “subsistence employment makes up 70% of total employment.” Participants argued that subsistence employment produced small amounts of intermittent monetary incomes, however, internal and international labour mobility generated larger cash resources.

Given its close proximity, many ni-Vanuatu travel to New Caledonia to work. It is estimated that nearly 2000 ni-Vanuatu work in New Caledonia. “New Caledonia has, in fact, been a destination for Pacific migrants….The largest overseas community of Ni-Vanuatu is found in New Caledonia” (Bedford, 2012: 26). I spoke with Phil a former employee of the Vanuatu Department of Labour, in regards to ni-Vanuatu working in New Caledonia. Like other ni-Vanuatu he told me that the wages were good there, (2011), better than in Vanuatu and New Zealand. He also now works in New Caledonia, whilst his wife works in the RSE scheme in Hastings, New Zealand. He reflected that:

> the money in New Zealand is not great, but the scheme is more than money for ni-Vanuatu, it’s also about the lifestyle, new learned skills and ideas. It’s the best thing that has ever happened to Vanuatu. It has been a positive experience for my family and many others (Phil, Port Vila, 26 April 2011).

Prior to the seasonal labour programmes that Australia and New Zealand have initiated there were limited employment opportunities for ni-Vanuatu to work overseas other than New Caledonia. In the immediate period before the RSE commenced in 2007, participation in the merchant marine provided a source of offshore work, with P&O alone employing “400-500 ni-Vanuatu” (Voight-Graft, 2006: 33). The limited options of paid employment opportunities make seasonal labour schemes for the region look attractive. Nevertheless, they are not accessible to everyone.

Previous experiences of labour mobility for ni-Vanuatu in the Pacific region have resulted in cautious and skeptical approaches for today’s labour schemes. This was reflected in how people often compared historical labour practices with the current schemes in Australia and New Zealand. Nonetheless, with few options within the archipelago, the RSE scheme is providing an additional source of employment for ni-Vanuatu.
Recruitment
The RSE scheme applies a strict selection criteria. Applicants must be aged over 18, have a job offer from a New Zealand employer and meet both health and good character requirements. This included an absence of any criminal record. In their first season 2007/2008, a company representative mentioned that most applicants that were denied a place in the scheme were due to alcohol-related crimes on their police records. Their goal was to recruit reliable people who could work productively in New Zealand.

In 2011 I attended an RSE recruitment workshop held at the Chief’s Nakamal in Port Vila. Hundreds of ni-Vanuatu men and several women attended to get their employment contracts and paperwork signed in order travel to New Zealand. Gwenda Kalmet Carlot manages recruitment for SSCO. She obtained an RSE license in 2007 and was employed by Seasonal Solutions Co-Operative Ltd in 2008 to aid with recruitment for the company (Personal Communication, E-mail to Author, Gwenda Kalmet Carlot, 5 November 2011). Workers were given a five day deadline to complete required documentation to apply for placement and finalise their employment contracts.

Figure 8: Gwenda checking RSE paperwork — Source: Author
Written on a white board in the Chiefs’ Nakamel were the essential requirements that the company needed before employing workers. These included police clearance, an x-ray to check for signs of tuberculosis (two yearly), a medical certificate, and letters from chiefs and family validating applicants’ good standing in their family and community. This is an annual requirement for each season. I have been informed by RSE recruiters that without these approvals, a worker will be denied employment in New Zealand. The requirement of a valid passport was an issue in 2012 as the men’s passports had recently expired since their first arrival in New Zealand in 2007. There were workers that found this process daunting as their passports were organised for them by their recruiter in 2007. By 2012 they were required to complete these formalities themselves.

These processes were very lengthy and costly for RSE workers. Some invested in these requirements without the promise of a job, making it a risky financial decision for those without employment offers. I knew workers who came to this meeting who had invested in travel and application fees but did not obtain a job offer for that season. Reasons for an unsuccessful application were due to limited number of placements, applicants not providing the required paperwork, receiving a poor work assessment by their New Zealand employers in previous seasons, being ‘blacklisted’ from the scheme, or holding a criminal conviction.

Table 2: Costs of participation 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Vatu</th>
<th>NZD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanesup to Craig cove return by truck</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>44.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Craig Cove/ Ranon to Port Vila return</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>220.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Certificate (on Ambrym)</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>15.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passport</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>102.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa</td>
<td>17,940</td>
<td>263.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical clearance</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>22.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police clearance</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>29.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidised airfares and South Island bus trip</td>
<td>102,000</td>
<td>1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical insurance @NZD 2.20 per day (203 days)</td>
<td>30,368</td>
<td>446.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (USD 2194.81)</td>
<td>179,858</td>
<td>2644.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workers sat in groups helping each other with their paperwork. Once the men had their paperwork in order they proceeded to VanWoods, a microfinancing NGO in Port Vila, to acquire a loan for airfares and to cover travel costs to New Zealand. VanWoods charge 25% interest on their loans. There are other options than VanWoods for their loans, such as their employers, Seasonal Solution Co-Operative Ltd and The National Bank of Vanuatu, who charge a much lower and competitive rate for the workers. Many workers take loans from their employers, Seasonal Solutions Co-Operative. When I asked why they choose VanWoods and not other local banking institutions, I was informed it was because they had been approved by VanWoods previously and knew that their loans would be approved. Bob told me that it is too difficult to get a loan from local banks, especially when one has no capital or proof of income to make repayments (also see Wittersheim, 2011: 317). Participants on Ambrym who did not have evidence of regular income were denied financial loans to participate in the RSE scheme.

As shown in table two, travelling to apply for the RSE scheme costs a significant amount of money. Additionally there are also payments for accommodation and food to be met while in Port Vila. These costs prevent some ni-Vanuatu from participating and those that are in a position to do so, take loans to meet financial requirements. In 2012, the company sent representatives to Ambrym with the necessary documents in order to help relieve domestic travelling expenses.

**Selection and Gender**

Until the time of writing (2014) there have been no ni-Vanuatu woman participating in the scheme from North Ambrym, although I have met ni-Vanuatu women working in the RSE in a neighbouring town in Central Otago who were from elsewhere in the archipelago. The men from Ambrym working on the RSE insisted that there were no women that came from their island. When I asked why, the general answer was ‘maybe they will come later’, meaning in future years. Four years later I asked ‘why are no women coming from Lolihor in Ambrym?’ This same question was directed to me by the women in Lolihor.

During the season in 2007, all ni-Vanuatu workers enrolled in the RSE scheme were men. This changed in 2008, when 379 female workers from Vanuatu joined the scheme (McKenzie *et al*, 2008: 209). Although this shift in recruiting female workers occurred
in Vanuatu, none that I am aware of were directly recruited from Ambrym. According to many that I spoke to on Ambrym, women from the island did not volunteer for the scheme because they were required to stay on the island and ‘take care of things’ as this ‘is their role.’ When speaking with the former chairman of the Lolihor Development Council, we discussed these arrangements as follows:

Rochelle: Are any women selected?
Nabong: We haven’t sent any women.
Rochelle: Is there a reason why?
Nabong: Well that’s a good question, we, its basically something with our culture that maybe later on we will think [about]. Because when you come to Ambrym you see that the women do all of the gardening, all the livestocks. And when we think of sending the boys to New Zealand we think that the women stay back to look after all these resources.
Rochelle: It is a key question that I wanted to ask, because some of the women here in the village they too wanted to know if they can go to New Zealand.
Nabong: It’s good because I’m glad too when others Craig and the World Bank have come and asked the same question. We have tried to explain to them that it is part of our culture but when you look, when you come to Ambrym, you see these things around you, you see what happens here. We want the women in the villages to look after the children, the garden, and the livestock. And our plan is when we started the scheme is to tell the boys that when you go you have to do plenty for the women; tell the boys to allocate some funds that’s why we have a big market house in there. To help the women later on.

Nabong justified the non-participation of women as cultural and that in return workers would provide funds for women to use.

On a cool winters evening while sitting with a group of women preparing laplap for Roberta’s wedding I was asked ‘Why are no women hired by GrapeVision? We are happy to share quarters.’ I explained that I was told by men that women from Ambrym did not participate for cultural reasons. The replies I received from the women were ‘Culturally sensitive – no way – let us come to’, ‘Families going, fathers and sons, what about mothers and daughters. Ni-Van women from other islands get to go’ (Group conversation, Ranon Village 19 June 2011). After hearing the views of the women in the group, I asked if any of them would consider participating in the RSE to which they all replied no. However, they want the opportunity made available to them.
Sharing similarities with Basok’s (2002) findings in Canada’s seasonal program, the preference in recruiting married men was raised by growers and policy makers. There are many reasons provided for this. The most important is the perception that married men are less inclined to overstay in the host country, as there is a general assumption that they will want to go home to fulfill family and community obligations.

The lack of participation of women is not because women from Ambrym are not allowed to be mobile and earn wages. I noticed from conversations however that there is a difference in perceptions between domestic and international labour migration. This has to do firstly with the notion of the ‘unknown.’ There is a large population of Ambrym people based in Port Vila, meaning that there are already established social networks to work with and gain support if one should need to (Eriksen 2008; Tonkinson 1985). In contrast, New Zealand is located further than Port Vila with unfamiliar customs and environments. I am not implying that women could not make this trip but in this case (as opposed to notion that women pave the roads for the men [Eriksen 2008; Patterson, 2002a]), it is the men that are paving the roads for the women to participate in the RSE scheme. At this stage, women from Ambrym are the exception to this.

**Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (PSWPS)**

A year after New Zealand introduced the RSE, Australia introduced a similar scheme in 2008. The PSWPS scheme is similar to the RSE scheme, with the main difference between them concerning recruiting practices and the numbers of seasonal workers that have been granted work visas. Unlike the RSE scheme, Tonga provided the majority of workers for the PSWPS (Gibson and McKenzie 2011). The first seasonal workers arrived in Australia at the start of 2009, and since then it has had positive feedback from growers and the Australian horticulture industry. Ni-Vanuatu workers I spoke with rated it highly. So far the majority of workers have come from Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu. During 2008–2012 116 ni-Vanuatu participated in PSWPS (PSWPS Data Summary, 2011: 29). In 2012 the PSWP became Seasonal Worker Program (SWP). The SWP expands from agriculture, to include the tourism sector, cotton, sugar cane and small scale fishing operators (Rudd 2011). The trial for these new sectors began in July 2012. However, Doyle and Howes (2013) reported that
the intake of workers has been low because of regulatory conditions in these sectors, and the additional costs associated with hiring Pacific SWP labourers.59

Initially RSE workers were not eligible to enter Australia’s SWP (unless they had not worked in New Zealand for the past three years). This is stipulated in the eligibility requirements for workers applying for the SWP (E-mail to Author, Vanuatu Department of Labour, 10 May 2013). Given the investment that New Zealand growers contribute to skilling RSE workers it is seen as an appropriate move. New Zealand growers have commented that they do not want to lose labourers that they have trained to the Australian labour market.

**Considering current day work schemes and historical labour practices for ni-Vanuatu in the RSE: A Summary**

The RSE scheme was driven by growers due to a labour shortage in New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries. When policy makers examined international labour schemes, the Canadian (SAWP) bi-lateral seasonal programme provided the best model, especially for risk management of potential overstayers. New Zealand’s involvement within the Pacific region, as a Pacific country itself, and a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, encouraged the recruitment of workers. This policy allows workers to return in successive seasons, which make this attractive to both recruits and employers involved in the scheme. RSE participants can only stay in New Zealand temporarily for specified employment purposes.

For varying reasons, ni-Vanuatu have been mobile in customary, colonial and post-colonial periods. Previously scholars noted that in the pre-colonial era ni-Vanuatu mobility was circulatory, seasonal, and limited. Research from Bonnemaison (1996), Huffman (1996) and Luders (1996) has also shown that there was significant trading between ni-Vanuatu and other Pacific islands, such as Fiji, Tonga and the Solomon islands on a regular basis. Beginning with the Sandalwood era, ni-Vanuatu experienced new forms of trade and social exchange with Europeans. This witnessed the beginnings of ni-Vanuatu travelling in search of paid employment. Surpassing this era, in the 1860s, what became known as the labour trade emerged to provide new opportunities

for ni-Vanuatu to travel throughout the Pacific and work on European plantations, primarily in Australia, followed by New Caledonia (mainly in mines) and Fiji. Working in New Caledonia has continued largely unabated from 1890 to the present. In the initial phase of the Queensland labour trade there was much controversy in how labourers were recruited (by kidnapping and deception or if they willingly agreed to foreign indenture contracts). This era has had a powerful influence on contemporary perceptions of offshore work as potentially mirroring the ‘blackbirding years’, a term that is still invoked in oral histories, public discourse and cultural politics in Vanuatu and Australia.

The end of the labour trade in Queensland in 1901 had significant effects on ni-Vanuatu lives. For those who returned home it influenced how they engaged with their communities in Vanuatu, and the new European colonial governments and planters that initiated another chapter of negotiations, legislations and mobility limitations. Colonial administrators and planters needed labour to help establish and maintain their commercial enterprises. After the formation of the Anglo French Condominium of the New Hebrides in 1906, restrictions limiting the ability of planters to recruit labourers within the archipelago were imposed. These regulations effectively prevented British citizens from recruiting workers in the archipelago, but French planters were free to do so. This resulted in tension between the two administrations and also placed British planters at a commercial disadvantage when compared to their French counterparts. When French demand for labour reached proportions that could not be met within Vanuatu they turned to indentured labourers from their colonies in Indochina (Bedford and Shlomowitz 1988; Mitchell 2007). These restrictions mainly affected the British who struggled to get workers due to British policy, thus putting them at a disadvantage to their French counterparts, who could import indentured labour when ni-Vanuatu were reluctant to work for them.

Ni-Vanuatu did work on both British and French plantations but some preferred to work on local cash crops. As Adams (1986) noted ni-Vanuatu realised the potential to sell their own produce rather than work for Europeans. Having a subsistence existence made this possible and many ni-Vanuatu tended to seek out paid employment when they were trying to obtain certain goods, for themselves or their villages. As mentioned earlier, this was termed ‘targeted employment’ (Bedford, 1971: 30). During World War II practices of labour and perceptions of white people changed, as trade and interactions
with Americans opened up new opportunities. The combination of European plantations on Efate and the presence of the American armed forces on Espiritu Santo established the foundations for Vanuatu’s two main urban centres, where there are today regular rural-urban migration flows. Ni-Vanuatu seeking waged labour today also travel to these areas, as they are still associated with access to paid employment, something that is difficult to obtain in most of the ‘outer’ islands.

There have been few opportunities for ni-Vanuatu to experience international labour mobility since independence. Access to paid employment is limited in many Pacific countries. Labour schemes such as RSE and SWP provide ni-Vanuatu with opportunities to gain work. The following chapter analyses access to money on Ambrym that drives the desire for work offshore and participation in the RSE scheme.
Chapter 3: Access to cash resources on Ambrym

This chapter introduces Ambrym, its people and socio-cultural and economic aspects of life on the island. Ambrym is referred to as the “island of fire” by many, reflecting the volcanic activity that is constantly present. ‘Ambrym island of fire’ was heavily emphasised in the song *Ambrym Island* by Mosuakea, a local string band. The island is also referred to as the ‘Mother of Darkness’ due to the notorious use of sorcery (Patterson, 2002b: 128) and more commonly in the archipelago as the ‘Black island’. The volcanic presence has had a major impact on the economic and social life on the island. The majority of my participants are from the Lolihor area that consists of 12 villages in North Ambrym (see figure 37, map four). According to the 2009 Vanuatu National Census, Ambrym has a population of 7,275 (Vanuatu National Statistics

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60 The translations provided here were written by an RSE worker. I am fully aware that this is not a standardised version of Bislama.
Steven Clegg (2009:15) estimated the population of Ranon in 2009 to be close to 41. In 2012 the population numbered between 150-200.

North Ambrym has a reputation for its black magic, volcanoes and allegedly ‘ol man bus’ (backward bush people) (Personal communication, Ron, Central Otago 2008). These factors are said to have put the island at a disadvantage in the archipelago:

North Ambrym, is one of the most disadvantaged areas of Vanuatu in terms of access to government services. Factors contributing to North Ambrym being designated as “disadvantaged” include topography (ravines and plateaus), geology (volcanic activity) and cultural factors (the belief that it is the area of black magic in Vanuatu.) Lolihor is a part of North Ambrym where problems are most acute. It has the village of Fanla which is known in Vanuatu to be the black magic village. It has very steep ravines so that there are no roads and no trucks. It is closest to the volcano and suffers regularly from the effects of volcanic activity such as acid rain that destroys crops (Salong 2007).

Negative perceptions of Ambrym and the island’s people were made to me by others in Vanuatu. In Port Vila I was often asked where I was going, a standard greeting in Vanuatu. When I said I was going to Ambrym and for how long I would get ‘really?’ or ‘mi sori tumas’ (I am really sorry to hear that). When I asked why, they would say it was not a good place, some mentioned black magic, others referred to the people of Ambrym as ‘backwards people’ or ‘man bus’ (bushmen). Sally a ni-Vanuatu waitress from Jill’s café (a US style burger eatery) in Port Vila told me that she would make me my last good meal until I returned; suggesting that the food I was going to eat on Ambrym would be insufficient until I got back to Port Vila.

Lissant Bolton (1999:55) has observed “[P]eople from other islands also practise black magic, of course, but the sorcery of Ambyrm, Ambrym itself, is the most feared”. Knut Rio noted that the tourism slogan for Ambrym in the 1990s was “stuck with a traditional way of life” (2007: 8). People of Ambrym are not ‘stuck’ in a time disconnected with the rest of the archipelago, or the world. They do engage in traditional practices, alongside an awareness of contemporary global issues. The negative perceptions that currently still exist, (such as ‘backwards’) do not reflect the realities of socio-cultural life on the island. The active twin volcanoes, Mount Marum

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61 When these numbers were taken, many in the Lolihor region were working in New Zealand and were unaccounted for.
and Mount Benbow play an active role in identities, activities and black magic associated with Ambrymese. Ni-Vanuatu participants from here refer to themselves as taran tapra. These words are associated with their relationship to the volcano “like when the flying fox take some food, same with the volcano and us. Taran tapra people of Ambrym” (Ron, November 2013). Although the connection with the volcanoes is strong, so too are the cautionary tales and experiences of past disasters. Memories of the previous eruptions of 1913 and 1951 are still present for most. Furthermore, the fall out of acid rain affects and destroys agriculture and infrastructure on the island. It is a combination of these three factors; black magic, man bus and the volcanoes that keep its reputation with others animated.

Primarily, Ambrymese are subsistence farmers, but they live within a traditional and cash dual economy (discussed further in chapter seven). Economic opportunities on Ambrym are limited in a commercial sense. The main sources of income are from carvings, agriculture, cattle raising, copra, tourism, island transportation, trade, and small businesses such as stores set up in a bulium (house). The RSE scheme has given as many as 400 Ambrymese the opportunity for waged work in New Zealand.

The objective of increasing economic development with earnings from New Zealand is being realised on Ambrym, where there are limited cash resources. This chapter documents how RSE workers are using earnings from labour in New Zealand to fund further business innovations. Businesses initiated by RSE workers on Ambrym are micro enterprises, which are strongly influenced by local kastom, rules of obligation and reciprocity. However, these are limited in their scope through difficulties such as isolation, transportation costs and reliability, and social and cultural obligations and expectations (Bailey 2009; Borovnik 2003; Bedford, Bedford and Ho 2009; Ramasamy et al 2008).

New Zealand growers and Central Otago community members that have befriended the workers, made mention that market distances hindered business growth on Ambrym. However, they argued that lack of knowledge in economics and management were

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62 In Bislama they are referred to as man Ambrym. For the purpose of this thesis I use the term Ambrymese as other anthropologists such as Bonnemaison (1996) and Patterson (2002b) have in the past.

63 This number was an estimation from village elders.
reasons behind business failures for RSE workers who returned to the scheme. This chapter will discuss this, as there are important other factors that these ethnocentric assumptions do not address. Even in New Zealand, statistics show that one in ten small businesses fail within their first year and a further 70 per cent of those that remain, collapse in the first five year period (Nicholas 2012).64 Those who have assumed lack of business knowledge as a reason for failure of RSE workers’ businesses do not account for the cultural environment in which ni-Vanuatu business ventures operate. Social and cultural expectations and obligations to gift, reciprocate and exchange in non-commercial ways (while using commercial resources such as business earnings) need to be acknowledged before these business skills can be judged.

Island of Fire
The northern and western parts of Ambrym are divided by the vast tropical bush areas, the presence of the volcanoes and the expansive ash plains. There are two ways that people can get to and from these areas. The easiest but most expensive way is by boat that takes anywhere between two and a half to four hours, depending on sea conditions. The other way is to travel to the north, by a combination of truck and trekking. Many Ambrymese from the south western areas of Ambrym, such as Sanesup, Lalinda and Port Vato, trek by foot over the volcanoes. In 2011 employers in this study recognised that costs for are high for Ambrymese to travel to Port Vila to complete necessary paperwork for the RSE. Therefore, in 2012, they organised a representative to travel to Ambrym to save costs for their workers.

In Lolihor, Ranon is the main port that cargo and passenger ships use. Patterson (2002 a: 209) noted that for Europeans it was the first safe anchorage after West Ambrym, and this was no doubt a consideration for colonialists establishing a plantation in the area. Because villages in the Lolihor district depend on this bay to receive and ship goods, not allowing access to the area has in the past been used as a penalty by some in Ranon village when there have been disputes with neighbouring villages who rely on access to the bay.

After entering Ranon Bay and crossing the beach of black volcanic sands, to the left is a shop and Solomon Douglas’s office. Douglas runs the village’s tourist bungalows

located on Ranon beach and on Fire Mountain (located on the hillside beside the beach). He also owns the shop attached to his office, and has a boat that transports people from Ranon to Craig Cove where the airport is located, (this boat service operates mainly on Tuesdays and Saturdays to connect with arriving and departing Air Vanuatu flights to and from Port Vila). To the right of these buildings in the centre is the market house. The market house was built with earnings from RSE workers in New Zealand, shown in figure 44.

Ranon village was also the location of a past colonial plantation that employed local residents and drew many from neighbouring villages to work. Ruins of this previously European run settlement still remain. Ranon started as a mission station established by William Murray in 1883 (Patterson, 2002a: 207). Later it became a successful plantation owned by the “Corsican brothers Rossi”, who also had a successful recruiting business (Patterson, 2002a: 210). As Patterson (2002a: 210) stated, “Ranon was a place to be ‘beached’ and a place whose bustling and almost ‘cosmopolitan’ early twentieth century character, has only just begun to be retrieved”. There are still several buildings in Ranon that belonged to plantation owners (see figure 9). Most of these ex-colonial structures are now unoccupied and are used for storing bags of copra for export, together with sacks of imported concrete mix mainly owned by RSE workers who are building permanent houses or community wells with their earnings.
The plantation offered paid work and combined with the mission station resulted in social changes, as many Ambrymese moved from inland villages to the coastal plain proximate to Ranon (Eriksen 2008; Patterson 2002a; Rio 2007). Eriksen (2008: 36) was informed “[A]lthough one bulium was located at the vicinity of where Ranon is today, this village, with its present form and size, is one of the most recently established villages on North Ambrym as a result of the plantation and mission”. Patterson (2002a: 205) noted that Ranon’s plantation “owner was the Ambrym-born child of a deceased Australian planter named Mitchell and his Ambae wife.” However, according to Eriksen (2008: 12) after independence this plantation owner:

was driven out of the village...forcefully made to leave without any of his possessions. The men from Ranon who had been working most closely with him, also had to leave the village and live elsewhere for a period because of the hostilities. Today those people have returned to the village but the Australian plantation owner from colonial times still lives in Port Vila.
There were differing opinions about the former owner, but the plantation was central to the development of Ranon. Ron portrayed this planter as a morally controlling man who had little respect for the people of Ranon. Others considered Mitchell to be a provider for various kin groups in the region, and he was considered as kin to some in Ranon. There was no consensus about Mitchell’s character but everyone agreed that he had to return the land to indigenous ni-Vanuatu after independence.

**Land ownership**

The return of land to *kastom* owners post-independence has caused disputes over who entitled land owners are. On my journey home from a festival in Nibul the truck driver made a detour inland to Fantcheveur. While the driver stopped and had a meal, three men I sat with in the back of the truck explained why one half of the village was abandoned. Apparently there was a land dispute between families on opposite sides of the road. The families that failed to claim ownership to the land relocated to another island. Yet the land that they lived on, (other than the church that remains) was not occupied by the successful claimants. Land ownership in Vanuatu is complicated and colonial influences such as, “[T]he practices of fencing coconut groves and of grazing cattle under the palms have further constricted a land ownership system that was once flexible” (Bedford, 1971: 200-201). Land is important as it is connected to identity and genealogy. Selwyn Arutangai has stated that:

> All ni-Vanuatu feel that land is everything, it is basic to their identity ... Traditionally land is not only the source of subsistence but the mainstay of a world-view by which ni-Vanuatu cultures operate, the foundation of all custom. It represents life itself, both material and spiritual (1987: 262).

For ni-Vanuatu it is important to have land to identify with. Without this, a person is considered not to have any roots, status or power (Arutangai, 1987: 262).

George spoke about his family having a large allocation of land that was passed down to him from his ancestors. “Land has passed from generation to generation through a variety of traditional tenure systems for millennia” (Malvatumauci National Council of Chiefs and Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2012: 22). It was also noted among those surveyed in the 2012 report *Alternative Indicators of Well-being for Melanesia* that 79 per cent of ni-Vanuatu had access to customary land and 90 per cent were clear where customary land boundaries where located (Malvatumauci National Council of Chiefs
and Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2012: xiii). However, as various scholars and participants have demonstrated, access to land is dependent on social ties with the community (Bedford 1971; Eriksen 2008; Hess 2009). RSE workers and Ambrymese who live away from the island remain in contact with their home communities in order to maintain relationships and access to their customary lands. Furthermore, upon their return workers make cash or material payments to those who have maintained their lands or aided in the support of their families in their absence.

Disputed land has hampered infrastructure projects such as water supply, roading, schooling, churches and health clinics on Ambrym (Eriksen 2007; Patterson 2002b). For several participants access to land has become important especially for those that have begun or increased ownership of cattle, built new copra pits and new permanent structures such as household dwellings, churches or wells. Access to land resources affects the capabilities for work on Ambrym. The ability to earn cash on the island can be intermittent.

**Income Opportunities**

On Ambrym, most income is gained through the production of local crops, the selling of copra, tourism, tourist artifacts, and souvenirs. These employment opportunities are intermittent and often seasonal. Cash is scarce in most parts of the island. In this section, I plan to discuss various ways income is generated in the region. Traditional forms of art and agriculture have generated small amounts of money to the region. Agriculture is the basis of the subsistence economy on Ambrym but it is susceptible to natural disasters. Copra production and cattle projects are limited to local and national fluctuations and demands. Even though it can be difficult to gain sufficient incomes from copra and cattle, RSE workers are investing their earnings in these businesses. *Kastom* festivals are another source of income. Although limited to a short duration, it is hoped that festivals will encourage tourism to the region that relies heavily on the presence of the active volcanoes (Interview, Chief John, Ranon village, 13 June 2011). Cash resources are limited on Ambrym, and alternative sources of income, such as working in the main centres of the archipelago or applying for international labour schemes are explored by ni-Vanuatu to earn money for family and community requirements.
Carvings and Tourist Artifacts
North Ambrym is recognised as a primary site for traditional carvings in Vanuatu, and these are sought after both nationally and internationally. During fieldwork I observed much carving. Carvings are an important source of revenue on the island, especially from May to August (the most prolific carving months) when tourists arrive. North Ambrym carvers produce and supply many of the carvings that are displayed throughout Port Vila. For two consecutive years I observed carvings being prepared for sale in Vila. Whilst in Ranon, May 2011, I observed tree fern and tam tam\textsuperscript{66} carvings appearing on the beach, as pictured above. Annually carvers travel by cargo ship in mid-August and take their chances selling their tree fern and wooden

\textsuperscript{66} For similar reports on the importance of carvings in Ambrym see Patterson (1996) and Rio (2007: 14).  
\textsuperscript{66} Tam tams are also referred to as slit drums.
carvings in Port Vila. Although carvings were sold in a few places in the village for tourists, all of the carvings on the beach were destined for Port Vila. Both Patterson (1996) and Bonnemaison (1996) noted the status of the slit-gong carving in Port Vila: “[T]he Ambrym slit-gong has today become a sort of typical image of Vanuatu, like the Pentecost Jump – clichés known almost around the globe as a result of tourism advertising” (Bonnemaison, 1996: 46). The symbolic slit gong and tree fern carvings are prominent in Port Vila, found both inside and outside hotels, local bars and various tourist targeted shops. This provides a market for Ambrymese carvers.

On an over-cast morning in April, sitting with George on an old canoe underneath a breadfruit tree, we discussed the tam tam carving he was working on using a pencil to outline his intended markings. This was to be the first of many carvings that he would make for the year. He had found some ‘strong breadfruit trees’ that he intended on purchasing for the wood needed to manufacture his carvings. We spoke about restrictions on carvings. George had one of the highest grades in the village and was entitled to carve canoes, and instruct those entering carving endeavours. This was important to him, and he continued to let me know that he possessed a higher title than all three chiefs of Ranon village. Patterson (1981: 192) observed that in some areas of North Ambrym kinship is bound to the grade taking ceremonies and “little or no concern in others”, meaning that not all grade taking ceremonies were based on a persons’ kinship alliance. However, for George and others in Ranon kinship was intrinsically tied to the grade system and the rights to produce local carvings.

To acquire the rights to carve requires payment in pigs or cash. Due to the limited availability in cash on the island, or not having certain kinship ties, not everyone on Ambrym has the culturally prescribed right to carve. Therefore this means of labour to generate cash is available only to those who have previously amassed a certain wealth. This keeps large numbers of Ambrymese out of the carving markets.

Although not sacred, slit goings have traditionally been used for ritual ceremonies, especially in grade-taking events. Patterson (1970: 55) also documented that these

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67 Grade taking is a ceremony where usually men are given their rank or names in Vanuatu (see Allen 1981, 1984; Bolton 1998; Bonnemaison 1996; Deacon 1927; Guiart 1951; Layard 1942; Patterson 1970, 1981; Rio 2007; Rodman 1973; Tonkinson 1982). Grade taking is expensive and involves the sacrifice of pigs to acquire new names and levels of status. George’s grade was bestowed on him through a combination of hereditary factors, his father’s rank and the various ceremonies he had participated in.
instruments were an “extremely effective inter-village communication system.” The ability to carve and what a person is allowed to carve is limited by the grade status, achievements and hereditary factors of the carver and his kin (see Patterson 1970; Rio, 2007). On another occasion while George was teaching his third son and two apprentices, he spoke of how his father taught him and now he needed to teach his son. For George and others on Ambrym it was important to take names and grades to have the right to carve: “[A]pprenticeship is taken seriously; the tradition is handed on…making art on Ambrym, or elsewhere is paid for in many different ways. It is serious work” (Boulay, 1996: 15). I first became aware of the importance of carving while conducting fieldwork with RSE workers in Central Otago. While in New Zealand, workers carved and sold many traditional ni-Vanuatu motif carvings made from donated Oamaru stone.68

68 Oamaru stone is a hard limestone. It is quarried near Oamaru, Otago. This stone was donated to ni-Vanuatu workers in 2007.
In 2009, which was the last year I observed ni-Vanuatu RSE workers carving in New Zealand, Ambrymese figures started to be seen across the landscape of Cromwell, carved not in wood, but the white shades of Oamaru stone. In Central Otago some local residents had large *tam tam* structures in front of their houses and smaller versions in their gardens. Only three men in the group had the rights to carve, and even then I was told that they were limited in what they could carve depending on the grades they had achieved on Ambrym. Carvings produced in New Zealand gave RSE workers another approach to earn additional money and they were also used for exchange and gift giving purposes. For two carvers, participating in the RSE provided the opportunity to share a part of their world with their host community in New Zealand (George and Sammy, Central Otago, January 2008).

Tourists I spoke with on Ambrym discussed the prices of carvings in different locales, noting that carvings were more affordable on the island than in Port Vila. Large carvings were argued by tourists to be expensive and often they would try to haggle with a carver. What is not taken into consideration however are the enormous hours carvers labour from cutting the tree to the end product. Using axes, chisels, pencils and
glass, sandpaper and the end of a screwdriver for hammering, many larger tam tams
took several days to complete. For a carving of this size, George earned between Vt 20–
25,000 (NZD 400–500; USD 332–415). He said that he intended making eight to ten
	tam tams so that he could pay for the high school fees of three of his children.

Agriculture
The main traditional food crops on Ambrym are yams (yams/rem), taro (taro/oper),
breadfruit (bredfrut/beta), pawpaw (popo/beta anvo), mango (mango), island cabbage
(aelan kabis/liwel), manioc (maniok), sugarcane (sugaken), banana (bananas/wi, sweet
potato (kumala) and coconuts (kokonas). Rem (yams) are associated with men on
Ambrym and play an important role in identity (Patterson 2002a). The myth of the yam
from south Pentecost was also noted by Paton (1971) and Patterson (2002a, 2006a) in
Ambrym. A chief asked his sons to plant a garden, kill him and plant him in pieces. The
different pieces of his body are associated with the various yam species found in the region (Paton, 1971: 6; Patterson, 2002a: 204).

Yams were, and remain a significant focus of all presentations between kin at birth, male puberty rites, marriage and death, despite proliferation of other crops and the incursions of cash-cropping and the money economy which frequently necessitates their purchase locally or from neighbouring islands (Patterson, 2002a: 204-205).

The planting season generally occurs between July and December. There are stipulated planting and harvesting times that occur alongside ritual and ceremonial practices. For example the practices of planting and harvesting yams are associated with men and there is a highly ritualised competition and ranking associated with men and their yams in Ambrym, especially during the New Yam ceremony (Eriksen 2005; Jolly 1981, 1982, 1987; Patterson 2002a).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: North Ambrym Planting Seasons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February - May “Hiriuan”</td>
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<tr>
<td>June –July “Tewe”</td>
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<tr>
<td>August –October “Dondonan”</td>
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<td>November - January “Ngangaoan”</td>
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Sources: RSE workers and Author 2013

When I asked workers how being in New Zealand affected their planting season, most said that it did not, as they prepared their gardens early and that the gardens were tended well by family members in their absence. Rio (2007: xi) observed, “horticulturalists in Vanuatu first and foremost orient their lives around the ongoing production of relationships and gardens.” Considerable time and effort is made by

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69 The information in this table was compiled in consultation with RSE workers. The phonetic spelling was provided by research participants.
migrants to compensate for their absences, and workers spend time prior to their journey to New Zealand preparing the gardens, setting up resources and leaving behind money for their families to use while they are gone. Repayments are made to those who assist workers’ families with gardens and other domestic duties upon the workers return.

Consideration of seasonal migration is pertinent not only for New Zealand growers, but also for ni-Vanuatu labourers that leave their own crops to participate in the scheme. Although Ambrym sends large numbers of workers, they are from multiple villages on the island. There is no mass exodus of male labourers while they are working in New Zealand, thus minimising labour impacts on the region.

Officials in the Departments of Labour in both Vanuatu and New Zealand have reported that they were concerned that participation in the RSE could result in workers being unproductive in their villages once they returned to Vanuatu. Phillip Martin (2007: 13) called this a “rest-at-home mentality.” Workers return home and take a period of rest between seasonal contracts. There is no evidence for this. Upon returning to Vanuatu, RSE workers reintegrate into village life with ease, and are working in their gardens within a day or two of their return. Gardens and land maintenance are of high value, and the men ensure these are managed in their absence and when they return.

In North Ambrym there is an observation period, during September to December, where no planting or access to the volcano (Mount Marum) is allowed, as it is said ‘it will make the yams dry’ This has now changed, and the prohibition on climbing the volcano is sometimes disregarded if tourists find willing guides. The main concern among many in Ranon village, was not the absence of the men for the production of agriculture, but the new presence of people climbing the volcano during a time that it has always been forbidden. Changing social practices to earn money throughout the year are not new on Ambrym. Sparks (2005: 80) observed that the seasons for cash cropping had been altered to suit the term payments of school fees as well.

Subsistence agriculture provides livelihoods for the majority of Ambrymese. It provides sustenance for daily consumption, and ceremonial exchange. This benefits the maintenance of reciprocity and social obligations required in community activities. There are debates on the role of food in exchange relationships concerning the social values of store bought foodstuffs, garden crops and their transformations as gifts and/or
commodities (Bolton 2003; Eriksen 2005; Patterson 2002a; Rio 2007; Young 1971). Awareness of these debates is important as planting, sharing and consuming is connected to personhood in Ambrym (Rio 2007). Natural disasters also increase reliance on store bought goods.

Natural disasters
Agriculture in Ambrym is susceptible to many natural disasters. Steven Clegg a technical assistant for the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office found extensive damage to most of the region from floods and landslides in 2009 (Clegg, 2009). This limited access to gardens that are located on steep mountain terrain and there was destruction to piped water supply lines in some villages (Clegg, 2009: 9-10).

In 2012, the World Bank stated that Vanuatu was “one of the most vulnerable countries to natural hazards on the planet”.70 Because of Vanuatu’s vulnerability there are many disaster risk management projects in the region to prepare for events and minimise effects. Vanuatu opened its first National Emergency Operation Centre in Port Vila in August 2013, as part of the project Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in Vanuatu (MDRR).71 Also in 2013, Vanuatu joined other Pacific nations at the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and the Climate Change Roundtable to discuss the affects of disasters at community levels.

RSE workers are building permanent homes that they anticipate will withstand cyclones and other natural disasters in the region. As many as 18 ni-Vanuatu workers I have spoken with have built homes or improved their existing dwellings with their New Zealand incomes. With RSE earnings Tom and his son have purchased land and built houses in Port Vila in response to the likelihood of a future eruption.

Rochelle: Can you tell me about your house in Vila and why you built it?

Fred: Because we live on a volcanic island so we want to build another one on another island. Sometimes we got the volcano eruption and we need to get out from that (Interview, Fred, Sanesup village, 17 August 2012).

In addition to threats on homes, natural disasters destroy cash crops, which affect livelihoods on Ambrym. In discussing the Ambrymese who relocated to Mele Maat in the aftermath of a volcanic eruption on their home island, Robert Tonkinson (1985: 146) observed “[P]eriodic problems with volcanic ash falls, hurricanes, and water shortages experienced in south-east Ambrym can lessen its attractiveness to absentees, as does its exclusive reliance on copra as a cash crop”.

**Copra**
The main cash crop on Ambrym is copra. Copra is the dried meat of a coconut. The sale of copra is a primary source of income for many Ambrymese. Copra prices, from the 1960s through to the early 1980s provided a significant amount of cash in island communities (see Rodman, 1987; 1993) but the price of copra has steadily declined since independence. Other factors that contribute to the decline are the aging coconut palms (*Cocos nucifera*) in Vanuatu and the competition for palm oil. Vanuatu does not have the economies of scale found in “India, Indonesia and the Philippines, which produce three quarters of the world’s coconuts, much of this in plantations, and fully process it locally”. These larger economies that have the capabilities for large and full-scale production crowd out smaller producers in the Pacific, yet there are connections to other international companies. In January 2013, Malakula sent the largest shipment of 1,000 metric tonnes of copra to the Philippines. This was the largest direct export from Malakula in that year.

Copra from Ambrym is sent from the island to be refined and further processed elsewhere. At the time the RSE was introduced in 2007 earnings from the cash cropping of copra were no more than supplemental. Yet, there was widespread participation in the labour of copra. There are numerous copra pits spread over Ambrym and most men and women work or have worked in its production.

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Copa is dried in two ways. The first uses a copra pit, pictured in figure 14, and the second is performed by cutting the coconut in half and leaving the two pieces in the sun to dry, shown in figure 15. When the copra is bagged it is stored and then delivered to the ‘copra boat’, where it is weighed, paid for, and shipped for manufacturing in soap, oils, shampoo, conditioners and so on.
Copra incomes are susceptible to fluctuations in prices, and producers have been known to hold onto their crop until prices increase. In the December 2012 quarterly report, the Vanuatu National Statistics Office reported that copra exports were in decline by 22 percent.\(^74\)

The majority of my research participants have been actively involved in the production of copra at some stage of their lives. Eriksen (2008:17) observed that in Ranon “[M]oney is not plentifully available in the village, and most people will harvest some coconuts for cash cropping when they need money”. Elaborating on Eriksen’s observation, producing copra for cash is not only an individual practice. Often it is laboured collectively for fundraising for ceremonies, school fees, development projects, and medical supplies or the church.

Despite the low prices of copra, RSE earnings continue to be invested in the sector. RSE workers have used their earnings to build copra pits for them themselves and others to participate in the copra industry. The copra pit, shown in figure 14 was owned by an RSE worker who rented it to others to use. He earned VT 100 per bag,\(^75\) but did


\(^{75}\) I was informed that the weight of copra bags varied between 40-60 kilos.
not use it himself. This gave him a new resource to access money and others in the village to produce copra to generate a cash income. Furthermore, because of the location of the pit, which was a one minute walk from Ranon bay, there was easy access to the beach. Often copra producers walk one to two hours down mountains with 60 kilo bags of copra. Those who have road access will hire the local truck to pick their copra bags, but this cost reduces earnings.

Tom, who has been participating in the RSE scheme for seven seasons, owns a plantation on 54 hectares of *kastom* land in west Ambrym. Like many others, Tom considered the copra business to be hard work, and told me it was for “slow money”, for a minimal return. He said that he got Vt 600 (NZD 8.50; USD 7.05) for one bag of copra (approximately 60 kilos) and that he and his wife aim to produce 30 bags of copra per week because they have a large plantation. For others, on smaller plantations, he told me that maybe they will produce approximately 10-20 bags. Once bagged the copra then has to be transported to a shipping area in Craig Cove. This costs Vt 100 (NZD 1.43; USD 1.185) per bag by truck. RSE workers now offer work to others in their villages on their copra plantations. This provides jobs for many that do not have a chance to work in New Zealand. Although Tom and his wife are involved in the majority of the labour, they also employ kin and community members. He informed me he gives one bag of rice or Vt 1000 (NZD 14.30; USD 12.85) to others in the village as payment for a day of cutting the copra.

Many RSE workers immediately return to working in copra upon their arrival from New Zealand. Chris said as soon as he returns from New Zealand he is “working with the copra to earn money” (Interview, Chris, Ranvetlam village, 23 May 2011). Although he does not have an immediate family of his own, as with his RSE earnings he uses the money from copra to pay for his brother’s son to go to school, and is also planning to start his own cattle project.

**Cattle projects**

In addition to selling copra, cattle raising is important on Ambrym. The Vanuatu beef industry has been present for over a century. As Burnett and Kenneth (2006: 32) observed:

> From the latter part of the 19th Century coconut plantations geared to copra production were developed, mainly by European colonialists. They transformed the Vanuatu landscape,
The beef industry is a vital source of export revenue for Vanuatu. While other sources of exports such as copra, cocoa and kava have been in decline, beef exports have increased. However, Ambrym’s commercial cattle operations are limited in comparison with other islands with high production such as Santo and Efate.

There is extensive anthropological data in Vanuatu which emphasises relationships between ni-Vanuatu and pigs, how they are reared, the various kinds of pigs in the region and how they are associated with ceremonial rituals (Eriksen 2005; Jolly 1987; Layard 1942; Lindstrom 1990; Patterson 2001, 2002, 2006; Rio 2005, 2007; Rodman 1987). With the growing number of Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) on the island, cattle are in demand, especially for ceremonial purposes. In ceremonies associated with Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), pigs are not used as food, as they are considered unclean. Many West Ambrymese are SDA’s (but there are smaller numbers of SDA’s in the north), particularly located in Linbul village north of Ranon (see Eriksen 2008).

As a result, although culturally pigs are of much higher status and value, cattle have become the primary meat for ceremonies. While carving in the kitchen on a rainy day I had a conversation with George about his brother’s wedding that we attended. I was curious about the prevalence of buluk (cattle) in the ceremonies.

George: Now it is wedding with the buluk, because many weddings. Sometimes we take five buluk and they are killed, it feeds more and the costs are cheaper.

Rochelle: Do you know how much a buluk costs?

George: One buluk costs, sometimes 70,000 [vatu]

Although buluk are used as meat for ceremonies, George emphasised that pigs had a kastom value that was more important. Buluk are cost effective and feed more people. During most ceremonies buluk were divided into the prestation piles of food for various kinship groups, and then again further divided for redistribution to extended kin. Often we would bring buluk meat home from ceremonies and again share any surplus meat amongst people in our village.

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RSE earnings have funded the growth in cattle-raising on Ambrym. In the first season (2007), only three participants spoke about purchasing cattle with their incomes from New Zealand. Since then many more have invested in cattle. Raising livestock is “a more common strategy of supplementing household income” (Durand et al, 1996: 433) in environments that are not commercially viable. Earnings from New Zealand’s scheme have been used to purchase fencing for many plantations on Ambrym. Tom has fenced off half of his plantation and is hoping to complete it with his 2013/2014 earnings. I was told that fencing was very expensive but it is needed for keeping cattle in, and other stock, such as pigs out of gardens, and to demarcate land boundaries.

**Kastom festivals and ceremonies**

*Kastom* festivals and ceremonies not only provide an avenue for potential tourism, but performances by those involved are judged as part of grade-taking ceremonies. RSE workers have acquired earnings for themselves or kin to partake in local *kastom* ceremonies. While watching the Rom Dance in Nibul in 2011, the performers were being judged on technique, timing, aesthetics and stamina by the men I was standing with. John and Kevin kindly explained technical aspects of the Rom dance, such as formations, while rating the performance of those involved. All the while they reminisced about the times that they too performed this dance. At the end of this ceremony the RSE worker paid Vt 50,000 (NZD 735.29; USD 610.29) and two pigs in...
exchange for the rights to participate in Rom ceremony, naming rights and the Rom mask pictured in figure 17. Earnings from the RSE have increased the number of grade-taking ceremonies on Ambrym. Incomes from New Zealand are financing traditional systems that had been in decline due to the introduction of cash into these practices, (this is discussed further in chapter seven).

**Kastom Festivals**
Displayed *Kastom* ceremonies generate income on the island. Ambrym is renowned for its ‘Black Magic’ and famous traditional Rom Dance. In tourism advertising, brochures and various websites, it is stated that the Rom Dance is held in Fanla village, north Ambrym. Many in Ranon also called Fanla ‘*kastom*’ village.77 When I asked why this was called *kastom* village I was informed it was because when the tourists come everyone changes into *kastom* clothing. Fanla village is a popular tourist destination and the mocking by others in nearby villages is possibly related to jealousy in attracting tourists to the region.78

An annual three-day festival that Ambrym hosts in August is called *Back to my roots*, where the Rom Dance is also staged. This festival is very popular with overseas tourists. In 2011, a group of 12 tourists from Italy stayed at Solomon Douglas’ bungalows in Ranon solely to attend the festival. I did not attend this festival, but various sources said that between 40-60 tourists attended. The following year, 2012, when I boarded the plane at Bauerfield airport in Port Vila, destined for Craig Cove in Ambrym, three Italian men were onboard. They were friends of the Italian tourists I had meet in 2011, and came on their recommendation. Ranon village guest houses were at full occupancy with tourists for this festival, which is located in the village of Olal at the top of the island, a ninety minute drive from Ranon. Festivals and ceremonies are an important source of income for the people of Ambrym. Many yacht tourists I spoke to planned their visit to Vanuatu to coincide with the *Back to My Roots* festival. This festival began in 2002 and has its own Facebook page.79

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77 For more detail on Fanla village see Patterson 2002a, b, 2011b.
78 Mocking is closely related to the joking relationship that Ambrymese share. Often joking relationships are used as a method in social control connected to ideologies of Relationality, or to make light of a person’s actions. In this case, it was joked that the village only reverted to kastom clothing for tourists. For more on joking relationships, see (Eriksen 2007; Hess 2009; Rio 2007).
In July 2011 a new festival, the *Ruan Cultural Art Festival* was started by a former RSE worker in Nibul, North Ambrym. The festival was held over five days, and the main objective of the organisers was to encourage more tourists to Ambrym. After a community meeting at the market house in July 2011 I briefly spoke with George Bumseng the festival organiser, prior to his departure back to Port Vila. George said he hoped that the Ruan festival would bring more tourists to the Lolihor region of Ambrym and that he had already spoken with many Australian Aid workers who had confirmed their attendance. George teaches Bislama in Port Vila to many aid workers in the region and had access to many potential festival goers. There were three admission rates for this festival. For locals the daily price was Vt 20 (NZD .29; USD .24), Vt 4000 (NZD 58.83; USD 48.82) for tourists and Vt 2000 (NZD 29.41; USD 24.41) for non-locals such as myself who were temporarily residing on Ambrym.

Upon entering the festival setting, to the right were two tables of local carvings, masks and bamboo flutes set up for sale and to the left another two tables that sold local food such as coconuts, breadfruit, mandarins and bananas. Further along there were three large *tam tams* in the centre of where the ceremonies were staged. The day I attended I noted that most of the audience were Ambrymese, there were three tourists and several overseas volunteers who had been working on other islands in Vanuatu. The programme consisted of a variety of island dance performances, drumming, sand drawing, bamboo flute demonstrations, magic, children’s performances and the Rom dance.

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80 There are many spellings for different villages. This is the spelling from a sign at the village.
Sand-drawing

According to Huffman (1996: 248), the term sand drawing is credited to Bernard Deacon who “collected 118 different designs from Malakula” from 1915-1927. Various sand drawings range from leaving a message at someone’s door, local songs, and to complex storytelling such as explanations for relationality of kin groups through ancestors. (Huffman, 1996: 247; Taylor 2008). Sand drawings are geometric figures made with the index finger, which does not lift off the ground until it is complete (Zagala, 2004: 32). Stephen Zagala (2004: 32) described sand drawing as “an indigenous form of ‘writing’, rather than a ‘drawing’….sand drawings are much more than simple pictures or decorative patterns.” Deacon (1927), Layard (1942), Patterson (2006a), Paton (1971) and Rio (2005, 2007) have documented various examples of stories invoking kinship relationships through sand-drawing in northern Vanuatu through the practice of sand-drawings. Rio (2007:54) argued that the practice of sand drawings was “about the mastery of social and historical circumstances; of knowing places, people and past trajectories.”
Bamboo flutes
In Ranon, bamboo flutes were often presented to foreign guests as a parting gift. Huffman (1996: 151) wrote that although bamboo flutes were produced throughout Vanuatu, Ambrym is famous for manufacturing of single bamboo flutes.
For myself, and presumably the people of Ambrym, the sound of bamboo flutes invoked emotions. Although an outsider to the world of Ambrym, listening to these instruments being played created a feeling of connectedness to the histories, environments, and the people of the region.
Food for Ruan festival
One of my participants and his wife were involved in selling lunch meals at the Ruan festival consisting of local food, such as laplap/ long \(^{81}\), yams (yams/rem), chicken (faol/to), pork (pig/parpar), banana (banana/wi), breadfruit (bredfrut/beta), grapefruit (pamplimus), and coconuts (kokonas) for the 2011 Ruan festival. Prior to this festival, there was much debate on what food to provide tourists. I was informed that Western style food was to be brought to the island to make the experience more attractive for the visitors and that there would be a one day adventure during which these guests would be able to hunt and gather their own food. This festival did bring a small amount of money to the region’s economy as some of the tourists purchased package deals that included accommodation, food, transport, and the festival entry fee. Additionally, local boats and trucks in North Ambrym were kept busy at this time, as the location of the festival was a two hour walk from Ranon. Although this festival was aimed at encouraging further tourism to the island, two chiefs told me that it also aided the maintenance of local kastom and traditional knowledge on the island.

Island Transportation
Island transportation is a good source of income for people on Ambrym. One of the ways in which the Lolihor Development Council (LDC) earns money is through the boat that they own, that transports both locals and visitors around the island, mainly to and from Craig Cove where the bank, post office and airport are located. Not only does the boat provide a small wage for local boat drivers, it also generates income for various local projects and events. Between 2007 until 2012, RSE incomes have funded three engines for the LDC’s boat.

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\(^{81}\) This is a Pacific Island pudding made in various forms, both sweet and savoury. In Vanuatu Ambrym is famous for its pumpkin (pumpkin is introduced though) and banana B-laplap; NA-long.
The high cost of benzine (petrol) makes traveling by boat expensive. A one way trip from Craig Cove to Ranon can cost Vt 12,000 (NZD 170; USD 141), unless passengers are lucky enough to share with others for a reduced price. When I left Ranon in 2012, an RSE worker had taken his boat that had been sitting in a shed since 2008, to be repaired so that he too could make money through island transportation. His son who is working in Australia’s seasonal labour program is planning to purchase a new motor for the boat with his earnings.

Travel between islands is more affordable. Most Ambrymese, as well as myself travelled from Port Vila to Ambrym by the cargo ship *LC Brisk*, which cost between Vt 3,500–6,500 (NZD 70–100; USD 58.10–83) one way. It is one of the few affordable means of transportation for inter-island travel, especially to and from Port Vila. Additionally it is also one of the most economical forms of transportation for travel between North and West Ambrym. The alternative to this boat was a three hour boat ride from Ranon to Craig Cove, where the domestic airport is, and then a flight from Craig Cove to Port Vila which costs Vt 11,500 (NZD 160; USD 132).
Costs of inter-island transport also affect the choices that RSE workers make in their travel. These costs are detailed in table 2. A problem that occurred while I was in Ranon in 2011 was the *LC Brisk* that frequented Ranon Bay stopped operating. My fieldnotes recall:

Today 16 men arrived in Ranon from Olal in North Ambrym. They are on their way to Blenheim for winter pruning. Most of them have been to New Zealand previously. The only problem now is getting them to Port Vila as the cargo ship expected to take them did not arrive due to engine failure (24 May 2011).

The engine failure of this cargo ship had economic and social impacts for the people of Ambrym, especially those with businesses.

It was not until the end of July 2011 that other cargo and passenger ships started to arrive in Ranon bay and these stops were intermittent. This was a frustrating period for most in Ranon. It impeded business dramatically for many shop owners in North Ambrym, who were waiting for supplies for upcoming wedding ceremonies. Village shops had no flour, rice, tuna, canned beef, or sugar. Because of the reliance on store brought goods, the lack of shop supplies affected many people. When ships returned bringing goods to the area, the prices of most goods had increased. This price rise was because varying shipping companies charged more for the delivery of goods purchased from Port Vila to Ambrym, and there was no other option for North Ambrymese but to use their services.

This could not have happened at a worse time as it was the “wedding season” (Michael, Faramasu village, May 2011). The usual provisions for weddings were not available locally, such as rice and calico. Organisers of weddings had to rely on people from West Ambrym, who still had regular cargo and passenger ships transporting goods, to deliver them to the north during this time. People were unable to travel to weddings because passenger services on the *LC Brisk* had been suspended. Those that did experienced extra financial burdens in travelling to the ceremonies, often at double the cost. At the time, one RSE worker discussed the idea of purchasing a larger boat in order to reduce costs of inter-island travel for his family in Port Vila to travel to and from Ambrym. In July 2012 while travelling on *Efate Queen* to Ambrym with several

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82 The men found alternative transportation and reached their destination. This is an example why employers insist that workers prepare and leave their islands well before departing Port Vila.
RSE workers they spoke of investing earnings from New Zealand into a large inter-island vessel to compete with what was available and generate new incomes for their communities. This large scale enterprise never eventuated, as there are limited funds once most RSE earnings are used for individual and community needs. However, during the 2011–2013 seasons RSE workers used their incomes from New Zealand to purchase outboard motors, boats and benzine to use in smaller scale business ventures.

In Ranon, two trucks transport people and goods between villages, and tourists to the volcanic treks. Residents rarely use trucks unless they have heavy loads of copra or goods arrive from Port Vila that need to be taken long distance. This is mainly due to the cost of petrol. At the time of my initial fieldwork in 2011 this was Vt 270 per litre, (NZD 4.30; USD 3.56).

**Smol bisnes**

Starting a small business with RSE earnings was an intention of most workers. They referred to this as a *smol bisnes*. The concept of business is culturally specific and this thesis refers to business (*bisnes*) in the context of Ambrym. Although called *smol bisnes* by participants they are significant. Like individual RSE workers earnings, *bisnes* operators in Vanuatu are affected by obligations that can extend to those outside everyday operations. For example, percentages of earnings are expected to be shared around various claimants, such as immediate family, extended kin, the church and the community. Markets on Ambrym are small scale operations. Generally they are markets that operate by rules of obligation, reciprocity and exchange. In the time that I have been documenting ni-Vanuatu participation in the RSE scheme, (2007–2014), RSE workers and their spouses and kin have started many new business ventures. The RSE gives participants income, which in turn allows them to contribute to markets and stimulate them at home. This section discusses new businesses that have been generated from RSE earnings and some of the difficulties and obligations business owners have on Ambrym.

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83 *Smol bisnes* translates to small business.

84 This is not entirely specific to Vanuatu.
Power Generating Business

“With my New Zealand money, I am going to buy my own benzine to sell here at the house, our village never has enough” (George 2011).

RSE workers have used their earnings to sell benzine (petrol). Benzine is not only needed for local transportation but also for generators. There is no electrical power on the island and the distribution of fuel is becoming a popular business venture for RSE workers. There is great demand for benzine and as long as people are operating generators or using trucks and boats, this will continue to thrive. There were three main distributors of benzine in Ranon village. Due to demands and lack of reliable shipping to and from the island, we often had limited supplies of benzine and people travelled from other villages to purchase benzine in Ranon when they finished their supply. I spoke with a man from Ranvetlam village, which is a 30 minute walk south of Ranon. He had travelled to purchase benzine for his boat, as none was available. 85

Some of the demand for benzine has arisen from RSE workers buying generators for themselves and their families with their earnings. With this in mind a goal of many of the RSE workers in 2012, was to save enough money to start their own benzine business. On my first trip to Ambrym in 2009 there were only a few generators in Ranon. People went to the beach store to have their mobile phones, (which at the time were scarce), charged or to watch something on television, either through a VCR or the newly acquired DVD player from New Zealand, (there is no reception for national television in Ranon). Since then, almost five years later, and partly as a result of material goods purchased by workers in New Zealand, many ni-Vanuatu in Ambrym have their own cellphones and portable DVD players but depend on RSE workers with generators or solar panels to charge them.

Generators and Solar Panels

With limited infrastructure for electricity, generators and solar panels are sought after commodities on Ambrym. They are used for various activities such as weddings, concerts, gatherings to watch string band DVDs and recently for charging mobile phones and portable DVD players. According to the 2009 Vanuatu National Census of

85 During my fieldwork in 2011, most of the villages in North Ambrym had no petrol, because as mentioned earlier the inter-island cargo ship was no longer sailing due to mechanical failure.
Population and Housing Report, (2009: 27) 76 per cent of households in Vanuatu have mobile phones.

This increase in cellphones has not just been because of participation in the RSE scheme. The rise in cellphone numbers has also been driven by the two mobile phone operators within Vanuatu, Digicel and Telecom Vanuatu Limited (TVL). These companies have made this technology available to more people by providing flexible top up plans and rates, and more importantly extended reception areas. Danielle Cave (2012) has reported that increased use in information communication technology (ICT) is transforming the Pacific region. The increase in mobile phone use has led to a rise in numbers using social media as a form of communication “enabling Pacific Islanders to connect with one another, form online networks, share content, project opinion, promote debate and coordinate activities in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago” (Cave, 2012: 3). RSE workers use social media and various forms of ICT to aid in developing and maintaining relationships domestically and internationally. They have also used ICT and newly adopted training courses in computing to create new forms of income generation such as recording music albums (as discussed in subsequent chapters). Watson (2012) has written about the use of cell phone technology and its potential to aid development in Papua New Guinea. She observed (2012: 47) that the Pacific was “one of the last parts of the world to have widespread mobile phone access and coverage”. This is possibly due to the lack of electricity infrastructure to recharge mobile phones, thus, encouraging RSE workers to invest in power generating items.

Workers told me that a generator in Vanuatu costs between Vt 18,000–35,000 (NZD 264–514; USD 222.08–426.62). Their main concern in purchasing generators was the inability to maintain them and the costs of benzine. Increasingly RSE workers are purchasing solar panels and power inverters. A worker from Baiap purchased solar equipment for his home and collects a small fee for charging cellphones in the region. Solar equipment is a more affordable option than generators, which operate on benzine. I was informed solar was a more reliable source of power as often generators stop

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86 Although, in the first four seasons of the RSE scheme cellphones were one of the first products that many bought upon arriving in New Zealand.
working and there is limited knowledge of how to fix them.\textsuperscript{87} The only downside to the solar panel option is a lack of radiant light. In some areas of the island, smoke from the volcanoes hindered solar efficiency.

\textbf{Bakeries}

Workers have remitted household goods, for individual and \textit{bisnes} needs. Three workers have provided their spouses and parents, with materials such as baking dishes, recipe books and money for ingredients for \textit{smol bisnes} bakeries. In 2012 there were eight bakers in Ranon village, five more than when I did my first field work in 2011. Most bakeries make Gato or plain bread buns (see figure 21). Gato bread is similar to the Western donut and has become popular on Ambrym. In 2011 we would eat this on a Sunday for dinner, but in 2012 I noticed that it was being cooked more often. The growing demand is possibly due to affordability. The day I took the photo shown in figure 21, the baker had sold 90 Gato at Vt 20 (NZD .29; USD .24) each, thus bringing Vt 1800 (NZD 26.48; USD 22.17) into the household, minus the small outlay to produce them. These bakeries initiated with financial and material goods from RSE workers, have provided Ambrymese households an additional source of money.

\textsuperscript{87} In 2011 RSE workers expected to gain skills in maintaining generators while in New Zealand. I mentioned this to their employer who agreed to accommodate their plans as it would also support creating new business opportunities for workers back in Vanuatu.
Another RSE worker funded the start-up costs for his mother’s bakery in Baiap, West Ambrym. From my discussions with his mother and general observations, this is a thriving business that has been very successful in their village.

**Small stores**

Although there are stores in the larger villages of Ambrym, such as Ranon and Craig Cove, smaller villages run stores from their homes. Small stores are one of the most prevalent business ventures that RSE workers have established. These usually operated from the front of newly built homes that have been constructed using their New Zealand earnings. The one shown in figure 22 belongs to an RSE worker who positioned his store opposite his home.
The viability of these businesses depends upon the shipping of goods from Port Vila. As discussed earlier, in 2011 the mechanical breakdown of LC Brisk at the end of May had a major impact on business operations in the region.

Stores in the region are increasing, as is the reliance on store brought goods. There have been debates describing the differences in viewpoints of store brought goods to local produce. Eriksen drew from Jolly (1991) to argue:

> that the idea that rice makes you weak and yams make you strong, is not so much related to the fact that rice is soft in itself and a yam is a hard substance, but rather that the rice is not from the home place or from local earth. According to Jolly, food mediates between the body and the land, so food from the garden makes a strong connection between person and place (2008: 17).

Likewise I agree with Jolly that local produce is important for the connection to place and all other aspects of social nurturing in Ambrym. However, rice is increasing in popularity and I spoke to people in the village about the reliance on rice as a staple meal. They told me that to be seen purchasing and eating rice had become something of a status symbol. In contrast to Eriksen (2008), eating rice was not seen as a weakness but had become a symbol of wealth. Rice and packets of noodles were an alternative
when local crops were unavailable. Michael Burke also (2000: 10) observed that in Papua New Guinea access to cash incomes increased the purchase of “rice, flour, animal fat and vegetable oil” when other crops failed.

The reliance on store bought goods was evident during shipping delays. When local shops had depleted their stocks that were supplied from Vila, differences between locally produced and store bought goods were discussed with me. Sharon a local woman who had a smol bisnes, estimated that the village consumed large quantities of rice a week and that not having it available was a problem. Although rice has become a staple, many in the village cannot afford to purchase it on a regular basis. My host family and other RSE workers regularly shared rice with others in the village such as single mothers, widows (zilna) and some elderly village members. George reflected that he bought rice with earnings from New Zealand. “I came here [Ranon] with four bags of rice, the 25 kilo ones. Then every widow in Ranon, I gave it to them”. This is one of many examples where cash remittances from New Zealand were converted into consumable goods and shared with others on the island. Many RSE workers travelled home to Ambrym with large bags of rice for individual and community meals.

Rice also played a major role in wedding feasts. Although it was never put into the large piles of prestation food to be redistributed to families, in ceremonies rice was the main staple that accompanied buluk, whether for weddings, circumcisions, funerals, or fund-raisers. Store bought food is regularly consumed, more so than it had been in the past. This was also observed by Sparks (2006: 106-109) during her fieldwork in Ranvetlam village. She noted an increase in the need for store bought goods and that there had been many changes in food preparation and consumption practices on Ambrym. In her assessment, many of these changes occurred with colonial institutions and influences, from the food in stores to formal education. In addition to small businesses on the island, Ambrymese have invested in businesses outside of Ambrym.

**Buses and Taxis**

Many RSE workers have entered the transport sector in Port Vila purchasing buses and taxis. To reduce traffic in the region the Vanuatu government in September 2013 made an order amending the *Taxi Act CAP49*. From January 1 2014, no new licences will be issued for buses, taxis and public transport for the three and a half year term of the current government (Cullwick 2013). In December 2013 I spoke with workers in
regards to this pending change, as I knew of men that had intended purchasing taxis in 2014. They were aware of the situation and replied with laughter stating they had no confidence in the government to follow through with this. However, with the number of available vehicles in the greater Port Vila area competition is high, unlike on Ambrym where there is a lack of transportation.

The cost of transportation is high on Ambrym and in 2012 Jonathan, an RSE worker, invested in a truck for his village as they often relied on the truck from a village 20 minutes south. He told me that the truck they used charged too much money and was unreliable for getting goods to the ship for members of his community. He is planning to use the truck for community purposes and is intending to make money taking tourists to the volcanoes and festivals.

**Other businesses**

Earnings from the RSE have financed a number of small businesses on Ambrym. For example, Peggy from West Ambrym sells telecommunication top-up cards for mobile phones. She purchases them for VT 60 and retails them on to customers for VT 100, the value that is shown on the top-up card. Her husband’s RSE earnings were used for her initial investment of Vt 5000 (NZD 72; USD 59.76) in 2010. When I spoke with her in 2011, she had invested Vt 20,000 (NZD 285; USD 236.55). This increased re-investment was emphasised by Peggy and her husband as evidence that her business was growing. This business has also benefited with the recent cell phone towers installed on the island (between 2009-2012) and the fact that the competitive telecommunications operator had limited reception in West Ambrym.

Another revenue earner for some on the island has been the production of string band DVDs. While in Vila I met with RSE workers from Ranon that I knew. They were standing in the car park of Centrepoint Mall with a television and DVD player promoting their DVD *Island bloa Faea* [Island of Fire], which they had produced with earnings from New Zealand. The DVD cost Vt 2500 (NZD 36.76; USD 30.51),\(^88\) making it an expensive purchase. Many in Ranon complained to me that they helped make the DVD but could not afford to purchase it. However, the workers have had success selling the DVD in the tourist destinations of Port Vila, and in areas where they

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\(^{88}\) It retails at the Dunedin Farmers’ market for NZD 10 (USD 8.30; Vt 680).
busk in New Zealand, such as the Farmers Market in Dunedin, the main port city on the coast of Otago, some two to three hours drive from Roxburgh.

**Tourism**

Tourism is not large on Ambrym but it is used by many as a means of generating income on the island. It is difficult to accurately estimate tourist numbers for Ambrym as many arrive by private yachts and anchor in various parts of the island. Tourists that arrive by plane normally stay in the west of the island. When I first met my participants in Central Otago in 2007, they had come to New Zealand with many tourism brochures and DVDs promoting Vanuatu. Ever since then they have become ‘ambassadors’ and have promoted Ambrym island to everyone that they meet. The personal relationships RSE participants make in New Zealand, both at work and during their time off, have allowed them to promote Ambrym and Vanuatu as a country. Many seasonal workers from New Zealand have travelled to Ambrym after working with the men. Nonetheless, these tourists, like many that visit, only visited the west of Ambrym, because the cost of getting to the north made the rest of the journey unfeasible, especially if they are backpackers on a budget.

Other than the actively promoted tourist attractions, such as Mount Benbow and Mount Marum volcanoes, the Rom Dance, sand-drawing and black magic, there are many more attractions on the island such as hot pools, turtles and dugongs. It was mentioned to me by the workers’ employers, local aid workers and people in the North Ambrym community that RSE earnings should help promote these attractions and contribute to new infrastructure in North Ambrym, such as airports and roads, to make access for tourists easier and more affordable.

The building of an air strip in North Ambrym has previously been attempted. Patterson (2002b: 126) observed, after failed attempts to clear land in North Ambrym for an air strip and after the death of a worker, (argued to be a result of sorcery) the project was aborted. During meetings on the island in 2011 and 2012 constructing an airstrip was revisited. It was said that an investment in an airport would have been beneficial for everyone in Lolihor and earnings from seasonal programs, such as RSE and SWP, would be needed. There are differences between how the community aims to use RSE earnings and how RSE workers want the money spent. Workers note that the associated
costs of developing an air strip are too high and their money is more suitable for smaller projects benefiting their immediate communities.

**Bungalows and Guest houses**

Four RSE workers have entered the eco-tourism sector, by building bungalows or guest houses with their earnings from New Zealand. While in Ranon in 2011 I participated in and observed the construction of the guest house in figure 23.

Initially this house was built for the arrival of their New Zealand employer in 2011. It is now rented to guests for Vt 2000 per night (NZD30; USD24.90). I also spoke with Tom who built a guest house in Sanesup, West Ambrym. The beach is a two minute walk from Tom’s guest house and once there, is a remarkable view of the neighbouring islands of Epi and Paama. Sitting on this beach on a clear night there is often a spectacular fireworks display from the volcanoes. Accommodation rates at Tom’s guest house covered the costs of the services that the women of his village would provide for the guests, such as food, cooking and cleaning. A rate of Vt 1500 (NZD 20–25; USD
16.60–20.75) per night was given. Several other RSE workers have plans to build guest houses on Ambrym and two have bought properties in Port Vila to rent to tourists. The projected incomes from these investments are expected to provide cash resources for RSE workers and other community members.

**Volcanoes**

The volcanoes generate more income in the western parts of Ambrym than the north. There are two reasons for this. It is easier to climb volcanoes from the West and it is expensive to travel to the north. Those that usually travel to the volcano from the north are traveling on their own yachts. I was told by people in North Ambrym that there was very limited interaction between tourists and the communities. Sarah said that most “white people [tourists] don’t go to our villages. They stay in the bungalows [in Ranon], or just go to the volcano and leave on their boats” (Personal Communication, 16 May 2011). Cash generated from tourists in the North is small and does not bring about sufficient income for community benefits.

Another advantage that West Ambrym has is that it allows tourists to climb the volcano year round, whereas in the north there are restrictions made during the planting season when no one is permitted to climb the volcano. Previously all tourism to the volcanoes from the north ceased during yam planting season July to December, but this is changing. In an interview with Simon of Ranon village we discussed planting and the volcanoes:

Rochelle: Is the planting season affected by the absence of RSE workers in New Zealand?

Simon: No. This is the time for planting yam, August. Some people start on July/August. That’s a good months for planting yam. We are planting and brushing the garden and then we go away. The problem is the volcano.

Rochelle: Can you tell me more about the volcano problem?

Simon: The problem is the volcano. Then maybe August they are not going to stop the volcano. But before, yes, they are blocking the volcano, but now they just make it, they go and come.

Rochelle: I thought the volcano walk was *tabu* during yam season because it interfered with the yams. This is what I read.
Simon: Yes that is why the chief made the plan. But now tourism. They [tourists] just go and come. Because when we say no, the West is going to come and get all of the tourism, all of the money.

This conversation highlighted that these two regions of Ambrym are competing for cash resources; and how the pursuit for the tourist dollars is changing avoidance practices in North Ambrym. However, cash is not the only exchange that Ambrymese have with tourists.

**Exchange**

There is a small amount of economic trade and barter with tourists who visit the island.

Figure 24 shows an exchange between Scottish tourists and a local carver who requested rope as payment for his miniature *tam tam*. The previous day these tourists had seen his carvings and asked me what price they were. However the carver did not want cash. At the time he was in need of rope to tie his pigs up. When I asked if he thought the exchange was fair, he said no and that he should have received more rope.
for the carving. Most exchanges with tourists that arrive off their own yachts are for food. I spoke with many tourists who came in search of fresh fruit and vegetables to take on their journey between islands. I found that some tourists were obtaining fresh produce in exchange for their expired canned food, which was often traded.

Most Tuesday mornings a market was held where the women from the Lolihor area would bring produce such as sweet potato *B-taro* (*NA*-oper), *B-kumala*, cucumber, island cabbage *B-aelen kabis* (*NA*-liwel), beans *B-ariko*, tomatoes, grapefruit *B-pamplimus* to the market house to sell. This market was advertised and posted on several yachting blogs. Accessing food crops is not always easy as most gardens in North Ambrym are set up high on the mountains and hillsides. Reaching them is usually a difficult one to two hour walk. In 2011, Denise planted a garden close to her house in Ranon village, using her husband’s earnings from New Zealand. She did this to make it easier for herself and others, especially elderly widows and single mothers, to access food if they had difficulty making the journey to the nearest garden. In her garden she had island cabbage, tomatoes, capsicums, red peppers and pawpaw. Because of the location of the garden she could also sell produce to tourists that arrived, as her garden was located a two-minute walk from the entrance to Ranon Bay. Although this garden could be used to source extra income from tourists, Denise gave away more produce than she sold. In doing so, she was creating and maintaining reciprocal relations in the region, which has more value than cash. This is one of many examples of island *bisnes* operations.

**Business knowledge, the need for exchange and cash**

Encouraging economic development in the Pacific states via the RSE scheme centres on the assumption that remittances will be invested in new businesses and the repatriation of ‘new ideas and skills’ will contribute to entrepreneurial success (Gibson and McKenzie 2010; Ramasamy *et al*, 2008). In the past seven seasons RSE workers have gained a substantial amount of economic, social and material remittances. Initially they acquired goods to improve their immediate families’ lives, such as with mattresses, laptops for their children to use for school and solar paneling for power (Bailey: 2009). Since 2010 many of the men have been importing goods from New Zealand such as lap tops, cameras and cellphones to make a profit in the greater Port Vila region. As they informed me, these items are expensive in Vanuatu, and it is easy
to sell them when they return home. Participation in the RSE scheme provides opportunities for these small businesses.

Workers that have established businesses on Ambrym have two main goals. These are meeting the financial requirements of their families, (especially school fees) and participating in financial and social obligations that maintain social relationships on the island. The concept of sharing resources over profits made is especially important on Ambrym (Rio 2002; Patterson 2001). RSE workers have built small businesses such as shops with their RSE earnings, but because of various social structures, such as reciprocal obligations, limited capital gains are made from these enterprises. I expand on this in chapter six. Generally it is difficult to make money, although this is not due to a lack of entrepreneurial ideas or skills, as had been suggested by people I spoke with in the Central Otago community.

Kinship relationships are invoked to manage required labour. While workers are in New Zealand they depend on family and community networks to maintain their labour loss in the community. Basok (2002) argues that Mexican workers utilising their older children would be ideal for maintaining businesses while they are absent. However, like migrant labourers in the RSE, most workers participate in these schemes to earn additional income to send their children to school. They do not want to disrupt their childrens’ education to look after their businesses. The primary reason for most ni-Vanuatu participating in the scheme is to earn enough money to pay for schooling.

Workers who have returned to Vanuatu not only have financial and social obligations to their immediate families but also those extended kin and friends that have been supporting their families while they are absent. Whilst working in New Zealand, Ron hires a relief driver for his taxi in Vila, but has concerns about him. Ron’s wife was also apprehensive that the taxi was not being used appropriately and had concerns about the income earned from it. RSE workers use spouses and extended kin to tend not only domestic chores but also to look after their cattle, copra and small store businesses while they are absent. Samantha said she was ‘tired’ while her husband was in New Zealand. With limited support, she found it difficult to manage her family’s cattle and work long hours in the hot smokey copra pit by herself (these tasks were in addition to the domestic and community responsibilities expected of her).
Soon after arriving in New Zealand (2007), within a week many workers were running their own enterprises selling goods among each other and with minimal profit. Workers are operating in the western economy, use western terms for their businesses in New Zealand and although it is not their main source of income they refer to these enterprises as their *smol bisnes*. Reciprocal and exchange relations between workers are also evident while in New Zealand. For many, the amount of money they made was not significant but it was a continuation of relations of exchange. Most do not make a large profit and many only cover the cost of their initial investment. These businesses are not considered for earning ‘big money’, but they are important for delivering the circulation of goods, building and sustaining relationships of reciprocity through exchange and trade.

**Business and Social Realities**

Running a business in Ambrym also creates further social obligations and expectations from others in the community. This is linked to the importance of sharing on the island. Nonetheless, I have seen evidence of one RSE worker pretending that he had no money left in order to keep some for himself if he needed it. Furthermore, Ambrymese do not overtly display their wealth as this can bring about anger, jealousy and spiritual malevolence (Rio, 2002: 143). There was only one case where I knew of this, as most of the workers told me they were always willing to give their money to others. It highlights however the many RSE workers who are aware that they may need to keep savings aside for individual needs as well as community obligations. These savings will vary, depending on relationships in the community or family responsibilities such as schooling or obligations to reciprocate.

There is no personal income tax in Vanuatu, but there is a provincial tax for local businesses. In 2012, there was a notice on the Lonbato cooperative society store in Ranon, giving the tax rates for those who ran businesses in the Malampa province. For businesses that generate income over Vt 4 million per annum (NZD 58,823.53; USD 48,823.52) they have to purchase a business operation license which costs Vt 20,000 (NZD 294.11; USD 244.11) and those that earn less pay Vt 500 (NZD 7.35; USD 6.10) for a business certificate operation fee.

The search for cash has changed villages and relationships over time. An example I provide is Sanesup village, which contains numerous empty abandoned houses. In an
interview with the chief of Sanesup village, he expressed concerns about people leaving
the village for paid employment in Port Vila, and more importantly, the connections to
the village that were being lost. His words were reiterated to me by mothers of children
that had left Sanesup in the pursuit of waged labour. Comments I received from many
in the village, such as they have ‘left us’, or ‘forgotten about us’ diverge from research
which argues that ni-Vanuatu will maintain connections to their place, in order to go
home when necessary (Bolton 1999; Eriksen 2008). These connections are sustained by
the RSE. Incomes generated from the RSE scheme flow throughout the island in
various ways; through labour, reciprocal exchanges, kastom ceremonies, providing
services and sharing goods.

Generating money for new developments on Ambrym
This chapter has highlighted the social and economic realities of earning cash on
Ambrym. There are limited resources for earning income on the island, other than copra
production, carvings, tourism and cattle farming. Participation in customary practices,
such as grade-taking ceremonies has increased with more monetary flows on the island.
RSE workers have funded business ventures on Ambrym, but as I have demonstrated
these can be seriously affected by the reliability and costs of island transportation.
Many RSE workers established non-commercial exchange systems in Central Otago
where money was the medium but not the end goal of the transactions. The
continuation of relationships through exchange was important. I believe that these
exchange ventures both in New Zealand and on Ambrym are closely aligned to the
practices of circulation and reciprocity. Ni-Vanuatu RSE families have profited from
successful mico enterprises, funded by RSE earnings. Most of these profits are
circulated back into the community.

Although tourism is small on the island, there is a move in the region to increase it. For
the north, this has involved breaking kastom observances in order to compete with the
western region, who already have the advantage of the airport in close proximity.
Festivals on Ambrym attract international tourism. Northern regional councils in
Ambrym plan to increase tourist numbers through new festivals and improved
transportation. Many in the community are anticipating that RSE earning will help fund
this endeavor. Yet the workers themselves are skeptical about these plans and who will benefit from them.

New business opportunities have been established with RSE earnings. The financial gains from small enterprises are still reliant on island transportation and community endorsement, which is closely tied to the management of circulation and reciprocal obligations. I also observed this in New Zealand; having a business was not only for earning a living and making a profit, but to participate in the exchange and circulation of goods.
Chapter 4: Gardens, wages and work: the RSE scheme and routes of labour

Since 2007 workers have spent seven months each year living in New Zealand and five months in Vanuatu. This chapter examines the seven year involvement that participants have had in the RSE scheme. It demonstrates the different ways in which participation affects workers, their families, employers and communities in both New Zealand and Vanuatu. Living in New Zealand for seven months a year and Vanuatu for five months has consequences that will be addressed throughout this chapter and the following chapters, especially in terms of their specific locations (see also Agunias 2006; Ammasari and Black 2001; Borovnik 2003, Rigg 2007; Skeldon 2004). In the section on work, I explore ideologies and relationships of and about work by examining aspects of waged and unwaged labour in Ambrym. In addition to this, I discuss island employment and reciprocal labour.

The opportunity for ni-Vanuatu in this study to be selected for the RSE scheme was largely determined by their status and identity in their communities (Bailey 2009). In addition to those that do participate, I explore the livelihoods of those that do not and the various reasons for not partaking in the scheme. Earning money in New Zealand has resulted in new forms of leadership, jealousy and alliances. In this chapter I reflect how earning money has changed relationships among workers. This chapter also reviews how the men’s employers have experienced the scheme, and the consequences of hiring ni-Vanuatu workers, especially in terms of costs and productivity for businesses in the Central Otago region.

On route- losing income in Port Vila

Although this thesis is mainly focused on Central Otago and Ambrym, Port Vila is another important place for RSE workers. Port Vila is home for many participants and it is becoming an important location for the majority of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers to base themselves in, both prior to, and after returning from New Zealand. On average the men spend up to one month on either side of their travel to and from New Zealand in Port Vila. As mentioned in chapter two, the month in Port Vila prior is for recruitment and organising paperwork for their travels. However, their employers also
recommend that workers from the outer islands arrive in Port Vila at least one week prior to travelling to New Zealand, to avoid any unforeseeable delays that may occur as a result of inter-island travel disruptions, which were discussed in chapter three.

These temporary sojourns in Port Vila have caused tensions in relationships between spouses. One of many examples of this occurred in 2011 when interviewing Georgia from West Ambrym, who made it clear to me how upset she was with her husband for spending ‘too much time’ in Port Vila, when he had left New Zealand more than a month before. She was not the only wife to comment negatively on the length of stay workers had in Port Vila. Caroline who looks after the cattle and the copra business for her absent husband said “he spends too much time there (Port Vila). He needs to come home and help me. The work I do is very hard and I am getting very tired by myself.” (Interview, Caroline, Baiap village 13 June 2011). However, the reasons for Caroline’s husband delayed return to Ambrym in 2011, was firstly, the container ship had not arrived from New Zealand and secondly, the regular cargo ship to Ambrym had been out of commission due to mechanical failure. Due to the quantities of goods which the men brought home from New Zealand, the passenger ship to Ambrym was too expensive and in some cases unable to take their material remittances. Furthermore, during that period, the passenger ship did not anchor in North Ambrym. Although workers complained that it cost too much to live in the capital, they were not concerned about being delayed in Port Vila.

Because of the importance of Port Vila as a transitional space, there had been talk of plans to build temporary housing with earnings from New Zealand for seasonal workers to offset housing costs in the capital. Former Chairman of the LDC, Nabong, informed me:

> When things went broke,²⁹ we used the chiefs Nakamel in Vila trying to get them together. When they come back from the work in New Zealand they should have put in this amount [so] that we can create a place for them in Vila when they come back…. when they also come from the island to Vila we should have gathered them on one place instead of staying with their families in Vila. Plenty of complaints in Vila when we move the boys to Vila they shouldn’t have to stay with their families….When the funds come in, we will try to allocate a piece of land,

²⁹ He uses the term broke for the men not contributing money to the community as had been agreed in previous years.
maybe build some shelter for them to come and stay for a while. When they come from the
island or New Zealand, they stay in one place and shift them at the same time. These are the
things we think instead of them spending all their money in Vila. (Interview July 2011).

After the workers had an unexpected extension of their stay in Port Vila in 2012, I was
told that the plan for building a house in Port Vila for seasonal workers would be
revisited again. Using RSE earnings to establish housing for workers would be
beneficial; however most workers did not want to contribute to this project. Reasons
given were, included the possibility of not returning to New Zealand or that their
earnings had already been allocated for other purposes. Other RSE recruits mentioned
that staying with relatives was convenient. A few workers joked that they had already
lived together in the same quarters for seven months, ‘time for a break from each other’
(Group conversation, Ranon 25 June 2011).

Many workers from Ambrym have relatives in Port Vila they can stay with. Most are
located in Fresh Wota, Mele, Mele Maat and the settlement of Blacksands, where many
Ambrymese living in Efate are settled (Eriksen 2008; Lindstrom 2011a; Mecartney
2000; Mitchell 2002; Tonkinson 1985). However, hosting workers puts added pressure
on these relatives and their living resources and unlike the island, living costs in Port
Vila are extremely high. It is unthinkable to deny a kinsperson hospitality, as there are
many obligations and reciprocal relationships that need to be met in order for most ni-
Vanuatu social relations to be maintained (Eriksen 2008; Hess 2009; Rio 2007). When
Ambrymese people leave and return home (Ambrym island), they know that to be
accepted there they must continue to fulfill their obligations of reciprocity in order to
maintain connections with kinspersons and place in Ambrym (Eriksen 2008; Hess
2009; Rio 2007). Ambrymese in Vila are part of these networks and relationships,
which extend back to the island, and now beyond to New Zealand. Although this thesis
has emphasised that Ambrymese RSE earnings are circulated on the island, they reach
further to distant relatives also. Hosting workers contributes to maintaining social
connections and RSE workers’ incomes are also redistributed in the households of their
hosts in Port Vila.

RSE workers ‘wasting their money in Port Vila’ was a criticism made by many people,
especially by workers’ spouses. One story recalled by several Ambrym women
discussed how a group of wives met their husbands at Bauerfield International Airport
in Port Vila because of their husbands’ inappropriate spending behaviour the previous year. It was said that the men spent all of their New Zealand earnings in Port Vila’s kava bars and in paying for living costs such as housing, food and buses in the capital that are substantially higher than on Ambrym. These workers had returned home with little money. Their wives travelled to Port Vila to prevent this occurring again. To avoid workers’ earnings being drained in the capital, spouses wanted to limit RSE migrants’ time in Port Vila and instead return home to Ambrym to contribute to household needs, such as gardens, children and community obligations.

The RSE has not been the catalyst for extended periods in Port Vila. I was told by many women that their husbands had often travelled to Port Vila or Luganville in search for waged work. Perceived opportunities in the urban areas for work are preferred over the ‘small money’ available from cash cropping on Ambrym.

With Port Vila becoming an important arena for mobility and a potential source of income for workers that have experienced new waged labour I wondered if the capital would become a final stop for RSE workers (see for comparison, Haberkorn 1989). Four of my participants resided in Port Vila prior to the RSE and since participation I have been told of two others that had moved to Port Vila for work; yet their families remain in Ambrym.

Only a small number of RSE workers from Ambrym have chosen to settle permanently in Port Vila. The majority of my participants had no desire to leave Ambrym. As one Chief said the advantage of the RSE scheme, is that the people do not have to leave the village permanently in search of paid work.

Chief Tallis: The problem is because of money. The ones that were in the village they went out because some of the kids they have gone to high school. So we got a problem for them having to work in Vila, going to Australia and New Caledonia to work for the money for school fees. With RSE they don’t have to move, they can go and come back. We don’t lose people

(Interview, Chief Tallis, Sanesup village, 17 August 2012).

The chief from Sanesup village said that in the past there were up to 200 people in his village, because of the search for paid employment for school fees, there are now only 40 people residing in the area. As he showed me around his village he pointed to the empty abandoned houses of those that had left and introduced me to some of the elderly
residents that have had family leave in search of work. The house in figure 25 is an example of many of the abandoned homes in this village.

![Abandoned house in Sanesup](image)

**Figure 25: Abandoned house in Sanesup — Source: Author**

Opportunities in the capital are increasing due to economic growth in Vanuatu. In the 2009 census it was reported that the urban growth rate of Port Vila was 4.1 per cent. Numerous academics have documented the effects of urbanisation in Port Vila (Connell 2002; Mitchell 2004; Rawlings 1999) highlighting the capital’s importance and social and economic influence. The Port Vila Urban Development project was launched recently in February 2013 (Garae 2013). The project is worth USD40 million and is jointly funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Australian Government.

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90 Lindstrom (2011a: 2) also tells the story of a man from Tanna moving to Port Vila, so that he could pay for his brother’s school fees. While living there he had his own children, and in order to pay for their school fees he had to stay in Vila. In his concluding argument he states “[O]netime circular migration of men from village to plantation or town and back has given way to the movement of entire families to Vila’s peri-urban settlements” (Lindstrom, 2011a: 12).
It is said to be the largest project since independence. In the Asian Development Bank report (2011: 8) it suggests that due to an increasing urban population:

The project will contribute to poverty reduction and socioeconomic development in the project area by improving urban infrastructure such as sanitation, roads, drainage, public toilets, and bathing facilities along with associated community hygiene capacity development.

An objective of this project will create new employment opportunities for those in Port Vila.  

While in Port Vila in 2011, I observed a significant increase in construction work in the capital. RSE workers acknowledged the increased construction work occurring in Port Vila and that jobs were becoming more readily available but argued that they can earn at least four times the wages in New Zealand compared to Vanuatu, making it less appealing. There is a perceived hierarchy of employment by workers. The RSE is often

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92 See Wittershein (2011) for more on urban growth in Port Vila.
seen as more valued than work in the capital or on the island. This is reflected in the monetary rewards for these jobs. RSE workers also distinguish differences in island forms of work and waged labour.

**Work**

“To meet their material needs, people produce, distribute and consume goods”

(Durrenberger and Marti, 2006:2)

This section highlights differing concepts of work and labour, and how they are perceived by ni-Vanuatu in this study. Participants in this research had varying ideas about waged and unwaged work and the social values that are assigned to them. Therefore it is necessary to develop an understanding of not only the social implications of the RSE scheme in Vanuatu and New Zealand but also look at ideologies of work, both remunerated and unwaged. In my initial research in 2007 I was informed by ni-Vanuatu workers that concepts of work were evaluated through differential hierarchical and obligatory forms. For instance, people were socially obliged to do specific tasks, or only people of a particular rank or lineage could perform activities such as carving. There are also differences in the gendering of work in Vanuatu and New Zealand.

Most of the men told me they had not participated in structured paid labour prior to the RSE scheme. This was also conveyed by the management of Seasonal Solutions Cooperative Limited (SSCO) to their clients at a local growers’ meeting in 2007 (Bailey 2009). Initially employers were concerned about how the men would adjust to the New Zealand workplace, and the popular Pacific stereotype of ‘island time’ was noted by New Zealand growers and acknowledged by the men themselves. Their employers reflected from their own personal knowledge of ‘island time’, that they had concerns that RSE workers would not be able to endure the hours expected of them. In addition to expected hours, the experience of agricultural labour was also important for growers. All of my participants come from subsistence agricultural backgrounds (Bailey: 2009).

**Island labour**

Paul Durrenberger and Judith Marti (2006) observed that work is not only what we do as people but is at the core of how society operates. They argue that labour:

... provides a window for understanding all of human behaviour, thought, and organization from the most macro-level of a global political economy to the most micro-level of the
individual worker in a household. It is what we do and who we are. It shapes, and is shaped by, how we see ourselves as individuals or components of larger groups. Labor is embedded in all relationships from kinship to household relationships to non-kin social networks, to market based employee/employer relationships, to political relationships such as ruler and ruled that direct the recruitment and uses of labor. Labor divides and links – it defines class and crosses class lines and may link or divide gender and age categories (Durrenberger and Marti, 2006: 1).

When I first interviewed workers in 2007, they stated that their unwaged work on Ambrym was not ‘real’ work. When I asked the men what work they did in Vanuatu, all but three (who had paid employment in Port Vila) told me they did not have any. But when questioned if they worked in the gardens they all said yes. George informed me being in the garden was not ‘real’ work as there was no payment.

Much value is placed on ‘real’ waged work by the workers. When waged labour is spoken about it is discussed as being more productive than other work, for example, in local gardens. Yet, the unpaid work that is done in the gardens on Ambrym accounts for more subsistence and exchange production than cash provided by waged earners in the region.

Work in the gardens is highly organised and plays an integral role in reciprocity in the community. It is an essential part of the subsistence economy and social organisation. Labour is often used as a form of reciprocal exchange, therefore participating in labour is an essential part of belonging and identity in a community. Not to participate in this activity would be detrimental to one’s status in a community. This is not just limited to the garden, there are many community activities on Ambrym where it is expected that everyone will contribute, whether this is in church, kastom ceremonies, school fundraising or local community projects, such as building a medical centre or a house.

Participating in unpaid reciprocal labour is often a communal activity. During my stay in Baiap, in 2011, John told me his house had been built with his RSE earnings. When I asked how much it cost to build his three bedroom home, he told me that most of the costs comprised the materials as the community gathered together and helped build the house. From my understanding, the community gathering and helping John mentioned is related to what Gregory observed in Papua New Guinea (1982: 62) that “[L]abour-time is often given as a gift and it creates the obligation to return a work-gift at some future time.” Like Gregory, I too noticed that work parties were common and reciprocated upon request. He gave me a figure of Vt 100,000 (NZD 1470; USD 1220.10). Most of the homes that have been built with earnings from New Zealand
have cost between Vt 100,000–250,000 (NZD 1430–3571; USD 1186.90–2963.93). While building the house many workers stayed with him and his responsibility was first and foremost to ensure their needs were being met, mainly by providing meals and accommodation. Many RSE workers described the same situation for the houses that they had built in Ambrym. New homes have had benefits for extended kin of RSE workers. John’s closest kin moved into his old house, and in 2012 John also built a house for his parents.

**Garden work**

Many Ambrymese maintain separate gardens organised for different uses, such as plantings for ceremonial purposes, household and community use, and others for trade and commercial production (see also, Rio 2007). My host family had more than one garden, located in the hills, approximately one kilometre from the village, and a closer

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*Figure 27: House built with RSE earnings — Source: Author*  

93 The roof has solar panels, also purchased with earnings from New Zealand.
one by the house. The latter was mostly for household use. Pawpaw, tomatoes, island cabbage and capsicums were planted in this garden. My host told me that she used her husband’s earnings from New Zealand to plant this garden. It was easier than climbing the hillside to their other gardens while her husband was away and it gave her another small business to run.94

As mentioned in chapter three, the regular cargo ship to Ranon village ceased in 2011 depleting stocks in the shops, making the community reliant on local produce. Some complained that they had to do more work because of this. Denise was concerned that many in her village had become too reliant on store brought goods, and that many of the younger ones did all they could to avoid working in the gardens. Furthermore, there was a general concern in the community that the younger generations were focused on western education and lacked the knowledge of traditional gardening (see also LiPuma, 2000 for comparisons with the Maring). Small amounts of cash can be made from gardens. When crops are plentiful, women from Lolihor come to the market house in Ranon, (see figure 44), to sell produce.

**Obligatory labour**

Considerable work in the village is obligatory labour, unpaid, or some *smol moni* (small money) is exchanged for services. During my fieldwork in 2011 my host family purchased a grass cutter in Port Vila for just over VT 15,000 (NZ249) and donated it to the Ranon church. In addition to this donation, the large grassed area of the church was cut by their son using the new grass cutter. I asked if he was paid in cash for this, as I knew that he received cash for cutting grass in other areas of the village. I was told no, it was his job; his duty to the church, village and family. Through his actions he earns respect from others, as did many of the activities in the village that he did with no expectation of payment. There seemed to be recognition about what he did for others, and many of the youth in the community looked up to him and attempted to follow his actions. Participating in unpaid work on Ambrym is the norm rather than the exception to it. Often groups are organised to work together for obligatory labour, such as clearing bush, gardening, fundraising and ceremonial events or to help others in the community.

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94 She also runs another business at home. To state what this is would identify her, so I have not done so.
Ambrymese do consider their participation in the subsistence sector to be work but not in the same sense as paid work in New Zealand. When asking someone where they were going they would often reply, ‘we are going to work in the gardens.’ This work is associated with many social and cultural interactions and relationships that the men have throughout their lives, but they differentiate their work in the gardens and having a job. Beneria (1999: 2) stated “the problem stems from the way ‘work’ has been defined, both in theory and in conventional statistics, as a paid economic activity linked to the market”. Nonetheless, in Vanuatu research has been undertaken with a view to including unpaid subsistence work as employment in national statistics.

**Waged labour**

Money is seen to produce jealousy (brire) and anger (lollfrifri), since it has a potential for being kept to oneself and apart from social engagement. It does not deteriorate, cannot be eaten or replanted, and thus represents an enduring and coagulated presence in social life. People always tend to imagine that their relatives are holding back money from them, and when there is a question of money changing hands, the demand for sharing and ‘borrowing’ always comes up. We can then understand why the generation of men who worked for the ‘Master’ at the Ranon plantation put the gold and silver coins they earned in jars and buried them in the ground when they were full. Even though this ‘planting’ of the money could not produce increments, like the food they planted, at least it was invested into the soil of the place.  

Rio’s observations above resonated with what I had observed in regards to the relationship between money and people in Ambrym. To my knowledge, workers are not planting their earnings when they return home, but there is an expectation that money from working in New Zealand will be investing into their place (Ambrym). In regards to RSE earnings, themes such as jealousy, anger, sharing, borrowing, and holding back, were spoken about by workers and people in various parts of Ambrym. There are competing interests in RSE incomes. There is jealousy from those that cannot participate in seasonal programs; anger from workers that have enforced expectations of their earnings; and those who see RSE workers as ‘wasting time and money’ in New Zealand and not sharing or using their incomes appropriately.

As mentioned earlier, prior to the scheme four of my ni-Vanuatu participants had paid employment. These four lived in Port Vila with some form of regular work, such as,

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construction, working at a cafe, as a radio DJ and one who lived in north Efate working in his father’s shop. Of the men that did not have paid employment, they all stated that they spent a lot of their time in their gardens. As mentioned previously, because this work is largely unpaid, in Western monetary terms, they did not consider it to be work, at least when talking to me.

Earlier concerns from growers (Bailey 2009) about the ability and competence of Pacific workers in waged employment in New Zealand were unfounded. Since coming to New Zealand ni-Vanuatu labourers have more than proved their hard-working abilities and competency in the horticultural and viticulture sectors. Although not causing any significant changes, New Zealand labour practices have been partly implanted into island work routines. The popular proverbs spoken by their New Zealand supervisors on the vineyards are becoming popular in local Ambrymese garden jokes. For example, while on Ambrym I often observed workers jokingly referencing the association between money and time, saying ‘come on, time is money’ when they are working in the garden or waiting for someone to arrive. Bob would tap on his wrist pointing to a non-existent watch and say “kiwi time, not island time”. “White” man’s time is also used, although this was present prior to the RSE scheme. LiPuma (2000: 281) observed similar differences in notions of Western and village time and commented that it is not a subject to be preoccupied with by the Maring in Papua New Guinea. Although LiPuma observed that Western forms of time creates routine and social order (LiPuma 2000), my experiences of time on Ambrym, (especially meetings set by myself or others), was that the set time was a guideline unlike the structured time in New Zealand that workers often joke about.

**Non-participating Ambrymese**

Recruitment for the earlier period of the RSE scheme was strategic and rigid. In 2012 however, I was informed that recruitment has become more relaxed. Nonetheless, personal, community and kinship connections play a major role in the selection process, as does social standing in the community. Workers have to provide a letter of recommendation from their chief or pastor as well as a family member when they apply

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96 Although this work is largely unpaid, produce from gardens on Ambrym are often sold or exchanged for other goods.
to work in New Zealand. A number of Ambrymese are unhappy with the selection process. This disappointment was explained to me as the result of the politics of recruitment or because of where the selected resided, especially those that lived in Port Vila. The lives of people who do not move is important to consider as Cohen and Sirkeci (2011: 3) note “[W]e also look into nonmovers, those left behind, who are crucial to understanding transnational mobility and the importance of the household in changing patterns of mobility and a conflict framework.”

There are many reasons why certain individuals are not able to work in New Zealand. Most complaints about not being able to participate are usually made in privacy, or during local kava sessions. Twice I have been asked to become an agent for some of the disgruntled men who want a change in the recruitment process on Ambrym. I declined to do this.

The length of participation was also a deterrent as many non-movers wanted to enter the scheme but not for a seven month period. Some wanted to go to New Zealand for four months if they could, which is a possibility with other growers and recruiters in New Zealand but not the case for the group that I have been following. Workers from Ambrym have been participating in Australia’s seasonal program since 2009 and there is an assumption among many that they can earn considerable money in a short space of time there, due to that country’s higher wages and more favourable exchange rate with the vatu. There were considerable wage differences between workers who returned from Australia’s PSWPS in 2011 and those who had been in New Zealand.

One of my participant’s sons worked in Australia for four months and earned more money than his father did in New Zealand over seven months. In order to earn large earnings in a short space of time, recruited workers that went to Australia worked day and night, seven days a week: “We start[ed] early in the morning and work[ed] with lights on our heads at night picking asparagus. Very long days” (Interview, David, Ranon village, June 2011). This was confirmed by others who said they worked from 9am until 11pm. The downside of going to New Zealand for four months means that workers would earn even less money. Furthermore, if the grower has a particularly bad season due to weather and crops, the workers may only get the chance to recover travel costs to New Zealand and not accumulate sufficient savings.
Lack of money to cover travel costs was another factor in not participating. While staying in West Ambrym I was informed that many in local villages would like to have the opportunity to go to New Zealand or Australia but this was not possible because they had no money. A lack of financial capital hinders participation in labour schemes (Castles and Miller 2009; Massey et al. 1993). Tom from Sanesup told me there were only two people participating in the scheme from his village; himself and his son. Most of his earnings went back into supporting others in the village. He told me that the 2013/14 season may be the last season in the RSE as he has nearly finished everything he wanted to achieve. Throughout our conversation Tom emphasised that someone needed to replace him by bringing money into his community, even if this meant investing in others to do so.

As mentioned in previous chapters, there is a division in attitudes towards the participation of women from Lolihor. Both men and women have differing opinions about women going to New Zealand. Paradoxically, one man who was against female participation has a daughter in the Australian SWP scheme. According to her father the prohibition is a cultural one. There is a possibility her father did not approve of the decision for her to migrate. Prior to traveling to Australia the daughter lived and worked in Port Vila for many years. Her husband is an RSE worker and they had made the decision to both work abroad to save for their child’s education. Her husband believed that by following her brother she would be protected from any harm while working in Australia.

There are of course Ambrymese that do not want to migrate. Some have heard stories about New Zealand, especially about it’s cold climate and do not wish endure such conditions, and others do not have aspirations to leave their homes.

Cohen and Sirkeci argue that ‘non-movers are challenged’ (2011: 116) by the tasks they have to participate in to cover for absent migrants. This was evident in my study. Extra work was undertaken by non-movers while the men are absent, and women of the

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97 This resonates with Cohen’s (2004) observations of Oaxacan migrants where he illustrated that there were beliefs that women should stay home and look after their families. This also mirrors arguments that I was given for women staying behind in Ambrym. Cohen and Sirkeci suggest “[I]n many countries, women are prohibited from making international moves – instead, women stay at home or move locally and when they do move internationally, they follow their fathers and brothers” (Cohen and Sirkeci, 2011: 6).
household predominately performed the tasks of absent men. Conversations with workers suggest that those that do not migrate and replace the labour of absent migrants are compensated with earnings from New Zealand. Additionally, my findings have shown that a small number of men from various villages participated in the RSE, meaning their villages do not experience a great loss in male labour.

**Leadership**

In examining mobility in Vanuatu, Bedford (1971) suggested that big-men and chiefs tended not to migrate because of their larger responsibilities in their communities. During the more than 40 years since this research was conducted, norms, values and leadership in Vanuatu have changed (White and Lindstrom 1997). High status and leadership qualities were sought after for initial recruitment. My original group of 22, included a church leader, one Yafi (loosely translated as big-man), and three chiefs. The men did not identify their positions in their home communities directly to me in my earlier research. It was not until I conducted fieldwork on Ambrym in 2011 that I was informed of their positions in the community. Leadership is an important dynamic in the RSE scheme and it is also attached to religious and customary standings in Vanuatu.

Prior to migrating to New Zealand, leaders are assigned for the various ni-Vanuatu groups that participate (group discussion with workers, Central Otago 2007). In the first season that I worked with the men, 2007–2008, three of them were selected as leaders in Vanuatu among the group. There were differing attitudes towards leadership roles and how these fitted into life in New Zealand. At times I observed leaders taking advantage of their status in the group and this created some resistance to their authority (Bailey 2009).

Leaders fulfill vital roles for ni-Vanuatu RSE workers, but this is also seen as an area for controversy while workers are in New Zealand. Not all leaders are chosen because of their status in their village. For example a man might be a leader because he is a pastor in the church, or because they have demonstrated leadership skills to their employer. Bedford (1971: 70) found that “[O]n plantations the emergent leaders were those with the greatest experience of colonial conditions rather than holders of high rank in the traditional hierarchy”. There are similarities with the selection of leaders in the RSE scheme. Those with the knowledge, skills and the ability to interact with their
supervisors and employers have established new forms of leadership. This leadership is situational and not necessarily transferrable on return to Vanuatu.

Some RSE workers have a higher position in their home communities than the allocated group leader, and this has been a source of contention among ni-Vanuatu groups. Ni-Vanuatu that have been prescribed leadership roles while in New Zealand but have no rank or status in their home communities are not necessarily well respected amongst workers. Although not always recognised as leaders at home, they have powerful positions at the time of recruitment. Therefore, the RSE scheme has contributed to new fields of contestation where these leaders are gaining capital[s] in particular fields (Bourdieu 1998) such as recruitment in Vanuatu and life in New Zealand. Team leaders have a responsibility to lead and have a powerful political position that can change workers’ livelihoods and positions in the scheme.

Some workers tend to be dismissive of the decisions made by New Zealand growers and management staff on their choices of ni-Vanuatu leaders. This can lead to conflict and discontent amongst groups. There is a fear of directly challenging ni-Vanuatu leaders in New Zealand. Yet, it does happen. The men have to be careful in the methods that they use to protest their leader’s decisions as most can influence whether or not workers can return to New Zealand. This is because team leaders are responsible for reporting to their New Zealand employers and the Vanuatu Department of Labour on their return.

RSE group leaders have many responsibilities. They are expected to deal with internal conflict and politics within their groups. Leaders are expected to represent themselves and their group in good standing in both their work and social life. I also observed leaders maintaining the internal policing of group behaviour. In weekly meetings, ni-Vanuatu RSE leaders reinforced the point of being good workers and representatives for their communities. Where there was emphasis on the importance of remaining a unified group and keeping community morale, these weekly meetings fostered cooperation between the men. During these meetings workers voiced their opinions on work and home life, discussed their goals and how to spend their earnings (both in New Zealand and Vanuatu), and occasionally undertook training and continuing education classes.
New Zealand leaders are challenged, just as traditional ideas of leadership are also challenged on Ambrym. A common complaint by ni-Vanuatu in both North and South-West Ambrym was that their villages had too many chiefs and several RSE workers stated that this was a source of tension within their communities. Workers also complained about this when in New Zealand between 2007–2009 when they had three leaders instructing them how to behave and spend money appropriately. For employers, Ni-Vanuatu leaders are important as they coordinate work schedules and pastoral care with their employers and accommodation hosts.

**Employers in the RSE Scheme, 2007–2013**

There have been a number of changes for workers since arriving in 2007. This section examines employers’ perspectives, wages and costs. The ability of labourers to return for successive seasons allows employers to re-hire good workers. The pattern of employment over consecutive seasons has enabled a number of the ni-Vanuatu men to be promoted into jobs of seniority, such as supervisors of gangs, and increase their wages.

During the first season 2007–2008, RSE workers could not move between RSE Employers. This changed in 2008 to allow employers greater flexibility and provide employees with more work opportunities (Bailey 2009; Cosgrove 2008). This benefited employers, rather than encouraging RSE workers to have wider employment opportunities. In practice, it is impossible for a seasonal worker to be able to move between employers. For a worker to be able to change their placement would take enormous support and effective social networks to be able to do so. Furthermore, this could jeopardise the ability of workers to return in future seasons. In reality, if a RSE worker wants to leave their employer they also have to leave New Zealand and return to Vanuatu. Employers hire ni-Vanuatu with the knowledge that they will have a dependable workforce with fixed contracts.

**Employers’ perspective**

In 2007 the employers I spoke to undertook a significant financial risk to participate in the scheme. For many in New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries it was too much of a risk. High levels of uncertainty, financial challenges and bureaucratic paperwork was too much of a burden and prevented many smaller growers from

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98 Groups working the vineyards are referred as ‘gangs’.
signing on to the scheme. For small businesses, the RSE did not offer a solution to their employment problems, as small growers hire few employees, and only have limited hours of work to offer. This meant that they could not commit to the New Zealand Department of Labour’s compulsory 240 hours per season, (between four-seven months) for each RSE employee. Additionally the financial bond of NZD 3000 per worker, together with required pastoral care discouraged a number of growers.

For the employers that have participated in this research, the response and reaction to having ni-Vanuatu workers has been largely positive:

business has actually become a lot easier for me. You just asked me why I was looking less stressed [here he is referring to a personal comment I made prior to the interview]. The reason is because I don’t have to find and recruit staff. Meaning I also train less people. Six years ago before the Vanuatu workers came to us we had staff turnover on a regular scale, a Swedish backpacker might be with us for a day and a half, I’ve had to go and train them for an hour or two, a supervisor would take over, continue training them and then the next day or the day after that they would be gone you know. So the constant retraining was a huge drain on resources particularly when we are focused on quality. [And] the consequences of the Ni-Van workers working for us have been that they are at speed within and I’m talking full-vehicle speed within a day, requiring little retraining, rework or reshowing....the level of retraining has significantly decreased, the level of productivity has continued to grow and that’s not just within GrapeVision but certainly within other areas (James Dicey, Employer: 2011).

Having reliable labour to tend to growers’ needs as well as increase productivity were aims of this scheme and to date this seems to be providing benefits to these industries (Bailey 2009; Bashman 2009; New Zealand Department of Labour 2010).

In 2009 one of the workers was promoted to the position of supervisor. According to his employers, he has performed extremely well in this role. This was made evident during the following year when his employer purchased flights for this supervisor’s wife and three children to come to New Zealand. His employer considered that this was an important step to show the supervisor that his work was valuable to him. Additionally in 2013 this worker was one of two that received an award, presented in Wellington by Hon Murray McCully, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, for being one of the best RSE workers in New Zealand.
In 2011, SSCO went to Vanuatu for their annual recruitment drive. The employers also visited Ambrym for the first time. Prior to their arrival there was much speculation, but one topic that was spoken about was recruitment opportunities. While in Ambrym participants were informed that an extra ten people would be selected for the 2011/2012 season. A meeting was held on who would be chosen. Much speculation occurred prior to their visit about who deserved a place in the scheme, as many wanted to fill these few places. On this occasion, places were taken by workers returning from their break from the scheme and employers interviewed potential candidates for the remaining vacancies.

Workers from Ambrym have impressed their employers. James Dicey believes ni-Vanuatu encourage his other staff to be productive. Ni-Vanuatu men had also expressed their ambition of becoming vineyard supervisors and while I was in Vanuatu they informed me they were going to travel to Malakula to obtain a driver’s license so that they could apply to be a company supervisor or tractor driver. The main reason for this is the increase in pay that is awarded in these occupations. Promotions within the company have led to some insecurity amongst New Zealand supervisors, horticultural
and viticulture workers. They have resorted to threats against ni-Vanuatu RSE workers that they have noticed training for supervisory roles.

There is still a small amount of anxiety and negativity shown towards the [sic] Vanuatuans when they demonstrate that they are actually capable of driving tractors, they are actually capable of leading teams and that fear is still sitting in the background and has reared its ugly head a few times. Not necessarily been expressed in the way of racism but certainly expressed in fear for their own jobs, particularly those skilled jobs like supervisor or particularly tractor driving skills (Interview, James Dicey, Central Otago, 2011).

Backpackers and other seasonal workers that enter the region are not perceived as a threat to permanent workers’ jobs as they are employed temporarily, sometimes only for a matter of days. Because ni-Vanuatu workers return for successive seasons they are semi-permanent fixed workers allowing them to change roles within the company. Employers in the region have told me that local workers should have nothing to fear unless they are not performing well in their employment.

Costs of RSE for employers
Hiring offshore labour is assumed to cost more than hiring locally (Basok 2002; Binford 2002; Reed et al 2011). Employers also confirmed this. These costs are increased with the extra expenditure needed for offshore workers, such as administration fees, transportation and other costs associated with work and pastoral care.

One of the challenges that I’ve got with the RSE scheme is that it’s a subsidised [pause] is the subsidised air travel. I don’t have a problem with that in the first year, the guys haven’t been here before and don’t have two brazzos to rub together and I’m quite happy to subsidise to get them here to work. But once they have been here a year or even two years they should have saved enough money that they could afford to bring themselves out here. If they were in that sort of situation and I wasn’t being forced to pay 50% of their return airfare they would actually get another pay rise. It’s another part of the cost they end up actually paying for it by having a depressed pay rate and I have to look at the cost of them as a labour unit to me, their productivity and what an alternative worker is able to bring to the table, you know do the numbers and that 450 or 370 or the amount that I get charged that is factored into the way that their pay rates are set. So it’s….they end up paying for it but in a slightly different way if that makes a lot of sense to you (James Dicey 2011).
As a requirement of the RSE, employers are obliged to pay for half of the return airfare of the RSE workers. Dicey’s sentiments on airfare costs are shared by many growers in New Zealand.

The SSCO encourages workers to retain money in their New Zealand bank accounts to cover their initial expenses such as airfares and buses (see table two) for subsequent seasons. Workers discussed the benefits of this with me, but many were reluctant to keep money in New Zealand when they return to Vanuatu. This is mainly because of the uncertainty surrounding participation in successive seasons. The subsidy of half the return airfare remains in place as per RSE policy obligations. Nonetheless, Dicey stated that the advantages of having the ni-Vanuatu workers have outweighed disadvantages such as travel costs.

Basok (2002) refers to seasonal workers in the Canadian scheme as being a structural necessity for growers rather than simply a preferred or convenient type of labour. Basok notes that “…without offshore labour Ontario horticulture would have experienced a significant decline” (2002: xix). Therefore, it is not just a matter of preferring this form of labour. It has become structurally embedded into the viability and survival of these horticultural/agricultural sectors. In 2009 I alluded to this becoming a possibility with the RSE scheme. From my conversations with growers and industry groups, I would assert that ni-Vanuatu workers are becoming a structural necessity in New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries.

Even with higher unemployment rates in New Zealand, Central Otago and other regions still experience labour shortages and RSE workers aid in fulfilling this shortfall. In 2009, Laura Basham reported that local growers needed RSE workers for the survival of their industry. Grower Barry Wratten believes that workers participating in the RSE have become vital to the local economy, adding “it would not survive without them” (Bashman, 30 June 2009). However, Bashman’s article also surveyed disgruntled local workers in the region of Blenheim, who were complaining the scheme was taking away jobs from themselves. This argument was made in Bashman’s article and to myself on numerous occasions that the employment of RSE workers was changing the culture of

100 For more on return migration and precautionary savings see Dustmann 1997.
vineyard and orchard work because workers could not freely move from job to job as they had done in the past. As intended the RSE has encouraged a more reliable and sedentary workforce for employers in the horticulture and viticulture sectors.

Concerns that ni-Vanuatu are taking the jobs off local people have been disproven. Figure 29 is a graph compiled by Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Limited illustrating the proportions of workers by key segments.

**Who Does the Work on our Otago Members Orchards and Vineyards**

![Pie chart diagram showing the proportions of workers by key segments: Permanents 32%, Backpackers 33%, RSE 13%, Casual Kiwis 14%, Students 8%.]

*Figure 29: Workers in Otago — Source: Reproduced with permission from SSCO 2013*
In 2013 ni-Vanuatu accounted for 13 per cent of the SSCO’s workforce. Growers are in support of retaining ni-Vanuatu and asking for an increase in their numbers to increase productivity. Central Otago grower Stephen Darling told Otago Daily Times reporter Sarah Marquet (2013), “We are very, very dependent on the RSE workers scheme and if we are going to expand the industry in Central Otago we need to expand the RSE scheme ... New Zealanders’ jobs are absolutely dependent on it.” Darling’s argument resonates with numerous growers in the region and beyond. New Zealand’s RSE is still in its early stages compared with Canada’s (SAWP), which has been in operation since the 1960s. Nonetheless, parallels can be made between the two in regards to the reliance of growers on workers and vice versa.

**Wages**

In 2007 the men employed in New Zealand for the first season of the RSE earned NZD 11.50 (USD 9.54; Vt 782) per hour and those involved in the World Bank Pilot project prior to the start of the RSE scheme received NZD 11.75 (USD 9.75; Vt 799). Workers are financially rewarded by a pay increase by their employer for returning each season. In the 2012/13 season this is still applicable. There are four sets of rates for this particular group. For men that are working their first and second seasons their hourly wage is NZD 13.75 (USD 11.41; Vt 866.25) per hour, those that have been in the scheme for more than two seasons receive NZD 14 (USD 11.62; Vt 952) per hour, those that are second in charge of gangs and van drivers NZD 16.39 (USD 13.60; Vt 1111.12) per hour and supervisors receive NZD18.88 (USD15.67; Vt 1283.84). Each year, within their seven month period in New Zealand, my participants have reported taking home between NZD 7,500–16,000 (USD 6225–13280; Vt 510,000–1,088,000) after tax.

In their first three seasons (2007–2010) the men were only able to receive an hourly rate for vineyard work but earned piece rates over the Christmas period when they picked cherries. Piece rates are determined by how much work is produced. For example, a worker is paid per bucket of cherries picked. Cherries are a popular, yet expensive fruit best obtained between the months of December and February. Central Otago is New Zealand’s primary region for the production of cherries. In 2012, estimated figures from 87 growers showed the export of cherries were valued at NZD

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101 New Zealand minimum hourly wage in February 2014 is NZD 13.75 (USD 11.25; Vt 935).
24 million (USD 19.92 million; Vt 1632 million), mainly to the Asian region and domestically worth NZD 7 million (USD 5.81 million; Vt 476 million).\textsuperscript{102}

Since 2011 on some vineyards, workers are paid on piece rates, therefore their productivity on the vineyards affects how much they earn per week. Workers in New Zealand’s viticulture industry are usually by paid piece rates. In this study, piece rates have been paid by how many buckets of cherries picked, or particular jobs completed on vineyards. This means the quicker employees work, the more they earn. Studies comparing piece and hourly rates have shown how workers are paid does not necessarily affect the quality of work (Billikopf 1996; Billikopf and Norton 1992). The benefits of working for piece rates have varied among workers. Some have earned upwards to NZD 30 (USD 24.90; Vt 2040) per hour, but in unfavourable seasons this can drop significantly. The advantage for RSE workers is that employers are obligated to ‘top up’ their wages, if their work on piece rate farms does not meet the New Zealand minimum hourly wage rate. However, local supervisors from Central Otago, with years

of experience in the industry argued piece rates significantly affected quality. The
benefit of an hourly rate is that the men have time to ensure tasks are completed
thoroughly. This is important as the men are subjected to a performance review at the
end of the season, which determines the success of applications for the following year.

Wages are largely determined by the hours they work. Ni-Vanuatu workers seek out as
many hours as they possibly can during their contract to maximize their earning
potential (see Basok (2002), Binford (2002) for similarities with Mexican workers in
Canada). Participants received at least 40 hours or more a week, normally during a six
day week. Although only 240 hours per contract is stipulated as a condition to meet the
government’s requirement of becoming an RSE employer, workers complain if they
only average 30-45 hours per week.

**Relationships of work and place**
Workers are constantly negotiating life in two worlds, although I would emphasise that
there are three worlds, as Port Vila has become an important liminal area between these
zones. Who is selected to participate in the scheme causes controversy in the village but
most of this is confined behind closed doors and via gossip. There is differentiation
between paid and unpaid work, though it is ordered in hierarchical preference and work
is approached differently in various settings. There have been tensions in regards to
selecting leaders in the scheme. People chosen as leaders for the scheme are provided
with much power and responsibilities while in New Zealand. Although workers protest
to non-customary forms of leadership they do so cautiously as not to prevent them
participating in future seasons. Overall, the employers in my study are more than
satisfied with the work that the ni-Vanuatu labourers have provided. They have noted
that hiring labourers from Vanuatu has increased the productivity of their businesses
and reduced anxiety about previous experiences with labour shortages.
Chapter 5: Pastoral care and reintegration

In addition to providing employment, employers are also obliged to provide pastoral care (New Zealand Department of Labour 2010). In this chapter, I revisit my previous research (Bailey 2009) on the living conditions and social interactions between the men and their accommodation hosts, and with the wider community in Central Otago. Since 2007, workers have resided in the same town and accommodation complex. During the period 2007–2014, there has been increased interactions with the community. These social and financial interactions have provided support to workers in Central Otago and these relationships have extended to communities in Vanuatu. Nonetheless, relationships with Central Otago community members have been blamed for a perceived sense of individualist ideologies amongst workers, especially by Ambrymese kin. Only small numbers of men interact regularly with the wider community; the majority tend to stay closer to their accommodation complex, during the limited free time that they have.

Regulations established in Vanuatu affect the labourers’ work and social lives in Central Otago. In 2011, the Vanuatu Department of Labour established a no-alcohol policy, for RSE and SWP seasonal workers. This branding of ‘alcohol free seasonal workers’ has been promoted by the Vanuatu Department of Labour in Australia and New Zealand. Vanuatu is the only Pacific country that has done this and it is an attempt to maintain their reputation as being able to provide highly reliable workers, giving them a competitive advantage over other RSE countries. Purchasing alcohol is deemed to be ‘wasting money.’ Spouses, kinspersons and the Vanuatu Department of Labour, expect that by not purchasing alcohol, workers will return with large financial remittances and use them appropriately. I discuss the implications of this zero tolerance policy and how both my New Zealand and ni-Vanuatu participants have reacted to it. While in New Zealand RSE workers spend a large portion of their earnings on accommodation, food, clothing and material items to remit home to Ambrym. This chapter provides details of how workers’ earnings are spent in New Zealand and how their incomes contribute to local communities in Central Otago.
Following this is an examination of how the RSE scheme is becoming integrated into rural and urban livelihoods in Vanuatu. This has implications for assumptions that labour mobility schemes facilitate a ‘culture of migration’, where moving for waged work becomes the norm in society (Ali 2007; Bailey 2009; Cohen 2004; Cohen and Sirkeci 2011; Kandal and Massey 2002). This is an important consequence of the scheme to examine as many children of RSE workers are now participating in the RSE or SWP, or are planning to do so in the near future.

The final section of this chapter offers an analysis of the reintegration process of the men returning to Vanuatu and their New Zealand host communities. The reintegration process is a significant and often neglected part of migration studies (Agunias 2006; Ammasari 2001; Borovnik 2003, Cassarino 2004; Rigg 2007; Skeldon 2004; Toyota et al 2007). I argue that to date (2014) participants’ reintegration has been successful due to connections and financial and social obligations being maintained. As mentioned in chapter four the only exception to this, would be when workers spend extended periods of time in Port Vila.

**Pastoral care**

Pastoral care is an important aspect of the RSE scheme and it is designed to provide security for both workers and their employers. The employers in this ethnography are involved in the pastoral care provided to the men; for their housing, work, social needs and medical care. This includes check-ups at the doctors, dental surgery and hospital visits. There are costs associated with pastoral care for workers; and for employers and participating RSE countries who have hired staff to provide ongoing support (Bedford, 2013: 200).

Employers have been quick to resolve medical injuries and personal trauma. In 2007 a worker’s son had a fatal accident on Ambrym and SSCO acted swiftly in returning him home to his family. Employers have informed me however that workers often do not inform them of an injury or medical condition. This can cause health risks as every so often the injury or condition deteriorates and a worker is hospitalised. For example, during the 2011/2012 season, Mark did not seek treatment for his boils. When I asked him why not he said he was afraid of having to pay high hospital fees and due to
‘shame’ in taking time from off work. Although Mark did not directly use the term shame with me, other ni-Vanuatu who shared a room with him did, explaining that by not attending work and earning money, Mark felt shame because he was disappointing his employer, his fellow workers, his family and community. Additionally, he imagined that his wages would be used to cover his illness. Because he was covered by compulsory medical insurance, I told Mark that he was fully covered for medical treatment as he had been in the past. He said other workers told him not to tell his pastoral care providers and that he had to work in the painful condition that he was in. This led him to suffer from more serious complications due to delays in treatment. I was informed of other cases where this occurred for ni-Vanuatu. The main concern here was the medical costs and the time off work. Mark did not factor in that he was covered by his medical insurance or his entitlement to sick leave. Not responding to his medical condition, resulted in me driving Mark to Lake Dunstan hospital for treatment. He was then transferred to Dunedin hospital where he received care for two nights before returning to Cromwell.

The first two years that the ni-Vanuatu were in New Zealand was a learning curve for their employers when it came to health and dental care. One employer said he did not realise the level of health care that would be required when the workers first arrived. It was overwhelming and he assumed this was because of their diet in Vanuatu. Employers assumed that the diet in Vanuatu was inadequate and that this accounted for the number of visits to health care practitioners in New Zealand, mainly dental services.

Attitudes of workers towards not willing to seek medical treatment make it difficult to account for an accurate picture of health care required for RSE workers. It is compulsory for all RSE workers to have medical insurance, in New Zealand this is provided by Orbit Protect. In 2012, Orbit Protect produced statistical data showing seasonal workers doctor visits in 2012 and what treatment was necessary (shown in figure 31).

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103 Forsyth (2009: 198) notes that “[T]he concept of shame has various important cultural meanings in Vanuatu” and that it is often associated with restorative kastom practices in Vanuatu. Hess (2009: 60-61) refers to shame in Vanuatu as being relational with others.
Only three per cent of visits involved dental treatment and 23 per cent of visits were related to accidents (mainly work place), but the larger proportion of medical care was not provided in the data. Therefore it is difficult to analyse health based on assumptions about nutrition.

Workers do purchase cheap affordable food with low nutritional value, such as potato chips at supermarkets to reduce their spending in New Zealand in order to increase their financial returns to Vanuatu. In the past, this has led to consequences for their health, such as the appearance of boils. Through pastoral care responsibilities, employers have emphasised the importance of ni-Vanuatu workers consuming nutritious food. Workers have found alternative sources of affordable nutritional foods over the years. James Dicey and the workers’ previous accommodation hosts Raewyn and Arthur both invested time and money to provide workers with two large vegetable plots to increase access to nutritional food for workers and to save them money purchasing produce at the local supermarket and to assist in providing workers nutritionally valued food for their diets. These have had mixed results and attention to these gardens has waned since 2010. As I have previously noted (Bailey 2009), it was assumed by employers and
community members in Cromwell that because ni-Vanuatu workers lived a subsistence lifestyle in Vanuatu they would want to produce their own food in New Zealand. Although well intended, due to long work days and at times lack of interest, these gardens have been neglected.

![Gardens at Apartments](image-url)  
**Figure 32: Gardens at Apartments — Source: Author**

Planted in these gardens were silverbeet, carrots, cabbages, strawberries and capsicums.

**Accommodation**

The provision of suitable accommodation is a condition of the pastoral care under the RSE policy (Bailey 2009; Maclellan and Mares 2008).\(^{104}\) Unlike the Canadian scheme, where employers are obliged to provide and pay for migrant workers accommodation, New Zealand employers are only obliged to find suitable accommodation for workers to live in (Basok 2002). Other than the initial World Bank Pilot Project in 2007, my participants have been residing in the same accommodation complex since the end of 2007. Their residence is located on the outskirts of the township in the industrial area.

From 2007–2014, 22-40 GrapeVision workers were placed in hostel style accommodation where they share rooms. Depending on the size of the room, between four to seven men shared one room and negotiate the use of four showers, six toilets, two kitchens, two lounge areas and two laundry rooms with 18 other ni-Vanuatu residents employed by Vinewise Viticulture, a vineyard managing company in Central Otago.

The men’s accommodation includes all living costs except for food and phone calls. The price of accommodation has been a contentious issue for the men. Initially in 2007, they paid NZD 95 per week, which over five years had increased to NZD 110 in 2012. This rate is less than average for accommodation of this kind in the region. In 2008 the men started talking about renting their own houses, as they had been told by others in the community it would be less expensive and more comfortable than their current arrangement. Depending on the cost of the rental property and how many workers rented together, workers would have significantly increased their savings. Although this idea was talked about and explored it never eventuated.

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105 This was also the rate in 2014.
There would have been difficulties in renting properties throughout the region. Firstly, the men had to factor in the costs that were included in their current accommodation, such as power, bonds, insurance, and the difficulty in finding a fully furnished home to rent. Secondly, because the men live in the same accommodation, it keeps them in a central location for work transportation. If they were to live in different houses throughout the region it would pose difficulties for transport and the organisation of work routines. Lastly, the support network that these men have developed with their accommodation hosts, employers and community over the years has been enabled by their living arrangements.

In the 2008/09 season some of the men complained that they were being overcrowded, and too many were being put into one room, which was not desirable. George complained “There are now seven men in my bedroom. It’s too much, all snoring and farting and we can’t open the window because it’s too cold. I bought myself a mattress, I’m moving to the lounge” (Bailey, 2009:175). To begin with, the men only had one section of the apartments, The Pines, (shown in figure 34) but with more ni-Vanuatu men arriving in 2008, all of the apartments are now occupied annually from October to the end of May.

![Figure 34: Accommodation complex — Source: Permission granted to reproduce by managers 2008](http://www.cromwell.school.nz/lodge.html)  

In the 2008/9 season an additional 18 men from different islands in Vanuatu came to live in the complex, most of whom were employed by another contractor in the region. They came from various islands in Vanuatu and most were young and unmarried. Most

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of these men were placed in The Birches lodge, shown in figure 34. Initially this new influx of ni-Vanuatu was met with much distrust and uncertainty by my participants, especially as money had been disappearing. It was later discovered who had been stealing money and possessions from the men’s rooms and it was not another ni-Vanuatu. Nonetheless, suspicions towards each other are still evident but not as strong as what they were in 2009. As of 2012, the two groups work well together with many sharing bedrooms and forming alliances. The RSE is providing a space where new relationships between ni-Vanuatu are being forged, just as they are in Vanuatu’s towns, and have historically on plantations (Adams 1986; Bedford 1971; Jolly 1987) and other areas that recruit workers from across the archipelago.

Three ni-Vanuatu participants from my 2007–2009 research now work in the Marlborough region, in the upper South Island. In our discussions they mentioned that they preferred the living situation they had in Central Otago, rather than their current living conditions. Some were paying up to NZD 150 (Vt 10,200; USD 124.50) per week to share with two or three others in a caravan with no heating. I asked one man if he had told his employers that the living quarters were not good. He told me no, because he did not want to be seen as a ‘trouble maker.’ He was willing to put up with these conditions to earn money in New Zealand.

In 2012, workers had a change in accommodation hosts. This coincided with an expansion of living areas for workers. This resolved the overcrowding situation workers had endured. Furthermore, a space was made available in the accommodation complex for a computer room that has improved communication between workers and their families back home.

**Communication**

In 2009, I documented that there was a lack of communication between RSE workers and their families in Vanuatu (Bailey 2009). This was because of the expense of calls and the communication network on Ambrym. During 2007–2009, a small number of

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107 Being labelled a “trouble maker” was a big issue for ni-Vanuatu as it could hinder their chances of returning to New Zealand. Basok (2002) also shows that overseas contract labourers will endure hardships for the opportunity of earning money while working abroad. In 2009, this was a reality as several workers informed me that prior to returning to New Zealand they were told by their employers not to complain about anything or they would not return.
RSE workers purchased cell phones in New Zealand so that they could send text messages home. This was only useful to those who knew of people in Vanuatu with a cellphone.

The men organised many of their phone calls home to Ambrym and Port Vila via text messaging. This way they could set up a time for their families to be at one of the few phones that were available in the different villages on Ambrym. This was sometimes a frustrating process for the men as in their free time many would sit by the phone awaiting a call from Ambrym. When some of the men rang home they told me that they would try ringing numerous times before someone would answer a village phone, and then have to rely on the person who answered the village phone to go and get the person whom they wanted to speak with (Bailey, 2009: 136).

The use of mobile phones has increased significantly since my first visit to Ambrym in 2009. The increase in cell phones and the new Digicel cell tower erected close by to Ranon now provides improved network coverage in North Ambrym, so the increase in mobile technology has made communication more frequent. Nonetheless, as Binford observes (2002: 12) long distance phone calls are one of the hidden costs of migration. The costs of ringing Vanuatu from New Zealand using the main telephone network Telecom, is NZD 1.49 (USD 1.23) per minute. From Vanuatu, off peak calling rates to New Zealand is Vt 36 108 (approximately NZD .46; USD .38) per minute. Workers’ families in Vanuatu call the men in New Zealand, because it is cheaper from Vanuatu, making contact more frequent now. RSE workers continually investigate competing sources for telecommunications. The ability to be in frequent contact with their families has improved their experience of being away. RSE workers can stay in touch with people and be kept up to date with happenings at home. Furthermore, for many it has helped them to be included in making decisions and having influence in their communities in Vanuatu while absent.

In 2008 workers were given access to a computer in their accommodation, at a cost. Due to low usage however, the company providing the computer and the internet service removed it. In 2012 computers were re-introduced to the men in their residence, free of charge, sponsored by Fruition Horticulture, New Zealand. The men now have free access to four computers which were constantly in use during my visits.

The men are using computers for social networking on Facebook, some to access string band music off the internet, gain access to media sources in Vanuatu, and for those who live in Port Vila they use Skype\textsuperscript{109} and email, as new ways to stay connected with family and researchers such as myself. Access to available and affordable communication makes it easier for RSE workers and their families to manage absence and workers have mentioned ‘feeling connected to home’ via social media. McKenzie and Menjívar (2011:78), who researched impacts of male migrants on ‘left-behind’ women from Honduras, observed that through forms of communication migrants felt connected to their homes. In this study, newly introduced forms of social media have improved communications between workers, their families and communities. Furthermore, as Cave (2012) noted for mobile phones, workers have joined various social media groups via technological tools such as computers provided by Vakameasina, giving them access to new information and abilities to form new relationships and alliances.

Family relationships have been managed well by workers and their families. Families and workers have endured some hardships through participating in the RSE scheme, such as the separation of parents and children. Nonetheless, a clear majority argued that the benefits of participating outweighed the negatives. In the first two seasons workers felt disconnected from home, especially in decision making processes in families and communities. With improved telecommunication workers and families are in frequent contact. This gives workers the opportunity to engage with current events in Ambrym and contribute to and with daily activities while they are absent.

**The disappearance of money**

In 2009 I received phone calls from my participants both in New Zealand and in Vanuatu to say that money had been stolen from workers’ accommodation and there was great concern about who was responsible. One of the phone calls was from Raewyn their previous accommodation host. She told me that she had spoken with the men about securing their belongings and not to leave these items available for others to steal. Raewyn had a conversation with Murray, one of the men who had told her that he had seen her image walking down their hallway on the day of one of the thefts. This

\textsuperscript{109} Skype is an internet software application that provides free international and domestic video communication.
was not alarming to her as she cleaned the lodge on a daily basis but she was concerned that he was accusing her of the theft. After time and my conversation with Murray, it turned out that he was not accusing her, but thought a spirit had attached itself to Raewyn. His theory was it was because workers were keeping money to themselves and not sharing it was why a spirit in the form of Raewyn had removed their money from the lodge.

Workers shared conceptions of money and its uses, such as positively contributing to children’s education and community projects, some viewed money not as an object of desire but one of necessity and for some this money invoked unwanted spirits if not used appropriately. Practices of circulation through the redistribution of goods, continues to be an important social activity irrespective of the cash economy. Murray and other workers, who believed that spirits stole the money because they (spirits) were unhappy, made sense and was logical in kastom. Patterson documents that spirits are not divided entities on Ambrym and that actions in the material world affect the spirit world, “[S]pirits of the dead, in the past as now, interact regularly with the living, some of whom in every domain have inherited or acquired a privileged access to them” (Patterson, 2002a: 204). These spirits are also capable of travelling internationally and are part of social ontology amongst Ambrymese in New Zealand.

Unlike Murray not all workers believed that the spirits were operating in Central Otago. While Ambrymese workers’ earnings are in New Zealand, there is a perception by most ni-Vanuatu that spirits will not interfere with this money. Nonetheless, for the workers who were concerned about spirit interference, they have the option of remitting earnings home to be redistributed. In 2009 I received an email from the men’s recruiter in Vanuatu who had suggested that camera footage was checked and informed me of who the workers thought was the criminal behind these events. Although correct, due to the lack of evidence (even with camera footage) they could not act on their suspicions.

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110 Rio (2007:210) also observed that “people cannot stretch this moment of association with mobilised wealth for a long time, because it represents a threat that might destroy them. If the wealth does not disappear out of sight it will signify the blockage of the passages that the agent is centre of. To hold money aside from circulation is hence antithetical to the paradigm of Ambrym social life.”

111 This may be due to many keeping money in their banks. Initially workers would take their living allowances from their bank accounts and save it in their apartments. Unfortunately I did not investigate how they depicted the accumulation of money in their bank accounts and if this had any relationship with the spiritual world.
and eventually the person responsible for the theft of the workers’ earnings over a number of years was identified in 2010 but did not receive a criminal conviction.

The disappointing factor for the men was that he was a good friend to them while they were in Central Otago. He was so close in fact that some did not believe that he could have done such a terrible thing to them. If he did, a spirit might have possessed him to do so. Because this person regularly engaged with workers for social drinks after work (prior to the alcohol ban in 2011), his presence near the accommodation complex was not suspicious nor questioned. Even after it was proven that this money had been stolen, a few of the men still believed that this act was the result of spiritual malevolence and that the man accused was either innocent or influenced by these spirits. Spirits are often referred to as being involved in times of disruption (Rio 2007; Lindstrom 2011).

“Alcohol Free”

Since the inception of the RSE, the Vanuatu Department of Labour has discouraged the consumption of alcohol in New Zealand and in 2011 moved to forbid it (although with no legal basis upon which to do so). It was not illegal but deemed by kin, the LDC, employers, and Vanuatu state officials to be inappropriate behaviour. Problems such as poor work performance and anti-social behaviour in the community while being under the influence of alcohol were raised with ni-Vanuatu workers in Central Otago. Alcohol related incidents in the 2007/2008 season generated a meeting between employers and ni-Vanuatu leaders. During this meeting with employers and accommodation hosts, ni-Vanuatu leaders were encouraged to initiate a self-liquor ban. This was policed by ni-Vanuatu leaders, but not formally or strictly. In fact, directly after this meeting three ni-Vanuatu leaders in Alexandra were seen at a local pub.

On the 31 October 2011 the Commissioner of Labour and Employment services Lionel Kaluat, announced an alcohol ban for all RSE and PSWAP workers that took effect on 19 November 2011. The letter of statement regarding to the alcohol ban from the Vanuatu Department of Labour had been laminated, framed and placed in the men’s lodging to promote this rule. Their new accommodation hosts also placed a notice to enforce this, stating “NO ALCOHOL TO BE CONSUMED ON THESE PREMISES”. I spoke to the other non ni-Vanuatu residents in the accommodation complex and this
rule did not apply to them. It specifically targeted ni-Vanuatu RSE workers. This ban both controlled workers social behaviours and their spending practices.

Vanuatu is the only Pacific country to ban alcohol under the RSE and SWP schemes. Controls of state regulations over overseas labour workers in foreign countries are difficult to implement. Transferring this rule and legally enforcing it in New Zealand is difficult and growers spoken to, agreed to the ban in principle, but were concerned about their legal positions in enforcing it on workers. Some ni-Vanuatu workers are disappointed with this policy. The majority are not regular heavy drinkers, but enjoyed the opportunity to have a cold beer on a hot Central Otago day after a long day at work, with their co-workers and sometimes in the local community. These enforcements usually force the men to drink secretly (I observed this after the leaders’ meeting in 2007), and as I was told by workers in the past, they do not like to be treated as children which can ‘lead to acts of unsociable behaviour’ (Michael, RSE group Leader 2008).

Although it is not illegal for ni-Vanuatu to drink alcohol in New Zealand the punishment of blacklisting is very real for the men. There is concern that if they drink, someone might report them to the Vanuatu Department of Labour, whether it was true or not. Numerous stories of workers being reported on for drinking circulated in Vanuatu. Most were said to be unsubstantiated rumours invented in order to prevent people from participating in the scheme, in order to obtain positions for relatives (of those who reported the incidents) to earn money in New Zealand.

**Integration and social life**

Workers choose to work long hours while in New Zealand which leads to limited social interactions outside the workplace. Unlike the Mexican workers in Basok’s study (2004), RSE workers living within the township and are not completely isolated from Central Otago communities. From my observations and conversations ni-Vanuatu are received well by the majority of the community. The advantage in coming to New Zealand every year is the ease of reintegration into the region. For first time workers they have the advantage of having experienced workmates help them prepare and negotiate new social systems and environments. Since 2007, many people have welcomed ni-Vanuatu into the community and have invited them to participate in community activities.
One way of engaging with New Zealand communities is through regular performances. Figure 35 below shows a banner promoting a concert that the workers held in Cromwell in 2012. Ni-Vanuatu working in all parts of the Central Otago region attended and contributed to this now annual event. Cultural dances, displays of magic, and contemporary ni-Vanuatu music from different islands of the archipelago were also included. Another way that the men have been engaging with the community in Central Otago is through their busking.

![Figure 35: Advertisement for concert — Source: Author](image)

**Religion**
Participants in the RSE scheme are included in church activities in Central Otago. One of the men who is a pastor in Vanuatu has given sermons at the Cromwell and Districts Presbyterian Church and ni-Vanuatu in the region attend social events organised by their church. Although changes in the group dynamic have occurred during the past seven years of being in New Zealand, such as people from different Vanuatu islands and kinship affiliations joining them in their accommodation, I have observed that
religion and kinship ties have been affective methods in bonding the workers together as a group to reinforce their goals and group identity. The group mainly consists of two denominations; Seventh Day Adventists and Presbyterians. It is the basis of their faith as Christians that makes it easy for RSE workers to achieve common attachments in daily devotions, which they have every morning before work.

Belonging to local church groups has enabled the men to engage with local community members and for many it has created the opportunity to make relationships and friendships. This has also extended to workers hosting community members from Central Otago in Vanuatu. Generous donations of clothing and food from the community and their church groups are given to workers to use while in New Zealand. Additionally they have been given material donations of clothing, toys and book for families in Vanuatu. In the first two years the men were provided with bikes, helmets, warm clothing and food for their stay in New Zealand.

A large portion of earnings contributes to workers’ churches in Ambrym. On average most workers annually give Vt 10,000 (NZD 147; USD 122.01) each year to their local churches. This money is then redistributed throughout the community contributing towards community events such as interchurch exchanges, assisting community members in times of need and maintenance and improvements of church buildings. As shown in chapter six, workers have used earnings to build community churches on Ambrym. Workers also contribute financially to churches in New Zealand but the amount is minimal as local churches in Central Otago assist ni-Vanuatu to fundraise for communities at home.

**Earnings spent in New Zealand**
Attention to cross-border labour schemes is largely focused on migrants, communities in sending countries, and the industries of the host countries they work for (Basok 2002; Binford 2002; Bedford 2013). Labour mobility schemes also generate development in the communities of host countries (Bailey 2009; Basok 2002). For the past thirty years, I have observed Central Otago develop. The small townships have increased in size and population and the viticulture industry has successfully become internationally renowned for its pinot wines (Bailey 2014). During the harvest months, October–May, the injection of tourists on working holiday visas and New Zealanders
working through the summer (usually students and travellers) increases the population and contributes to local economies in the region.

While ni-Vanuatu workers are in New Zealand to obtain financial capital to increase opportunities of development in Vanuatu, they are also significantly increasing productivity and development in the Central Otago region. Here, I focus on advantages to local communities through hosting migrant workers by analysing basic living costs and purchasing practices.

Costs of living vary between ni-Vanuatu working in different locations in New Zealand. On average, SSCO have annually employed over 200 workers for the Central Otago region. The return of RSE workers’ earnings into the host community is significant. Over a 29-week period, each participant paid NZD 3190 (USD 2647.70; Vt 216,920) for accommodation, and each worker spends approximately NZD 70 (USD 58.10; Vt 4760) per week on food and living expenses. Over 29 weeks, living costs equated to NZD 2030 (USD 1733.12; Vt 138,040). With more than 200 workers in the region, the revenue for hosting workers is worth over NZD 1 million (USD 830,000; Vt 68,000,000) to local economies. This amount only includes basic living costs and excludes other significant purchases that I expand on in chapter seven.

An example I wish to highlight is the local Salvation Army store in Cromwell. Most workers purchase clothing, household goods such as cooking utensils, mattresses, pillows and sheets from this store to send home. Within a two-year period, this store has expanded its operation due to the increase in business. The operators stated that their ni-Vanuatu customers contributed to their expansion.

**RSE: Additional sources of income or necessity?**

Workers have stated that participating in the RSE was a necessity in order to be able to send their children to school and earn money for family and community activities. Initially workers told me that the RSE would be a short term choice, of one or two seasons, for them to get what they required out of the scheme, such as, building a new house, providing money for education and opening their own businesses. The workers depicted the RSE as an opportunity for them to earn money to make purchases back home, and not have to return again for future seasons. In reality, most of my participants from 2007 are still involved in the scheme and many have participated in six consecutive seasons. For example in the 2011/2012 season, 19 of the original 22
workers, from 2007 have returned to New Zealand. Ellerman (2005: 619) argues that for a temporary labour scheme to remain as such:

rethinking should start with the idea that ‘temporary’ should mean limited to a fixed total time period of several years. Migrants from Asia to the Gulf States are called ‘temporary’ because each episode is limited in time and they may not immigrate. But this ‘temporary migration’ is nevertheless a permanent way of life.

Similar to Ellerman’s (2005) work with Asian migrants and Cohen’s (2004) with Mexican migrants from Oaxaca, ni-Vanuatu I spoke with have changed their perspectives on the RSE as a short term opportunity for personal and community gains to long-term fixed employment, as they return for each successive season, and deepen their connections to the programme through seeking promotions, training and making close connections in the Central Otago community. Earnings from New Zealand are contributing to education, community projects and permanent housing back in Ambrym. Many of these expenses are ongoing; therefore the continuation of workers returning to New Zealand becomes ever more important. For most workers, participating in the RSE has become a necessity to obtain the money required for individual and community needs that they cannot source at home.

Is a “culture of migration” developing?

A question that I had was whether or not this scheme would lead to a ‘culture of migration.’ Here I examined whether the children and extended kin of participants would follow in the footsteps of their fathers and also participate in the RSE scheme; or if labour migration would become a permanent structure in the area. A number of international studies have focused on the relationship between labour migration and the consequence of a ‘the culture of migration’ occurring (Ali 2007; Cohen 2004, Cohen and Sirkeci 2011; Levitt and Nieves 2010; Massey et al 1993). It entails the idea of how labour migration for work becomes entrenched within society as a normal practice that it is part of a person’s expectation in life, and “over time, villages, regions, and in a few cases even countries, come to specialize in migration (i.e., the exportation of labour)” (Taylor, 1999: 64).
Levitt and Nieves (2010) observed, social remittances could also contribute to a "culture of migration" that makes moving almost inevitable because people are no longer satisfied by the economic and social opportunities their homelands offer. Cohen and Sirkeci (2011) note that networks and support between origins and destinations enable a culture of migration to exist. For ni-Vanuatu these networks are recent and limited but no doubt will develop over time.

It is too early to determine whether or not a ‘culture of migration’ (Cohen and Sirkeci 2011) exists or what forms it will take. Even with the small percentage of RSE workers in this thesis, already there has begun a noticeable trend in the number of ni-Vanuatu who now have children and extended kin participating or have ambitions to participate in New Zealand and Australian work schemes. Ni-Vanuatu are seeing this as an opportunity among others on the island. As I was told by a truck driver in West Ambrym “The scheme gives us somewhere to go, something to aim for after school, as we do not have much, no work here” (Baiap village, 11 June 2011).

**Pastoral care at home**

Migration scholars, policy-makers and the public media may see in these phenomena (cases of migration), the journey and the arrival. But for the migrants, these activities also signal departure, separation and leaving family members, loved ones and familiar places behind (Toyota et al, 2007: 157).

In various studies families of migrants are commonly referred to as the “left-behind” (Toyota et al 2007). The term “the left-behind” needs to be readdressed in migration studies. This label presumes and often leaves a feeling of migrants abandoning their families. Those that remain in Vanuatu do not see themselves as ‘left-behind’ and their families working in New Zealand have expressed similar feelings and disdain about the term used for families at home. Cohen and Sirkeci have termed them as “nonmigrants,” “nonmovers,” “stay-at-homes,” and “immobile social actors” (2011: 87). This group includes multiple people that are either family or community members of RSE workers. I firstly discuss how people deal with absence by noting how social life and relationships are affected by the RSE scheme. I also note the importance of how these structural networks affect worker agency and provide the necessary motives for participation in the scheme (Bailey 2009; Cohen 2002).

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People that do not move are moving to the forefront of migration studies (Baio 2006; Cohen and Sirkeci 2011; Levitt 2002; Rigg 2007 Toyota et al 2007). ‘Left-behind’ studies have been covered most extensively in the wider Asian region (Biao 2006; Rigg 2007; Toyota et al 2007) and in the Pacific (Borovnik 2003; Brown and Connell 2004; Finau 1993; McCall and Connell 1993). As this scheme is recent, there is still much work to be done on the impact upon families and communities of Pacific migrants involved in the RSE.

Cross-border labour research has largely concentrated on the migrant and their journey. Toyota et al (2007:158) argues that those that remain at home are “often the forgotten”; “treated as passive recipients” and the “left behind are the left behind in migration literature” (Toyota et al, 2007:158). The ‘left-behind’ in this ethnography are active participants. It is important to bring the RSE workers’ families and communities to the discussion of the scheme, as they are, more often than not, the significant reason for signing up to the RSE scheme in the first place. They too are decision makers on how earnings are spent, and often regulate and request specific purchases be made by workers while in New Zealand. As was observed by Basstilla and Conaco (1998: 221) “in addition to the emphasis on the individual migrant, the family has been considered as an economic entity, a decision-making body, and a beneficiary in relation to migration”.

International labour mobility has a significant effect on family relationships (Borovnik 2003; Conway and Cohen 1998; Finau 1993; McKenzie and Menjívar 2011; Toyota et al 2007; Yeoh 2002). How families cope with the pressures of an absent migrant, and how migrants manage separation from their families and communities play a vital role in decisions to migrate and overall experiences of labour mobility. Workers are at home in Vanuatu for less time than they are in New Zealand. RSE workers explained that communication with their families in Vanuatu helps with the loneliness of being absent, and enables them to participate remotely in decision-making processes at home. This is not the first time circular labour schemes have affected families and communities in Vanuatu. As this thesis has shown, labour migration has occurred since the era of the sandalwood trade. Ni-Vanuatu had left their villages and islands in search of paid employment in Port Vila, Santo, and on plantations within the archipelago, prior to the RSE scheme. The RSE scheme has engendered new experiences of absence, departure and return that affect families, communities and the recruits themselves.
Dealing with Absence
It is difficult to assess how family members adjusted to the absence of workers. Families of workers told me that at first it was difficult for them but now they are used to the annual transition. As one wife in Port Vila said “its been five years now, we now know what to expect” (Jen, 18 April 2011). In discussing the men’s absence with RSE workers’ wives in Ambrym, I was told that it was ‘not hard’ for them having the men gone. Many had experienced absence of a spouse before when they migrated to Port Vila for work. Taylor (1999: 65) identified that domestic movement for work was the “alternative to participation in international migration.” However, for most spouses stated that their husbands working in New Zealand was different from internal labour migration. Reasons given for differences were thoughts of spaces, places and cultural settings. Not only does it involve a greater distance of separation, it invoked thoughts of early labour trading with Europeans. Concerns in the first two seasons of the RSE were related to treatment of ni-Vanuatu labourers of the past.

Spouses and relatives of workers from Ambrym often enquired into mens’ working and living conditions in New Zealand. For many having some knowledge about life and work in New Zealand gives some wives comfort. On a rainy afternoon in Ranon, I was sitting inside the house with Denise who asked questions about Central Otago and the people that her husband socialised with. She went to her bedroom and handed me a box that contained photos of her husband’s time in New Zealand. I recognised many of the photos I had gifted to workers between 2008–2009. We spent the afternoon discussing the people, landscapes and contexts of the photos. Visual representations of workers lives in New Zealand helped aid conversations with spouses and families. Many workers that have photographs have them adorning the walls of their homes. Nonetheless, communication while the men are in New Zealand is the most effective way to help cope during these circular departures and returns. As the women have said by telephoning “they remember us”, “I can ask for help or school fees” or “he tells me he’s good, work is good and he is warm” (Denise). Georgia told me she would keep her husband informed about their copra work and discuss the difficulties of his absence “reminding him who has to do the work”.¹¹³

¹¹³ I interviewed Georgia on two occasions. The first time (June 2011), as reflected in many of her quotes through the thesis, was while her husband was in Port Vila. She was less than positive in regards
Filling the labour void

The majority of the women in North Ambrym informed me that life was not too hard without their husbands and that it did not change daily life too much. Some said that they performed most of the labour even while their husbands were in the village. Only six women stated that their husband’s absence made daily activities more difficult. These women tended to have young children under the age of 10 years. Although many had support from other family and community members (usually their husband’s mother), they still found the extra workload challenging with their young children while their husbands were absent. In West Ambrym, at least two women confided in me that life was hard without their husbands, as they had to take care of everything. Tania told me that she was not going to allow her husband to come back to New Zealand in 2011. Yet, when we had an audio-recorded interview, she retracted that statement and her husband did return.

Spouses discussed the extra labour they had undertaken because of an absent spouse. This resonates with observations made by Jolly in her research amongst the Sa speakers in South Pentecost:

> Women whose husbands are away working are especially badly off, since they often have an enormous burden with garden work, gathering, childcare etc. There are limits to the assistance provided by other kin and affines. Thus wives often oppose wage labour trips and the quest for cash (1994: 88-89).

Only a few spouses like Tania opposed waged labour trips. Tania bemoaned her husband’s absence complaining that it was very difficult, as not only did she have their three young children to raise on her own, but also her husband’s mother, father, brother and brother’s girlfriend to look after.

Gloria told me that she was left to manage everything. She encouraged her husband to participate in the scheme during the 2007–2009 seasons, after which she asked him to remain at home. She had mixed feelings about the scheme and her husband’s absence. Consequences of the RSE scheme for her were that her husband was in New Zealand, her three sons were in school in Port Vila, and Malakula, and her daughter spent the

to her husband’s absence and her responsibilities. In the second interview (August 2012), in the following year she was more positive towards her husband’s absence as she was assisted in her work by her daughter-in-law during the following RSE season.
majority of her week at the local school. She associates the absence of her family and increase in her workload with the RSE. However, she also reflected that without her husband participating in the RSE her children would not get educated. One child had already been taken out of school due to lack of finances after her husband ceased being an RSE worker.

In 2011 her husband, with her approval, applied to return to New Zealand and from our conversations she would have been happy for his application to have been declined. That same year one of her youngest sons (that had been taken out of the education system) was accepted to participate in Australia’s PSWP. This was more emotional for her than her husband leaving, as Gloria was more concerned in regards to available support networks in Australia.

In 2009, three RSE spouses, (in the presence of their husbands), told me that they would not let their husbands go back to New Zealand for a third season. They expressed how lonely they felt when their husbands were away, and how stressful it was coping with finances and the extra household burdens that were placed on them. Only one wife changed her decision. The need for money for their son’s education was the central factor. The other two labour migrants did not return. One worker told me, as did his wife, that it was too hard for his family to be without him. For the other RSE worker, it was to do with feeling disconnected from his son. He said his youngest son, who was two years old at the time (2009), was calling his brother “dad” and that his son did not know who he was because of all the time he spent in New Zealand. The social cost of participating in the scheme again was too much for him.

**Awareness of support structures**

On Ambrym there are supportive networks for families that have absent migrants. These networks, comprised of kinsfolk were present prior to the RSE and through the RSE are now rewarded through financial and material remittances workers return home with. There was a difference in the conversations that I had with the women from the northern parts of Ambrym to the west of the island. Families in the west told me that life was more difficult in their locations than the northern parts of the island. Due to the small number of wives I spoke with in the west, I could not determine a reason for the

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114 Although this is often the case in kinship practices in Ambrym, Steven did not like this and blamed his absence in New Zealand for his son’s naming of his brother.
geographical difference in opinions of the RSE scheme. It may have just been the women who I interviewed. Nonetheless there is a distinction made between families of workers living in Ambrym and those in Port Vila.

For workers whose families are in Port Vila they told me that it is more difficult as Ron noted:

> It is harder for the families not on the island. They have their communities whereas in Vila the support is not as good. My wife started a group for workers wives to meet once a month and it works well. The main concern for them is not seeing how we live. They hear stories, rumours that are no good.

Here Ron makes a valid point; I too have researched how families (mainly in Ambrym) cope with absent migrants, noting that families and communities support most spouses of RSE workers. From observations living with Ron’s family while he was absent, his wife was supported well by her immediate family in Port Vila, but they have recognised that other families of RSE workers do not have such support; therefore they have begun a support group for spouses of RSE workers who meet on a regular basis.

Earlier I referred to the men having new found freedoms from obligations at home while in New Zealand. This also applies to women on Ambrym. In discussing her husband’s absence Denise stated “there is more work [but] there is also less work. No husband to feed. I can be more relaxed with dinner preparations, especially if the other children are away” (Interview, Ranon village, 10 June 2011).

Specifically focusing on the first year (2007) of Tongan and ni-Vanuatu RSE workers, Rohorua, Gibson, McKenzie and Martinez (2009) examined literature on the effects of ‘left-behind’ families. They examined diet, health, human capital (using schooling as an indicator), comparing migrant households versus non-migrant households in Tonga and Vanuatu. In comparison with Tongan households they argued that in Vanuatu, the transition was more difficult, stating that “[T]hey appear to have been eating less variety of foods while members are away and are suffering more health complaints” (Rohorua, Gibson, McKenzie and Martinez, 2009:36). I was informed that the diets of RSE workers’ spouses without dependents deteriorated while husbands were absent. However those with dependents stated there was little or no change in their daily nutrition. Belshaw (1954:94) critically responded to arguments made that absent ‘manpower’ involved in labour recruitment in Melanesia lead to ‘insufficient food’ and
he stated that “[S]uch statements ignore women’s role in agriculture.” Women, like men in Ambrym contribute greatly to garden production. Furthermore, as stated earlier the absence of RSE workers has little effect on garden production in Ambrym, as the majority of planting occurs prior to departing for New Zealand.

Families of migrant workers may not just be abstaining from consumption from because of a lack of produce, or money for food. Fasting is part of a wider cultural context on Ambrym. Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand often fasted. The first time I departed from fieldwork with workers in 2007, I was advised that Paul was fasting because I was leaving. Fasting is commonly associated with life cycles such as death rites and various emotional experiences faced in life. To my knowledge not all workers fasted while in New Zealand and those that did fasted at times when they were missing their families, communities and often island food; or when they received news of a death on Ambrym. With the exception of fasting for cultural observances, other times of fasting were associated with their migration to New Zealand.

Initially the Ambrymese wives I interviewed told me “everything is ok” when their husbands are in New Zealand. But as I formed relationships with them they would talk more of their experiences. Women with younger families found it more difficult than women with older children, aged 10 and over. However, women with older children away from the village, either at high school in Malakula, or at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Port Vila, told me that sometimes life was lonely without their husbands and children. One wife informed me that she often invited a relative to stay with her for company while her family was in New Zealand and at school in Malakula.

In addition to spouses I had discussions with six of the worker’s parents in different villages on Ambrym and they reiterated similar feelings on the effects of the scheme on Ambrym. Parents spoke about how proud and ‘lucky’ it was for their children to participate in the scheme. With a son working in New Zealand, they informed me that money bought home from the RSE benefited chances of education for kin, and through the circulation of earnings, this assisted the community as a whole. For example, by providing earnings for community development projects such as building wells. I discuss this further in chapter six.

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115 McKenzie and Menjivar (2011:73) researched ‘left-behind’ women from Honduras and noted that a husband’s absence created loneliness, stress and anxiety.
Overall I found that workers’ families coped with absence well with the exception of a few spouses. This is evident in that the majority of my participants have worked in New Zealand annually since 2007. However, young children of migrants do not cope as easily. For example, while in New Zealand I observed interactions between children and their migrant fathers via telephone calls on many occasions. Often the men listen to the sounds of their children crying because they are absent from home. This is an emotional burden for workers and those that stay behind. Many wives mentioned that their younger children cried for their fathers to return. Five wives mentioned that their children found their father’s absence difficult, “[T]hey cry because they don’t see him a lot. Especially John, the one that shows the most, he cries for his father, he misses him going to football with him” (Sarah 2011). Gina said one of her children often stays at home sick from school because of the ‘sadness’ associated with the father’s absence. It is often families with younger children, under the age of 10 that described sadness and crying for their fathers. One RSE worker departed the scheme because of the impact it had on his children.

**Leaving the scheme**

Involvement in the scheme depends on work performance while in New Zealand. If ni-Vanuatu prove themselves good workers then they are usually offered an employment contract for the following season. Exiting the scheme severely hinders workers’ chances for re-entrance at a later date. Workers will send members of their family to replace them. A participant who had worked in New Zealand from 2007–2011 told me that he could not return for the next season and that his brother will be temporarily replacing him in the scheme. This was normal and I had heard similar stories from other participants from different localities. There are problems that can arise from taking a relative’s place. The first is that the relative may not want to stop working because of the money earned. I have been told of this happening and that it caused a temporary rift in family relationships in Ambrym. The worker who replaced his brother told me that it was his turn to go, as his brother had already been to New Zealand for three seasons. Initially the Lolihor Development Council had intended on rotating workers to give as many in the region an opportunity for waged employment. This initial goal is another reason that family members feel that they should be entitled to a chance to earn money in New Zealand.
Difficulties arise when trying to get back into the RSE program after a season’s absence, especially if their positions have been filled. After the 2009 season, six workers left the scheme due to earning less money than in previous seasons. In 2010 they wanted to return to the scheme. After failed attempts to re-enter the scheme in 2010/2011, they were welcomed back by the company, while visiting Ambrym, as retraining would take less time and they had previously been good workers. Had these new positions not become available in 2011 there would have been little chance for the men to return to New Zealand. Two of the six workers applied for the SWP, but those who participate in the RSE scheme are not eligible to enter the Australian seasonal scheme because they have participated in the RSE. Alkema (2012:12) noted that applicants for the Australian SWP must not have participated in New Zealand’s RSE scheme. However there is an exception to this for RSE workers. In an email I received from the Vanuatu Department of Labour it was explained:

If a worker has worked under the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme in New Zealand, the worker is required to wait three years before applying to work in the Seasonal Worker Program in Australia. This requirement was established in agreements between the Australian Government and Participating Countries (E-mail to author, Vanuatu Department of Labour, 10 May 2013).

Therefore, former RSE workers who are prepared to wait for three years can apply for the SWP.¹¹⁶

**Blacklisting**

Another reason for leaving the scheme is if a worker is blacklisted. Blacklisting workers varies from two and a half years to life time bans, depending on the offence. Four of my participants have been blacklisted. Two of these four were blacklisted for alcohol abuse and damage to property and for the other two it is more difficult to say, as there were tensions between them and their team leader. All four were reinstated in the 2011/2012 season, but none of them returned for the 2012/2013 season.

**Reintegration**

Reintegration is an important process in circular migration. How workers return to society or are welcomed home is influenced by their actions while in New Zealand and how they respond to family and community obligations at home. I was in Ambrym to

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¹¹⁶ The Australian and New Zealand labour departments removed this restriction in January 2014.
observe workers’ reintegration and spoke with various families, community members, and the RSE recruits in regards to this process. I have observed the workers reintegration to Cromwell every year from 2007–2013. Reintegration is not a sharp re-entry of workers home into their communities. Reintegration is usually a smooth process. Nonetheless, workers have different experiences of migration and reintegration.

Prior to going to New Zealand ni-Vanuatu workers are introduced to the country and some of its culture via basic pre-departure seminars in Port Vila. These seminars are designed to inform the workers of the conditions that should be expected during their work as well as their social lives in New Zealand (Bailey 2009; McKenzie et al 2008). However, there is no discussion on the reintegration back into their own societies when they return to Vanuatu. As Alkema (2012:4) stated in an ILO report “[V]ery little literature was found on reintegration services under the RSE scheme and PSWPS that support development impacts for migrants returning home….”.

Upon returning to Vanuatu workers are required to fill out a Vanuatu Department of Labour Employment Services (ESU) data debrief form. The debrief form shown in appendix D asks RSE and SWP workers who they worked for; how long they worked; what skills they gained during their work season; will their employer accept them back for the following season; how much money did they save and bring back with them; how much did they send home while away; how many seasons have they been working, and how many more seasons are planned for future years; did they face any problems; and finally, visa information and feedback from the worker. This information gathering is one of many methods used to monitor workers in the scheme.

On 7 May 2011, we received news that the boat carrying my participants had left Port Vila and would arrive in Ranon Bay. The next morning, 20-30 people were sitting on Ranon beach in anticipation of the arrival of the LC Brisk. By the afternoon 40-50 people were gathered awaiting the arrival of the boat. Five small boats anchored in the bay. Some had come as far as Olal at the northern tip of the island to take home workers and their material possessions brought back from New Zealand and Port Vila. When the men came back to Ambrym in 2011, there was not a large performance to welcome them home, compared to the first two seasons where their return was met with large celebrations and feasts. This appears to have changed, possibly because this
mobility has become normalised now. I noticed that not all of the workers that came off the boat in Ranon were greeted by their immediate families.

I waited some time before I interviewed participants that had returned to Ambrym. When I asked how it was for them to return, the main answer was ‘it’s fine, nothing different’. This too is the message that I received from their wives. One worker told me, (comically), “Since I came back from New Zealand I can’t climb coconut trees anymore, I now use my bamboo rod.” What I observed is that most of the men were back working in their gardens or copra pits the day after their return. Over the period of my research, every year I asked workers about their experience returning home, what was it like, how they were received, and about settling back into village life. All of the men informed me that it was easy, and only a few of them commented on adjusting to a ‘harder lifestyle.’ By the term ‘harder lifestyle’ they compared the easiness of obtaining water, the use of electricity and domestic appliances in New Zealand to their lives at home in Ambrym. In Ambrym access to water to hand wash clothes often involved labourous work and other than generator and newly introduced solar panels, there is no main source of electricity. Returning to Vanuatu and going back to New Zealand has been relatively easy.

I am aware that there have been many changes upon the return of Ni-Vanuatu workers. As Rigg (2007: 171) states “…it should not be assumed that a return migrant will necessarily lead to a return to the old ways.” Furthermore, those that stay are not static when workers are away (Agunias 2006; Rigg 2007; Skeldon 2004; Toyota et al, 2007: 158). A cause of concern that is raised by Agunias is the idea that returning migrant labourers may not be as welcomed back as they had hoped, “returnees may not be universally welcomed by those who stayed behind” (Agunias, 2006: 41). There is also an argument that migrants and their families may view themselves differently during the migration process and that these potential self-transformations might lead to a feeling of distrust among each other (Ammasari and Black 2001; Agunias 2006; Skeldon 2004). Furthermore, Skeldon (2004) and Agunias (2006) noted the migrant might find themselves out of touch with their community through their absence. I have not found any evidence suggesting these possibilities occurring.

Reintegration is an important process of migration for workers. There is an expectation from the communities in Ambrym that migrants will return home and resume their
normal duties at home. For ni-Vanuatu in this study, what I have found is that communication with home, which has been greatly increased with the advancement of Vanuatu telecommunications companies, has contributed to an ease of reintegration as workers have had contact with their families and communities while absent.

**Support structures aiding migration processes**

Pastoral care is still a vital component of the scheme and their employers and accommodation hosts still play a significant role in this. However, as the years have gone by workers are becoming more aware of their work and social environments and expectations making pastoral care less ‘hands on’ by employers and accommodation hosts than in previous years. Additionally new labourers are inducted into these new social worlds of New Zealand through experienced workers.

Religion and leadership are key components in the men’s lives in New Zealand. They provide structure and support networks and have linked new relationships that support development, such as water projects on Ambrym. Most state that coming to New Zealand is their job. However, the intention that workers had in the initial period of the RSE of only working one or two seasons to obtain finances for needs and wants at home have changed. The more frequently workers sign-up for RSE contracts, the more they want to achieve. For some it is the enjoyment of being able to participate in paid employment. Because the RSE provides the opportunity for paid labour, it is an attractive opportunity for many to participate. As for labour schemes such as RSE and SWP becoming entrenched as a ‘culture of migration,’ this is a possibility. Annually ni-Vanuatu are migrating for work and returning home with money to finance individual and community obligations, most of which are ongoing. Other ni-Vanuatu are observing these workers, and many have aspirations to participate in the RSE in the future, to support their immediate family and community. Being mobile and working abroad and earning money is not new for ni-Vanuatu. Schemes such as the RSE and SWP are additional options to the scarce opportunities elsewhere in Vanuatu for the people of Ambrym. Nonetheless, fieldwork on Ambrym, Port Vila and New Zealand suggests that participating in these schemes is becoming integrated into the livelihoods of Ambrymese and these schemes are now an aspiration for many. Furthermore, the ease of reintegration from these schemes makes participation attractive.
Chapter 6: “Omankukar tone ruan gerwuten”

More and more, our people will become a very important national resource, both locally and regionally. The spirit of competition will continue between one group of people and another, between island and island. People will become more individualistic than they have been in the past, especially in the last decade. People will become more responsible than they have ever been in the past. The population will grow three times faster than before. People will know that they are a source of political power, that they can change situations if they wish to...Our traditions will continue to change as our people change with them. People will always talk about tradition but only a few leaders will actually try and encourage its continuation, so tradition’s future will depend very much on what value it is given by the Government of Vanuatu and other bodies like the church and education. Education and contact with the outside world will continue to influence and bring about new changes at the different levels of our society, and these changes will come not only from afar but also from our neighbours in the region (Lini: 1980:285-291).

The title of this chapter was inspired by a local community meeting held in Ranon during July 2011. Participation in labour schemes was encouraged on Ambrym, as the wages from the New Zealand and Australian schemes were depicted as a method for generating cash for new community development on the island. As discussed in earlier chapters there are limited resources for earning money on Ambrym.

This chapter draws on the competing interests of workers’ RSE incomes. It begins with the connection of the RSE to the LDC. Alongside the LDC are local church groups, and kinsmen that also have an interest in workers’ earnings. Workers are in constant negotiation with these groups. Workers who have not redistributed their earnings ‘appropriately’ have been said to have been influenced by New Zealanders to be individualistic.

The selection process of RSE workers on Ambrym came with obligations to further community ‘development.’ It was the workers’ communities that first gave them the

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117 Loosely translates to, working together for a better life, in North Ambrym language.
opportunity to participate in the RSE scheme, and workers undertook a commitment to set aside a certain portion of their incomes for local development projects in return for the chance to work in New Zealand on an annual seasonal basis. Workers were encouraged to be ‘good’ workers and ambassadors for Ambrym, while in New Zealand, and to promote future employment opportunities for the island.

RSE workers are influenced by the interactions and relationships that they have in New Zealand, subtly changing notions of personhood and identity. An important characteristic of money is its worth. People attach meanings and purposes to money. It serves as a function for acquiring goods, exchange, creating and maintaining relationships and individual and community goals. In a summary discussing money and how it is portrayed in social change, Bloch and Parry (1989:4), argue that for both Marx and Simmel “…money is associated with, and promotes, the growth of individualism and the destruction of solidary communities.” My discussions with many on the island took the opposite view. They saw money as a unifying force, for the greater community good. The individualism that they mentioned did not come from the money; it was sourced by the interaction with people living in New Zealand. This was seen as a threat to community solidary, which also hindered the further development of their region.

RSE workers were accused of becoming too individualistic by those on the island that did not participate. Although the men make the distinction between themselves and their communities, they also emphasise their relatedness in place. For example, in relation to their RSE incomes most say that the money ‘does not belong to me’ or is ‘for our communities.’ Moreover, they have emphasised that they are different from other ni-Vanuatu that work in New Zealand, stating that they are there “working for our communities, not like other ni-Van who are here for themselves” (Personal communication, Ron 2007). The relationship between workers and their communities can be seen in how New Zealand RSE earnings are appropriated and recirculated back in Ambrym. Although workers do aim to please their families and communities their earnings are contested.

My participants promote the fact that their incomes support their communities; however there is tension between their individual needs and use of earnings, and those of the communities they are part of. The men are contributing to both personal and community development. Much of this form of ‘self-development’ takes place in social
exchanges that maintain relationships, through investing in links lying at the core of the Ambrymese social structure. Ideas, assumptions and the material symbols of development inform customary exchange practises and increasingly facilitate social change. Although Salong (2007: 2) emphasised “[T]he LDC will demonstrate that communities in Vanuatu exist not as compartmentalized individuals but as groups.” There are continual negotiations of individual and dividual approaches to workers’ earnings.118

Financing school fees with RSE earnings was a priority for all research participants. In this chapter I also discuss education in North Ambrym and the ways in which earnings have contributed to schooling in the region. Education is the number one concern of participants and where most RSE remittances are invested. Following this, I consider how participation in the RSE scheme has also enabled workers to participate in continued education while they are in New Zealand.

The final section of this chapter considers recent and future development projects using earnings from New Zealand. De Hass (2009:5) argues: “[D]evelopment is not only a complex multi-dimensional concept, but can also be assessed at different levels of analysis and has different meanings within different normative, cultural and historical contexts.” The main objectives of development that have been drawn out by the participants of this study, in order of importance, were education, housing, water sanitation, and community projects, such as re-roofing churches, building water wells, and engaging in tourism ventures for the island. Development has very pragmatic and grounded local meanings and is associated with improvements to health and school services, infrastructure such as church buildings and community wells. Scholars that

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118 The terms individual and dividual were used by Marilyn Strathern (1988) to differentiate Melanesian and Western concepts of personhood. “Dividual” was seen in contrast to the Western “individual”. Strathern (1988: 13) argued; “Far from being regarded as unique entities, Melanesian persons are as dividentally as they are individually conceived. They contain a generalized sociality within. Indeed, persons are frequently constructed as the plural and composite site of the relationships that produced them.” Also see (Hess 2006 and Mosko 2010) for discussions on the “individual” and “dividual” in relation to Christianity. These dividual relationships are not restricted to living persons. As I noted earlier spirits and human persons are dividualised, rather than individuated (see Rio 2007).
link labour migration to development discuss projects comparable to these (Basok 2002; Bretell 2003, 2007; Cohen 2002; de Hass 2007, 2009; Goldring 2004; Kunz 2009) but there are other ideas about development that the people of Ambrym hold. These include material items for personal and home use; items that can be used for communal purposes, such as a church organ; or items that can be used for exchange or gifting in local ceremonies. The latter is used for developing new and old relationships that are central to social life on Ambrym.

Representations of development and modernity

These representations of development have significant importance and meanings to the people in this study for a variety of reasons that will be discussed in this chapter. In addition to local development goals on Ambrym, wider global ideologies of development such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) have been incorporated into the agenda of the LDC on Ambrym. Although these are global aspirations advanced by the United Nations they are well known and discussed in Vanuatu. The Pacific region is often singled-out for dependency on aid donors. As Patterson and Macintyre (2011:4) observed the Pacific is often referred to as “[T]he hole in the Asia-Pacific doughnut, sucking vast quantities of aid monies into their unresponsive economies”. Furthermore they noted that “Melanesians are aware of their relative powerlessness but can be innovative and imitative in their responses to the demands of foreign aid donors, such as the World Bank and the forces of global capitalism” (2011:13). Nonetheless, the interest of adopting MDGs appeared at a higher council level (such as the LDC), and had little significance to those at ground level on Ambrym. Yet, there are similarities between the local development goals on Ambrym and the MDGs such as improved access to water and health and education services.

RSE workers commented they prefer to be able to work and support their families and communities:

We would rather work for our money than be given aid. To do it for ourselves and not be dependent on aid, yes that is why we are here. We want our children to have a better education that we did. Most of us did not go past years four and five. We do not want this for our children and some monies we take back will go towards a scholarship fund for our children to get a better education (Ron cited in Bailey, 2009: 58).
RSE workers are engaging in their own ‘self-development.’ Remittances provided by RSE workers contribute to national and local forms of development. What I have found is that for RSE workers, their families and communities, the term ‘development’ and the nature of its given properties is largely defined in the sense of changes in livelihoods. Earnings from the RSE are aiding in delivering locally specific forms of development in Ambrymese communities.

People on Ambrym are not striving for the entire Western ‘development’ ideology. For most participants, improving livelihoods through access to services was development. While at the airport in Craig Cove in 2012, Greg an RSE worker said to me “So what do you think about our island Rochelle? It’s a long way from civilization, no? They tell us we need to catch up, to modernise. But we have seen modernisation, we like some things, but life here is good too, do you think we really need to catch up?” In his statement Greg, notes the differences in what he considers are ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ societies. Like other workers I spoke to, Greg observed advantages of life in New Zealand, such as access to education, water, power and employment but also recognised the negative consequences of needing money to live. The notion of ‘catching up’ Greg referred to were negotiations of local, national and global notions of modernisation, which is often referred to as ‘development’ in the region.

On Ambrym, development and modernity were often spoken of as being connected to each other. Frequently development was discussed in terms of money. In my initial questions I asked what participants thought of the term development and what development meant to them. This varied among participants, but overall the main ideas of what they wanted development to look like, appeared to be similar. What is usually discussed is how people can earn money, where to source this income, and how it can be used to improve and sustain local livelihoods. Participants immediate goals were education, *kastom* and community obligations, housing, clean water and improved medical facilities. From the point of view of many participants this development was to be financed by RSE workers via money, material and social remittances. Development in Ambrym was often seen and referred to as an activity that required money to be realised.

A concern from participants in both New Zealand and Vanuatu was if the scheme stops, development on Ambrym would too. This is not necessarily the case as various
development orientated activities were in place prior to the RSE scheme (Eriksen 2008; Rio 2007) and Ambrymese communities are constantly engaged in active fundraising activities for various projects that are not associated with RSE earnings. Nonetheless, the RSE scheme is a faster way to fund projects, but its sustainability hinges on the need to work in New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries.

**Fundraising**

Collective fundraising is a popular method for accumulating cash for community goals in Vanuatu. Although there have been differences in the community concerning the LDC, the church provides another arena where community projects are organised. The church has much more relevance in daily life than the LDC has. This was also evident in the participation of people in various projects, where the contributions to church events were attended by many with great enthusiasm. This was also noted by Eriksen: “[W]ithin the church there is a sense of community and work spirit that the LDC lacks….When projects are linked to the church, people have greater beliefs in the prospects of the project” (2008: 151-152). Most women are involved in church activities in Ranon. In contrast, when I interviewed spouses of RSE workers I asked if they were involved in LDC projects that used RSE earnings; only two of the 15 interviewed said that they participated in the organisation of the projects. Eriksen’s analysis of the LDC and churches in Ranon is also significant:

The LDC does not represent the whole community across church denominations. The LDC is based on the Presbyterian Church on the one hand, but focused on the state and the world of NGOs on the other. This makes the LDC something more than a church representative (2008: 152).

Although well intended the LDC’s focus on global development agendas do not always reflect local needs. On Ambrym institutions such as the church, address local requirements. Geographical location factors into this. The LDC represents 12 distinct villages in Lolihor, whereas the church, although aware of the national context, is focused on immediate village or nearby villages’ concerns. Workers’ connections to the LDC facilitated initial participation in the RSE scheme.

I participated in most church events where fundraising was an important activity. The events that I attended and had been made aware of were for school fees, school trips, local community activities, and church financing. The largest fundraiser that I attended
in June 2011 was for Thanksgiving at the church in Ranon. Most of the community attended both the service and the event. The church had so many members in attendance that many had to sit on the outside of the building for the service. There were donations of chickens, yams, taro, breadfruit, plantain bananas, pawpaw, canned beef and canned tuna that were placed into piles by ways of groups. As my fieldnotes recalled on that day:

Today is thanksgiving we took three taro, one chicken, two large leaves full of cabbage and money to the church. We became part of a group prescribed on our contribution in order to maintain balance in the distribution of goods placed in piles. There are five groups in total all giving yams, bananas, chicken, taro, breadfruit and money. (Fieldnotes, 3 June 2011).

These piles of food were auctioned for fundraising and the food was later redistributed to those involved in the celebrations of the day. The following week during a church service at Ranbwe village it was announced that Vt 40,000 (NZD 634.92; USD 526.98) was raised at the Thanksgiving fundraiser and that earnings from New Zealand contributed this large amount.\textsuperscript{119}

Working for the greater Community good

During his meeting in Ranon July 2011, John Salong recommended strongly that men from the region should participate in either the Australian or New Zealand work schemes, earn money, and share their new resources and income with the Lolihor communities for the greater good. Part of the greater good notion is to contribute RSE earnings to the church and the community. Since the RSE’s inception, the men have donated money to their churches and communities. From 2007–2014 I have observed and helped workers make purchases in New Zealand for various community projects on Ambrym and in Port Vila.

Contributing RSE earnings to local churches was mentioned by the majority of participants. The place of church and the role of their various faiths greatly influence workers in Vanuatu and while they are in New Zealand. Church plays a significant role in the lives of ni-Vanuatu workers. As I noted in chapter five, through interactions with local churches in New Zealand workers have developed relationships with those in the

\textsuperscript{119} Thanksgiving in Ranon was a day of celebration, centred around the church. The morning was dedicated to church services. Following this, an auction was held for the community food contributions and the days events finished with a lunchtime community feast.
Central Otago community, gained support, and provided a place of worship and friendship. As in New Zealand, church is a central feature in the lives of ni-Vanuatu in Ambrym. Not only is it a place of religious worship it is where people come together, make community announcements, organise community events and provides a time for reflecting upon what is happening in the community.

Christianity was not well received when first introduced by the Murray brothers in North Ambrym in 1886 (Eriksen 2008, Patterson 2002a; Rio 2013). Conversion to Christianity involved the adaptation to island beliefs and now it is integral part of lives in the region, with several Christian faiths existing. Earnings from the RSE contribute to various churches. For those in the north, RSE earnings have contributed to renovating local churches and providing financial support for social church gatherings. Tom from Sanesup in West Ambrym has spent the past three years of his RSE earnings building a church for his community shown in figure 36. He intends to have this finished in 2014 and informed me that when it is complete he will no longer need to go to New Zealand.

![Figure 36: New church for Sanesup — Source: Author](image)
There is a half erected church project in Sanesup. I asked Tom why he built his own church and did not use his income to finish the incomplete building. He said that in doing so it might cause social tensions in the village so he decided to have his own project. A notable aspect in regard to the earnings workers donated to the church (aside for the allocated funds to repair and upgrade the church in Ranon) was that the money was redistributed through the church and on to the wider community. Unlike money given to the churches, workers have concerns in giving money to the LDC. This is because of the council’s chequered history and also because of a lack of tangible results produced to date.

**LDC Connection to the RSE**

During my research there have been continual changes in the relationships of the LDC with RSE workers and their earnings. In 2007 the LDC recruited workers for participation in the RSE scheme from Ambrym. Workers stated they were selected by their council to work in New Zealand and be ‘good men to represent their communities.’ A number of studies (Bailey 2009; Cameron 2011; Maclellan 2008; McKenzie 2008) have noted that RSE workers’ contributions to the LDC are to aid local development projects. However, these studies have not been informed of the contested relationships between workers and this council. Only 15 men came from the Lolihor area for the World Bank pilot project in the beginning of 2007.
They were selected based on “their ability to work hard, listen and follow instructions, lack of dependency on kava, cigarettes, drugs or alcohol, a predisposition to respect and
the ability to leave their family for three months without too much trouble” (Salong, 2007: 2). As a result, 22 men were accepted to participate in the first season of the RSE.

An expectation set by the LDC, and the larger community, was that those chosen to participate in the RSE scheme would contribute a percentage of their earnings to the council for community projects upon their return. Workers contributed Vt 10,000 (NZD 147; USD 122) each to the LDC in the first two seasons, but they stopped during the 2009-2011 seasons. This has been an issue of contention between workers, their families, communities and council members, who also have husbands participating in the RSE. Various community members openly expressed their disappointment about this. “Only those that will contribute should get to go, that was the arrangement. I stood down to let others go this year. Not to contribute, that is not a good man. I need to go back and get money for my community” (Paul, Ranon Village 17 May 2011). In further discussions with Paul he noted the lack of confidence that many in the community had with the LDC’s role. Although he wanted workers to contribute to the council he himself was cautious to offer his RSE earnings to them. It is also important to highlight here that contributions to the LDC stopped at the same time that the LDC ceased taking part as the primary selectors of workers.

In 2012, I was informed that the role of the LDC had recently weakened, and it had been rumoured in Port Vila, prior to my arrival on Ambrym, that the LDC was going to be disbanded because of mismanagement. This was not the first time that the LDC had problems. In 2006, management of the LDC was handed over to women in the Lolihor region.

Well it used to be run by men, from the beginning. But then in 2006 when we came to understand that it was not being run very well, so they sort of give it to the women and it’s like when we see the change now, when it’s in the hands of the women. Women looked after the council for the last few, but again it depends on the women on the council and the projects as well (Nabong 2011).

I was informed that the reason for the change in management of the LDC was because the previous male-only council had misused funds, which hindered community development in the region.

The LDC is an elected group. The 2012 elected council stressed the importance of completing the current health clinic project, funded by RSE workers, before the next
annual election in 2012, as members were concerned that the project would be delayed by the vote. The rumour about disbanding the council was unsubstantiated. However, like previous councils, people expressed a lack of confidence in the organisation.

**Disconnection to the LDC**

It was not until I went to Ambrym in 2011 that I learned that my participants had stopped contributing RSE earnings to the LDC. There are various explanations why workers ceased contributing to the LDC. One explanation given by many workers and community members from Ranon was that stopping contributions was partly due to recruitment and leadership changes among the group and that this caused disruption to the prescribed practices of community selection and objectives. Although Ambrymese leaders who had not been re-selected for the RSE scheme did not refer to this as a cause, many within the communities of North Ambrym drew this conclusion and wanted these leaders reinstated into the RSE programme to push for a change in attitude towards redistribution of earnings. A consensus among many was that because local leaders did not return to New Zealand to encourage or remind the men of their obligations, workers returned to Ambrym with changed attitudes towards their earnings, a distrust of the council, and self-centered interests. The cessation of contributions was only confined to the LDC as the two councils north of Lolihor, Lonhali and Wawanfanhal, still received contributions from RSE workers in their areas.

The former chairman of the LDC, Nabong, expressed his concerns and suggested that the reason that the men discontinued to contribute to the LDC had come about due to interactions with other New Zealand workers:

Rochelle: So are workers still contributing money?

Nabong: Not now...New Zealand workers are giving different ideas to the boys, that’s why we have different ideas for the boys, you know the boys have little understanding but when you [New Zealand people] start to put in something that we have decided then you [New Zealand people] start to jeopardise what we [council and community] have decided (Nabong 2011).

Nabong highlighted that life in New Zealand was causing disruptions to the intended use of wages earned in the RSE scheme. He argued that interference by New Zealand people was creating selfishness and individualism among workers. Interactions with others in New Zealand do influence ni-Vanuatu workers but not to the extent that
Nabong mentioned. He was casting responsibility away from the local to the outside, to foreign places out of reach of indigenous sociality and omitting the local tensions that existed prior to participation in the scheme.

In the 2007/2008 season, I noted tensions in migrants’ conversations between individual and community aims of their earnings. In terms of social cohesion, Lindstrom notes:

> Anthropologists have repeatedly noted Melanesian dreams of unity and attendant fears of social disintegration. Islanders hope and work for community and consensus, but expect the worst. There is unavoidable conflict between social harmony, on the one hand, and competitive status games, on the other. People’s ongoing pursuit of status and power subverts the very sociability they hope to achieve (Lindstrom, 2011b:255).

For Ambrymese the RSE was an avenue to work together for the good of the community. However participation and the earnings generated have caused tensions between various groups in the community. Schoeffel (1997) has reported that this is not unusual in rural Melanesian communities. Nevertheless, despite disagreements about contributing RSE earnings from New Zealand to the LDC there was little of this same conflict and tension surrounding other community requests for money.

The LDC is a body that meets to represent various Lolihor communities, though not everyone actively participates in it. The LDC appears to be removed from other social spheres such as daily conversations, church or customary practices. There was limited participation of workers’ families with the LDC and in addition, along with a history of distrust of the council, which may be a part of the reason for a number of families being concerned about contributing RSE earnings. However, the council members themselves are actively involved in everyday community life and have ambitions to meet the needs and interests of their communities, either through the council, or local church groups.

**Reconnecting with RSE workers**
In my conversations (2011–2012) with previous and current LDC council members and various community leaders, it was clear that they wanted RSE workers to continue contributing New Zealand earnings to the council. Nonetheless, RSE workers and their families were ambivalent about this:

> Frank: We don’t know where the money goes, we give it, then do not see it. What is the money going to be used for? I’ve paid for my part.
When I asked why workers ceased contributing to the council I received these replies: “The council wants our money but what for this time?” “We gave them money already” “We give them our busking money” (RSE workers 2011).

As a result of the LDC meeting held in July 2011 it was decided that each worker would give VT 10,000 (approximately NZD 143; USD 118) to the council upon their return in 2012. Two weeks later, I conducted a meeting with chiefs and community members from Lolihor. The purpose of this meeting was to have an open forum to canvass perspectives about the RSE scheme and the consequences of participation on local communities. During this meeting an LDC member drew attention to the decision made at the Council’s meeting earlier that same month over the expected contributions from workers. This was important as most in attendance at the meeting were RSE workers and it was their chance to discuss the proposed VT 10,000 that the council was requesting. The amount chosen by the council was met by protest by workers, who argued that sometimes they did not get work due to weather or problems with crops in New Zealand. RSE workers are placed on different farms, do not all earn the same wages, are dependent on their employment contracts, and unlike my participants, not all Lolihor RSE recruits are employed for a full seven months in New Zealand. Therefore these considerations had to be factored into the amount asked of them. Although only a handful of men argued that VT 10,000 (NZD 145; USD 120.35) was too much, a new figure of VT 5,000 (NZD 72; USD 59.76) was decided that day. In a meeting in August 2011, where their employers from New Zealand were in attendance, this amount reverted to VT 10,000.

In 2011 it appeared that attitudes towards the LDC had changed and there had been some restored confidence in the council, reflected in workers agreeing to contribute their earnings in 2011. This could be associated with the knowledge that their employers also expect RSE participants to contribute financially to their local councils. Workers agreed to allocate a portion of their earnings to the council that would contribute to the relocation of Fire Mountain Clinic to an area in Ranon village where there was greater accessibility.

In 2014, work with the council had come to a halt. In January 2014, I had taken a draft of this thesis to show to participants in Central Otago to get their feedback. Before I took it out of its box, Simon who was in the kitchen preparing his dinner said “have you
written about the LDC?” Jonathan and others in the apartment said “we need to discuss
the LDC as it is no good…we have no faith, no trust”. During this fieldtrip I was
advised that workers no longer wish to contribute to the LDC but wanted to explore
other options for their communities.

During the period when contributions to the LDC stopped, RSE workers contributed to
the community in other ways, such as to the church, ceremonial gifts and exchanges,
local schools, the health clinic, and the construction of building community wells. RSE
earnings were immediately circulated into communities and often transformed into
tangible resources. These contributions were viewed differently by many Ambrymese
(compared to contributions to the LDC). Furthermore earnings given to the church, and
the LDC, were distinct, as these organisations have their own histories and reputations
in North Ambrym.

Ownership of RSE earnings were often negotiated between community and individual
households.

Tony: When I come from New Zealand I take that money because, that money is not
mine it’s for the community. When the communities come I give it to them and they
ask for 500 or 1000 I just give it to them… I earn for my community.

Most of the men I spoke to reaffirmed Tony’s statement and said they gave at least half
of their earnings to the community. Often people would visit the house of the RSE
workers I lived with and asked for financial support for ceremonies, school fees or
other expenses. My hosts always responded favourably to these requests.120 Earnings
from the RSE scheme have enabled extra resources, money and goods to circulate in
Ambrym.

**New Zealand Influence**

In August 2011 the director and general manager of Seasonal Solutions visited
Ambrym. The visit was a sign of partnership between the company and the community,
and this term partnership was used in speeches throughout the day. I spoke with various
community members about the visit. One chief told me he was overwhelmed with the

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120 Borovnik also found that this applied to Kiribati seafarers: “[T]he custom of borrowing by family
members makes it difficult to keep wealth in one household as it is distributed to a whole range of
people” (2003 :6).
occasion and spoke of how it was good to have the employers in Ranon to see how they lived and to talk with them about issues that were of importance to the community, and what earnings from New Zealand have been used for. In a meeting with the North Ambrym community where all three councils were present, RSE employers who may have been unaware of the LDC’s history, discussed their disappointment in hearing that the men had not continued contributing to the LDC and provided financial incentives for the workers to continue doing so. Employers have contributed to Ambrym communities, and offered the workers a vehicle and covered petrol costs, so that the men can busk in various towns within the region to earn money for their local communities.

At the conclusion of the meeting at the Lolihor Market house, their New Zealand employers presented the three councils with certificates of appreciation (see figure 38) from their company and discussed future development plans with local community leaders.

Figure 38: Certificate of Appreciation 2011 — Source: Author
New Zealand in the landscape

Symbolic connections to New Zealand have been also noticeable in landscapes throughout Vanuatu. From my first visit to Vanuatu in 2009, to my fieldwork in 2011 I noticed a change in the built environments of Port Vila and Ambrym. The silver fern, associated with New Zealand, was displayed on buses, taxis, shops and in RSE workers’ homes. Bus and taxi drivers informed me that earnings from New Zealand had paid for their vehicles. Placing symbolic motifs from New Zealand demonstrated to others that they had worked in New Zealand and used their earning to purchase a vehicle for their own business.

The same can be said for those who have established shops that are named after local stores such as the Kiwi Store, Four Square, or Super Value that they frequented during their work seasons in New Zealand. New Zealand symbolism is most noticeable in stringband DVD’s, such as the Mosuakea stringband, discussed in chapter three. Where a number of artists are wearing clothing from New Zealand, the most popular being New Zealand rugby tops.
What I did not expect to see was the New Zealand flag flying in villages on Ambrym. When I enquired into this I was told that the flag symbolised that his house had been built with RSE earnings. Additionally in Fantor village, Bob constructed a well for his village in 2011 and inscribed it with “Made by New Zealand: start on Number 1 Septemba end on Number 9 Septemba Year 2011.”

These symbolic motifs signal connections to places and networks associated with their earnings in New Zealand. While in New Zealand the men are ambassadors for Vanuatu displaying symbols of Vanuatu in their residence, work vehicles, clothing and most obviously while they are busking at the local farmers market.

**Busking**

Ni-Vanuatu first started busking in the summer of 2007/2008 when they started to perform at the Cromwell Farmers Market. Since then their performances have become part of the farmers’ market ambience. This is not the only location where they busk. Usually one group will busk in Queenstown, located 60 kilometers west, while another group performs in the townships immediately surrounding their workplace. Ni-Vanuatu
string bands are becoming part of Central Otago’s regional music scene. Buskers have become popular with the locals. Money made from a morning of busking varies between Vt 13,600–81,600 (NZD 200–1200; USD 166–996).

Figure 41: Busking at Cromwell Farmers’ market — Source: Author

Busking sign: "We commit ourselves busking, raising money towards Lonali community back in Vanuatu. The money we are raising will help Lonali council in any development they plan. Thank you for your support."

When the workers first stopped contributing their wages to the LDC, busking earnings were used instead. Currently (2014) workers are withholding busking money from the LDC. This is due to unfulfilled promises by the council, mainly the health clinic project discussed in the next section. In January 2014, Vt 500,000 (NZD 7352; USD 6102.16) raised through busking was in a New Zealand bank account to be sent to Ambrym development councils. Unless the LDC can restore faith with workers they will not remit these funds to them.

The LDC was an important institution that selected the initial labour recruits. Nonetheless during the course of the RSE scheme the LDC has lost this role. For three seasons the council did not receive contributions from workers and informed me that
this stalled any development plans that they had for the region. However, projects have also been stalled despite RSE contributions. Workers are now seeking to bypass the council and begin their own projects. Suggestions included were solar power for churches and community halls and funding school fees for relatives that cannot enter the RSE or SWP schemes.

**Education on Ambrym as Development**

The majority of research participants stated that the primary reason they became RSE workers was to fund education. Without their earnings from New Zealand their children’s education would have been limited. Fees for primary, secondary and tertiary education vary in Vanuatu, and are charged on a partial to full cost-recovery basis. Workers have been able to finance children’s primary education, and have had their children continue into secondary schooling. This section explores the education system in Ranon, North Ambrym and it discusses both how expense and location can hinder participation in education. Many RSE workers emphasised the importance of family members gaining access to education. Most workers told me that they had not made it past six years of schooling and I was told that the reason for this was that school fees were too high for their families. This was also noted by Mitchell (2004: 366) who observed that “[M]any young people do not have an opportunity to go to secondary school as there are not enough places for everyone and the cost of school fees can be prohibitive for many families.”

In order to promote and encourage participation of children in schools, a number of developments have occurred in the Vanuatu education system. In 2010, with funding from AusAID and NZAID, Vanuatu introduced free primary school education for years 1-6. I spoke with teachers in Efate about to the newly introduced education scheme and they informed me that it was not really ‘free’ but subsidised. I asked a teacher in Efate if parents’ participation in the RSE scheme had increased the school roll and she told me “maybe a little but not much” (Personal Communication, Lucy, Port Vila, April 2011). Although not as noticeable for Lucy in Port Vila, teachers from Ambrym said earnings from New Zealand increased enrolment numbers. However, Lucy informed me that the introduction of ‘free’ education for primary classes increased the roll and that her class increased from 21 students to 35. Because most RSE workers came to New Zealand to earn money for school fees, I asked how the introduction of the “free” education program affected their participation in the RSE scheme. John told me that it
“had not come to Ambrym” for his two primary school aged children. All workers from Ambrym agreed with his statement, as did many I spoke with from the islands of Epi and Espiritu Santo.

The RSE scheme is enabling workers to provide the cash resources required for educating their children and those of extended relatives. Furthermore, a proportion of the money earned by ni-Vanuatu migrants in the first season of the RSE scheme founded a new community education scholarship fund. Several RSE workers in this study have had their children educated at schools located in Ranon village. Not only is Ranon the most commercial area in the Lolihor district, but it is also the location for the main primary and secondary school. Children arrive from many villages to learn here and there are boarding facilities at the secondary school for those families who reside too great a distance to walk each day. In 2012 there were 100 pupils that attended Ranon secondary school and they have a maximum of 35 students per class (School Principal 2012). For many on Ambrym being able to complete the last two years of secondary schooling involves leaving home and boarding on the neighbouring islands of Epi and Malakula, and for tertiary education, the University of the South Pacific (USP) Emalus Campus in Port Vila.

As mentioned earlier by Chief Tallis, the need for cash to pay for school fees has affected village numbers. The lack of cash employment on Ambrym has forced some families to leave the island in order to educate their children. In his assessment of schooling and migration Rigg (2007:170) has observed, “[G]iven the necessity of education for accessing employment in the modern sectors of the economy, this can be viewed as raising the human capital of the non-migrant sibling and, by extension, the household (as a collective enterprise).” RSE workers have a collective approach to earning cash for schooling. On average RSE workers have at least three children, and those that do not have children of their own attending school, usually contribute towards their siblings’ education or to the children of their siblings. There is a sense of obligation to contribute and participate in labour migration for the sake of the family (Yeoh et al; 2002, Rahman 2009). As Simon told me “I come to New Zealand so that my sisters can get to go to school and learn more than I could.” This was confirmed to

121 This is not unusual in the Pacific, Gegeo (2002: 384) also noted disparities between provinces in the Solomon Islands.
me by his parents, “we hope that Simon is chosen again, to go to New Zealand for us. He pays for his sisters schooling, where we cannot”.

Other than the RSE, another way to finance school fees is through fundraising. The most popular method of fundraising, that is for those who could afford it, was to host a feast and sell plates of food for a small amount of vatu. As I discussed earlier fundraising is a collective undertaking on Ambrym. I observed that community members donate their time and money to the family hosting the feast in order for it to be successful. This is reciprocated when these same members host their own feasts for the same purpose. As well intended as this system is, it does not guarantee everyone a place within the school. There is also only a limited amount of money in circulation that moves around between individuals and families. The RSE scheme solves this as it brings in a new injection of cash providing more money for circulation.

Figure 42: Ranon Junior Primary school — Source: Author
The main schools in the Lolihor region are Ranon Primary and Secondary schools. These schools were originally a house and warehouse for copra storage belonging to Mitchell the former plantation owner. This was converted into a school after independence (Eriksen, 2008: 16). In Ranon students are primarily educated in English, and it was evident from conversations with parents that not everyone succeeds in this teaching environment. Reasons given were because of language, the syllabus and the limited support for children in this environment because of the lack of understanding parents had of the education system. I also noted that many, both young and old, that had been through this education system did not feel confident speaking in English. Even the daughter of our host family would read my daughter’s book to her very quietly. I asked her why she did this. She told me that she was worried that she was not speaking proper English.

The children at Ranon Junior Secondary school, who do not board pay a term fee of VT 23,000 (NZD 338; USD 280) and there are three terms to the year, therefore equating to VT 69,000 (NZD 1014; USD 841). These fees do not include items such as school uniforms, stationary, or money required for other school activities. Furthermore, Ranon Junior Secondary school does not provide the last two years of secondary level schooling. Parents who want their children to complete secondary school level education have to send them to other islands. The same applies throughout Vanuatu.

For those in Ranon the choice is usually to send their children to Epi, south of Ambrym, or Malakula, opposite the island (see figure two, map two). In 2011, I spoke with Tony, an RSE worker who had four children. One child was enrolled at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Port Vila, one at a secondary school in Malakula, another child at Ranon Junior Secondary School, and one son remained at home due to the cost of school fees. Tony discussed the costs of providing an education for his family:

Tony: For my daughter about 23,000 per term

Rochelle: so 69,000 for Jenny

122 Education in French was noticeable in other secondary schools on Ambrym; for example, in Sesivi (West Ambrym) and Tobol in (North Ambrym).

123 As Hess (2009: 137) notes on Vanua Lava “only a few parents can afford to send their children to secondary school on another island.”
Tony: James another 34,000

Rochelle: So that’s another 102,000 so all up 171,000 and that is without Paul’s fees?

Tony: 75,000 times two, 150,000 for Paul

Rochelle: That’s a total of Vt 221,000 (NZD 3250); (USD 2697.50).

Participating in the RSE scheme covers these costs. Workers hope that their children are able to move past year six. These are aspirations many parents have for their children. A truck driver in Baiap said:

> The RSE is great. I finished school too early; my family did not have enough money. But we know with the RSE scheme kids are staying in school longer and have something to aim for after school...going to work in New Zealand. RSE is great because we have no jobs to go to. Many of us, like myself drop out of school and do nothing but stay at home (Truck driver, Baiap village, 11 June 2011).

Overall people on Ambrym have emphasised the positive impact earnings from New Zealand have had towards childrens’ education. However if workers wish to keep their children in the education system the costs will be ongoing for at least ten years or more. Yet there is ambiguity as education is not always seen as beneficial to everyone on Ambrym.

**Education as a social problem.**

Not only is education a financial burden on Ambrym, but some in the community told me that “white people’[s]” schooling is coming at a social cost too. In my house in Ranon, the girls would leave for school at 7am to be in class by 7.30am. They returned home for lunch and a wash between 12 and 1pm. They resumed school at 1pm until 3.30pm. When they arrived back at the house they carry out chores, such as helping prepare the evening meal or raking the yard. Following this, they would wash and have their evening dinner, which is usually between 5.30 and 6pm. Then they returned to school once again at 6.30pm until approximately 9pm. Returning to school at night happened from Monday until Thursday. However, on Sunday they also returned to school for an evening session. I queried why this was so, assuming it was associated with Sunday school. But I was informed that it was extra schooling, and not related to church.
When I asked parents about the Ranon primary and secondary schools many stated that they were unsure of what was being taught but had the confidence the people in charge of their children’s education were teaching important life skills. One day George told me he was upset that Jenny was never at home when he and his wife needed her. He asked me “What do they do there for all that time?” and he continued to ask how long children attended school each day in New Zealand. It was important to him for his children to attend school. Education was also seen as an agent of change within village life. In speaking with mothers in the village we discussed schooling and the long hours that their children spent in formal education. Their conversations resonated with Sanga and Niroa (2004: 15) who observed that Pacific people viewed formal education “as alien and imposed from outside”. Nonetheless, parents on Ambrym are determined to finance children in the formal education sector as this achievement also reflects their own personal status within society.

Many schools have mottos at their entrance such as Ranon Junior secondary school, which is “Strive for the Best”; Ranon primary school’s motto is “Prosperity Grows in Education.” At the third school that I visited in Port Vila, Vila East school primary and kindergarten, the motto is “A Good student, A Good Citizen.” These slogans symbolised the relationship between education and being a good citizen. Furthermore, RSE workers reinforced this by working in New Zealand so that they too were being good citizens by earning money to enable their children (or the children of kin) to participate in the education system.
RSE Training

Education is not limited to the school room. RSE participants themselves seek out opportunities for further training courses and ongoing education in New Zealand. During the World Bank pilot scheme in 2007, RSE workers participated in short training programmes, such as basic computer skills and two stroke motor classes that were sponsored by the World Bank. When I first interviewed the men from the pilot project at the end of 2007 they assumed these training courses would still be on offer when they returned to New Zealand for the RSE scheme. Many thought that it was part of the RSE scheme itself. Since 2007 only a few RSE workers participated in extra training courses because there are many reasons that have prevented the men from doing so. One is time. Although the men want to participate in extra training courses, their primary reason for being in New Zealand is to earn money. Most training courses at the local polytechnic are held during their workday. Even if courses were conducted in the evening, long working hours would affect their ability to attend courses. In 2007 I asked the workers if they had a choice of educational courses what would they want to learn? Overwhelmingly, the majority of the men said ‘better English’, business classes,
and a two-stroke motor course. Although the workers demonstrated good English skills, improving them was a priority for most men.

**Vakameasina**

“Vakameasina” means learning for Pacific growth, (incorporating the word “vaka” which is a boat or a canoe, and “measina”, a Samoan word meaning “valuables”), thus a boat of valuables for the family”. 124

In 2010, the RSE Worker Training Programme, also known as Vakameasina, was introduced. The programme was initially managed by Fruition and McGirr Associates and funded by NZAID. The goal of the programme is to “increase opportunities and choices for Pacific RSE workers by providing them with access to English literacy, numeracy, and financial literacy training during their time in New Zealand” (Fruition Horticulture and McGirr Associates: 2010). While in Ambrym in 2011, I had the opportunity to speak with Managing Director Mandy McGirr. McGirr informed me that travelling to Vanuatu was an opportunity for her to see where her students had come from, giving her a wider scope on how to relate to the RSE workers. She said that it would be great for all of her tutors to be able to situate the RSE workers in their context, which would help with their learning. Informing me that the programme had been successful in parts of the North Island, she stated that the company was intending on extending the programme into areas of the South Island as well.

This was achieved, as a new three year training programme, contracted to Fruition Horticulture, funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme, which was announced in February 2012. Sandy Scarrow, Consultant at Fruition Horticulture stated:

> We are aware of how significant the RSE scheme is for the New Zealand horticultural industry, as well as for workers, their families and their communities back home. The fact that while working in New Zealand, some of workers also get the opportunity to improve their English and maths is fantastic. We are so pleased to be involved in delivering this training and are committed to make sure it is meaningful to both workers and their employers. 125

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Fruition Horticulture is now delivering training to RSE workers in Central Otago. At this stage it has been on a small scale but will probably increase over time.

Fruition started the training programme in Central Otago in 2012. Workers informed me their training is focused on leadership skills. Additionally the programme has taught the men their rights as workers in the RSE scheme (together with and the rights of their employers). Fruition has provided RSE workers in Central Otago with computers and internet access. During the 2012/13 season, when I entered the computer room in their accommodation complex I often notice workers using the Vakameasina website for teaching and learning purposes. It is hoped that training programmes for RSE workers such as Vakameasina will aid in workers’ future development goals and the knowledge they learn, such as hygiene and budgetary skills, can be transferred to others in the Pacific.

**Recent and future development projects**

A number of developments have emerged because of the RSE scheme and overall, community members that I spoke with are keen for the scheme to be part of their lives as it helps socially, culturally, and economically. This section discusses some of the ways in which RSE earnings have contributed to community projects. Furthermore, it highlights future projects that have been considered as essential for development in the region, and the difficulties in setting up development projects that are supposedly ‘good for everyone.’

**Market house**

When I arrived in Ranon Bay in 2011, the first change I noted was a newly constructed area beside the Solo store. This market house pictured in figure 44 was a project completed by the LDC and constructed using RSE earnings in 2009. During my stay in Ranon I noticed that the market house was

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well used by various North Ambrym communities. It was the venue for the Tuesday morning market, where women from different villages came to sell their produce, such as island cabbage, taro, yams, bananas, breadfruit, onions, cucumber and capsicum. It was the venue for various meetings, wedding feasts, doctor visits and eye examinations. It provided shelter against adverse weather for people, and transported goods such as kava, yams and copra in and out of Ranon bay.

**Health Clinic**

Relocating the medical clinic closer to Ranon village is another objective that many in the community have. Currently, the medical clinic is located on Fire Mountain. Within the first couple of weeks residing in Ranon in 2011, my daughter Kaylani became very ill, and I took her to the clinic. The clinic was situated approximately 20 minutes from the centre of Ranon village, up a steep slippery hillside. As we were climbing the

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127 On three occasions boats with medical practitioners came to Ranon and provided free eye and medical checkups.
I wondered how extremely ill or disabled people could make the trip as there was no access for the local truck. The clinic was operated by Rose who is a nurse who attends to various ailments and child birth. The treatment capacity is limited due to scarce medical resources.

The construction of better facilities with improved medical equipment is a goal of many in the community, including Rose. After the LDC meeting in July 2011, it was decided that RSE earnings should be directed to relocating this clinic. RSE employer Craig Howard offered to contribute to the new clinic, “[Y]our council; you need to talk to me if you are moving your clinic to the coast, we have helped through our contacts in New Zealand get some beds into the clinic at [another village], we can do the same again, no problems” (Meeting on Ambrym 15 August 2011). On my return in 2012, I was informed that the stack of bricks situated by the Douglas’s store were for the new medical clinic that was to be relocated beside the Lolihor Council house/tourism office.

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128 This was also noted by Clegg (2009: 9-10) “[T]he traverse to the clinic is demanding for a healthy individual, and would pose a serious challenge to those less fit, ill or suffering a handicap of any sort.”
which was located on flat ground and is also accessible by road. This project was funded by the decision to renew RSE contributions to the LDC. Nabong told me that they were waiting to get planning consent from Port Vila before they could start building. However, after further discussions with workers in 2014, the project was stalled again. “The bricks we showed you are getting ruined, no one is doing anything and there are disputes about the land that the clinic is on now. The owners of the land that the clinic is on are not happy for the clinic to be moved” (Interview, Sean, Cromwell, 30 January 2014). The stagnation of the health clinic project has led once again to the cancelling of RSE contributions to the LDC.

Water
Access to clean water was a priority for research participants. Nearly all the villages that I visited on Ambrym, had constructed or were in the process of building a well, using earnings from New Zealand. This was of vital importance for workers from West Ambrym where fresh water sources are scarce and projects are often hampered by acid rain produced by the volcanoes.

In 2013, the water and health project *Evriwan Patisipet blong Helti mo Hapi Kommuniti project* (everyone participate for a healthy and happy community), also known as the P2HK was completed. This project was coordinated through the Vanuatu Red Cross and funded by AusAID’s Civil Society Water, Sanitation and Hygiene fund. Workers spoke highly of this project. Obtaining fresh water is difficult in the region and often we collected seawater and put it through a labourous filtration system of boiling and straining it through cloth at least three times. *Evriwan Patisipet blong Helti mo Hapi Kommuniti project* has not only provided people from West Ambrym with training but also drilled several holes and installed hand pumps to improve water conditions in the region. Some 22 water catchments and various storage areas have resulted from this project.

Water projects in Ambrym have social and financial connections to New Zealand. Their employer, James Dicey donated a water pump to a village in 2008 and Central Otago’s Alexandra Baptist church and Youth with a Mission, organised “Water mission 2009”
to travel to Ambrym which improved water supply for 15 villages in Ambrym. A concert performed by ni-Vanuatu in Alexandra provided further fundraising.¹²⁹

Microcredit scheme
Another project that was established with RSE earnings was the Women’s microcredit scheme. Micro credit schemes are relatively successful in Vanuatu (AusAid 2010; Cornford 2001; Chand 2002). I was informed that by having this microcredit scheme available, RSE workers could borrow their travel costs from the scheme at an extremely low interest rate (compared to what is charged by commercial banks in Port Vila or VanWoods). Valarie a wife of an RSE worker told me that she was involved in the micro-credit scheme in Lolihor. She said that although her and her husband lived in Port Vila it was good to have some big saving here [Ranon]. So when I come to Lolihor I can do something for my family, even can help the council [LDC] in financial difficulty. So I had a part in the micro credit finance,

¹³⁰ What is not shown in this photo is the connecting pipes from the store that led to the well.
I had a book [similar to a banking book] here ....When Sean [her husband] went to New Zealand it contributed to the Lolihor [council] and helped me too. It [the micro-finance scheme], helps us [her and her husband] to think a lot, to have something back here at home [in Ranon] (Valarie 2011).

When the workers stopped contributing their wages this micro-credit scheme ceased. While in New Zealand, instead of remitting busking money back to Vanuatu on a regular basis as workers had done in the past, the men began their own micro credit scheme. They would lend money to each other at a minimal to zero interest rate. Borrowers used these loans to purchase the more expensive items in New Zealand. At the end of the season the money would be collected again and distributed to councils on Ambrym.

**Development via Tourism**

Another vision to stimulate development in the region is to promote tourism. In the early years of Vanuatu’s independence, tourism was controlled. As Bolton notes “policy discouraged tourists travelling extensively within the country, encouraging them to enjoy instead the tropical ambience, the French influence, the scuba-diving, and the duty-free shopping in Port Vila” (2003:3). This changed in the 1990s, when “small tourism developments in the islands were encouraged” (Bolton, 2003:4). In 2011 Vanuatu National Statistics office reported a total of 321,404 visitors, made up of 213,243 day visitor cruise ship arrivals and 93,960 others. ¹³¹

Many Ambrymese leaders depicted tourism as strategy for further development. Attracting greater numbers of tourists is a priority for the LDC. For example a tourism information centre was built in Ranon with RSE earnings. The centre is also used as the base for the LDC. The building has two rooms that house a selection of locally made carvings and laminated posters of activities that tourists can participate in while in north Ranon. The problem is that when tourists do arrive this building is not always accessible as it is locked and the local self-appointed tour guide who manages the information centre is not always available.

During a community meeting in Ranon, in July 2011, it was discussed that increasing tourism would generate incomes to improve livelihoods. A proposal to increase tourism numbers to the northern region was to build an airport in North Ambrym. This plan was

not new and had been discussed throughout various northern communities. However, like many projects there have been arguments over the location and distribution of profits for such a venture (see also, Eriksen 2007). Even negotiating this through the LDC was problematic. The LDC was established as a means to forge stronger communication and relationships between villages by having a community orientated to a regional body. However, identification with one’s village governed politics and approaches to development, not loyalty to the LDC. Hess (2009:8) notes “[P]lace in Vanuatu is mainly viewed in relation to questions of identity, kinship and movement within the larger contexts of the politics of kastom, colonial struggles or economic development.” This fits in with terms of place on Ambrym where place and identity were important factors in the selection of workers and how people were spoken about in regards to belonging to place. In the end the airport was never built, as residents could not agree on a location. Nonetheless, the development of an airport in North Ambrym is still a goal of many in the region and RSE workers’ earnings will be expected to contribute to such as project.

In discussing potential avenues for development on the island James Dicey, an employer of RSE workers, informed the men that promoting tourism would be beneficial for workers’ communities. He suggested this would involve a very small outlay, in comparison with other business ventures. He mentioned that on his trip from Craig Cove to Ambrym there were many places that tourists would pay to see, such as the hot pools, located a 40 minute boat ride away from Ambrym, and areas where sea turtles were abundant. It is hoped that RSE earnings will help fund the development of further tourism in the northern region.

**RSE earnings investing in development**

Representations of development and modernity are often seen as associated with the cash economy. Investments in development are expected to improve livelihoods in the region. Because cash is scarce on Ambrym and there is only a limited supply in fundraising arenas, the RSE is depicted as a method to generate additional money through the island. Seasonal workers are encouraged to work for the good of the community.
There is an expectation that earnings from the RSE will be given to the local development councils such as the LDC to be used for the “community good.” However, as shown here people from communities in Lolihor are not convinced that contributing earnings to the LDC is necessarily effective. Although changes occurred in the contributions to the LDC, workers continued to contribute to their communities in other areas. RSE workers contribute their earnings in other ways to the community, through the church, fundraisers, ceremonies and other local events.

Labour schemes can contribute positively to development-orientated activities. However, the perception of development varies not only across nations, regions and local areas, but also among individuals. Therefore to target development there is a need to understand what this means at these different levels. RSE participants have material and pragmatic views on development, which are associated with improvements in daily life such as water access, housing, health care and education.

In this chapter I highlighted the importance in education and participation in the RSE scheme. There have been steps to reduce the costs of education for ni-Vanuatu, but despite moves towards free primary schooling in Vanuatu, this is not available nationwide and there is still a need to pay school fees in many parts of the country. Participation in the RSE provides much needed income to cover school fees. In addition, the RSE has enabled workers to gain further education for themselves while in New Zealand.

Through working in New Zealand, RSE workers with their earnings have been able to provide their own forms of development on Ambrym. Unlike other forms of development performed by outside operations such as government departments or domestic and international aid agencies, workers are somewhat in control of how their earnings are used to contribute to their families and communities.
Chapter 7: Locating Remittances in local economies

“What a Godsend this scheme has been. It has enabled many ni-Vanuatu to make dreams and plans of marriage, family and own homes, as well as a potential for future education” (John, Port Vila. 18 April 2011)

There is a dual economy in Vanuatu involving both cash and ‘traditional’ subsistence activities (Regenvanu 2009). Both cash and non-cash activities shape social and economic relationships in Ambrym. What is more, cash and customary economic exchanges are important for building and maintaining relationships. The cash economy is becoming a central part of the island community and is incorporated into customary exchanges, obligations and circulations. However, as discussed in chapter three, cash is Ambrym is scarce and generating income is limited.

During my time on Ambrym I attended a number of kastom ceremonies, mainly weddings, circumcisions, and funerals. Exchange relationships were vital in these ceremonies. Anthropological accounts of exchange relationships (Eriksen 2006, 2008; Hess 2009; Huffman 1996; Jolly 1991; Patterson 2001, 2002a; Rio 2007; Strathern 1988) resonated with my own observations during fieldwork. Exchange is a central part of ni-Vanuatu relationships. The transactions that ni-Vanuatu make between each other have consequences for wider economic and social relations. This also occurs in relationships of exchange with others. RSE earnings have contributed to local ceremonies, and the financial costs involved. A number of workers have used their RSE earnings to pay for weddings for themselves or for their kin. Therefore I will specifically focus on RSE earnings that are allocated for weddings.

While on Ambrym I was made aware that ceremonies had become very expensive, and that in the previous year, 2010, a meeting was held to address the costs of ceremonies in the Lolihor region. Chiefs were consulted about how ceremonies were conducted before widespread monetisation, and the explicit focus was how to reduce costs based on past (non-monetary) practices. Despite considering the costs of these ceremonies, the chiefs were unable to implement non-monetary alternatives. The costs remain high.
Many of these costs are associated and centred on ideas of social obligations and reciprocity, which all facilitate and maintain social relationships of kinship and community.

**Traditional and Cash Economies**

Pigs, mats, shell money, kava and other items may not be valued or acknowledged outside of Vanuatu but they are highly valued internally. They provide security, establish harmonious relationships, appease hostilities, facilitate reconciliations and are key components in numerous ceremonies and rituals....They provide the base for rural economic activities that calls for national consideration and policy attention (Garu in Huffman, 2005: 7).

The majority of Vanuatu’s population have rural subsistence livelihoods. Where the importance of the traditional economy is the base for the majority of exchanges, the cash economy has little influence in daily social interactions. In the early 2000s, the Vanuatu government initiated the ‘money banks project’; which was founded in 1992 by James Teslo, a Vanuatu Cultural Centre fieldworker, based on pig banks in Malakula (Rousseau and Taylor, 2012: 170). From this project, in 2005 Huffman produced the report *Traditional Money Banks in Vanuatu*, in which he argued that the traditional economy still existed in Vanuatu. Nonetheless, the findings also showed the need for cash to pay for state services, such as education and health, was increasing.

The Vanuatu government declared 2007 the ‘Year of the Traditional Economy,’ which was continued again in 2008 (Rousseau and Taylor, 2012: 170-171). The year of the traditional economy was strongly promoted by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VCC). Former director of the VNCC, Ralph Regenvanu, echoed Huffman’s findings when he wrote of how rural ni-Vanuatu:

> live in their traditional economy and they are trying to make cash to pay for government services and things like that; mainly government services. Government services are the biggest burden, which is why we are targeting school fees and medical fees, because that’s what people need cash for (Regenvanu, 2011:39).

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132 For more discussions on the traditional economy, see Cox 2007; Garu in Huffman 2005; Geismar and Regenvanu 2011; Huffman 2005; Jolly 1992; Regenvanu 2007, 2009; Rousseau and Taylor 2012; Shakuto 2010; Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2012.
School fees are the primary reason why ni-Vanuatu work in the RSE scheme. What is more, cash is increasingly being incorporated in ceremonial activities.

Regenvanu (2009:1) defines the traditional economy as “the way in which our indigenous Pacific societies are organised to look after the concerns and resources of their members, in counterpoint to the way the ‘capitalist’ or ‘cash’ economy organises itself to look after the concerns and resources of its members.” For Regenvanu (2009(a)4), the traditional economy supports people in ways in which the cash economy may not:

All too often in our national development plans and charters, and our regional and international prescriptions for development in Melanesia, there is little mention of the traditional economy and the predominant role it plays in providing sustainable livelihoods and many of the sustainable development outcomes we wish to achieve.

Regenvanu argues that development policies can shift traditional economies and recommends that traditional economies are recognised in policy to avoid any loss of existing support systems. Development projects generated and funded from RSE earnings contribute to traditional economies. What is more, the agendas of workers and their communities are locally specific.

Cash in Vanuatu
Shortly after independence, the vatu became Vanuatu’s currency in 1981. This replaced the two condominium currencies of the New Hebrides franc and the Australian dollar. Huffman (2005: 31) argued that modern forms of money, such as the vatu, do not hold ‘cultural roots’ and ‘disappears quite easily.’ For Garu (2005) and Huffman (2005) traditional forms of currency offer cultural integrity with high value in the social systems of ni-Vanuatu (especially in terms of social obligations that maintain relationships). Although traditional forms of currency have important ‘cultural roots’, it would be negligent to dismiss the place of money in Ambrym societies. The vatu has been integrated into various social spheres on Ambrym. Reganvanu (2009a: 1) reported that “the great majority of the population use only a small amount of cash in their lives, and have correspondingly negligible amounts of debt.” There are various forms of debt on Ambrym; here I deal with financial debt, much of which is accumulated through

participating in cerominal exchanges. This is also a reason why many ni-Vanuatu participate in the RSE scheme.

During the mid-2000s, a temporary removal of cash from kastom ceremonies occurred, especially in bride-price (Rousseau and Taylor, 2012: 171). Contributing to ceremonies such as weddings, circumcisions and funerals is an expectation on Ambrym, depending on the ceremony or event and specific kindred obligations. Relationality to those participating in ceremonies determines obligations required to fulfill socially prescribed roles. Participating in relationships of reciprocity secures a sense of belonging and identity within communities. Failure not to do so has repercussions such as being gossiped about or being ridiculed by a mother’s brother (uncle), or father’s brother (father), a brother or other kin through their joking relationships. I was told of this happening with an RSE worker who was not giving his money to his wife and children “I kept harassing Ben, he knew he was not being good. I am his uncle [his mother’s brother] and every day I would remind him of that. Leaving what you would call pranks at his door until he looked after his family” (Richard 2011). Being good to families and communities was a common theme with workers, as Tony stated “someone that does not contribute to our community, he is not a good man.” Rio (2007: 186) stated that on Ambrym “[E]ven if no one has got anything planned oneself, on always has to contribute to other people’s events”. Nonetheless, there additional pressures to contribute to kastom ceremonies, especially if village members are involved in overseas seasonal work programs.

The exchange of cash for kastom ceremonies has increased dramatically and from what I was told this will probably continue to be so. Other than cash, the most valued exchange items are pigs. They were the most conspicuous exchange items in the various ceremonies that I attended. Pigs are vital in local exchanges, operating as a
form of currency in their own right (Bedford: 1971, Bonnemaison 1996; Miles 1998; Patterson 2001; Rio 2007; Eriksen 2008). As Rio observed “[B]efore vatu currency entered the Ambrym economy, tusked pigs were used for all sorts of payments; and that means a lot in Ambrym where almost every practice has its price according to kastom” (Rio, 2007:124). The ceremonial exchange of money has increased but has not replaced the traditional form or value of the pig. The reason for this Rio (2007: 451) argues is that, “[T]he killing of pigs is a specific form of prestation that cannot be translated into other forms of prestation. That is also why pig killing has not been replaced by monetary contributions in the ceremonial economy.” I also spoke about this with the local yafu[^134] in Ranon, who told me that pigs were the value of kastom in all ceremonial 

[^134]: On Ambrym the term Yafu would be the equivalent of what has been called a ‘Big Man’ in anthropological literature. ‘Big Man’ is a contested term among anthropologists (see Lindstrom 1981 or Godelier (1986) for the concept of ‘great man’). The title yafu acknowledges a person of significant status in society. In the context of Ambrym, it is someone that has reached particular grades and made beneficial contributions to their communities. (For more information on Melanesian Big Men, see Elota and Keesing 1978; Lindstrom 1981; Sahlins 1963).
activities. The value of this is not only in the presentation and size of the pig but related to the relationship between people involved in the exchange. The person exchanging the pig is essentially giving part of themselves in the transaction (Mauss 1969).

Even though the kastom value was important, the monetary value of pigs were also described to me at ceremonies. For example, the tusked pig in figure 47 had a higher traditional and cash value than the other six pigs presented as wedding gifts. Pigs are often purchased with money, and it is difficult to differentiate monetary and traditional economies in these situations (Geismar and Regenvanu 2011). It is the imagined perception of the customary raising of pigs and social exchanges that are the absolute focus of these rituals. Pigs are often exchanged for specific purposes (usually related to island kastom), whereas cash would be categorised as general purpose exchange due to its daily and multiple use throughout the region (Maurer 2006).

The cash economy is becoming more prominent in daily life. This is visible through the use of store bought products, money for education and also in ceremonies where exchange is important such as marriages, funerals, and circumcisions. Regenvanu and Geismar (2011:35) noted that in Vanuatu there has been an introduction of being able to pay for government services, (such as health and education) with kastom items (Regenvanu and Giesmar, 2011: 35). This has not reached all communities in Vanuatu. Whether this is from a lack of resources or the inability to earn cash, many children still do not attend basic primary school because their families cannot afford the school fees.

There are other reasons why money is becoming an important factor in Vanuatu social domains; “[M]oney is needed to buy cultural symbols of social importance sought by islanders” (Watters, 2008:67). In an attempt to debunk the classic stereotype of ‘primitive Melanesia’ Knauf (1991: 13-14) states:

Today, Melanesians want much more than steel axes, salt, beads, and matches. They want a regular supply of tinned fish and packaged rice. Western style clothes, trucks and motor-powered boats, refrigerators, Western-style houses, airplane tickets, cash reserves, and advanced schooling for their children.

The material remittances that workers return to Vanuatu reflect goods that are sought in Ambrym (discussed in the final section of this chapter).
Although not completely reliant on the use of money, the need for cash and the role it plays on Ambrym present difficulties for research participants. Prior to travelling to Vanuatu, George, Richard and some of the other men had complained to me about the cost of living in New Zealand. In 2007, while shopping at a local supermarket in Cromwell, George complained “the problem with New Zealand is that it’s too expensive and you need too much money for everything. Not like home (Ambrym) Rochelle where we can just live off the land and have all that we need.” George’s statement resonated with numerous ni-Vanuatu. When walking through the fruit and vegetable aisles in the local supermarket in Central Otago, workers would often point out the prices of mango, banana, pawpaw and complain about the cost. Several times I would be told “when you come to Ambrym you will just live free. Take the food from the trees and live well” (Bob, New World supermarket, Cromwell, November 2007).

The costs that workers refer to are associated with living and accommodation. Weekly accommodation costs are not found on Ambrym. Yet the notion of completely ‘living off the land’ that George and other workers spoke of was not necessarily what was observed. As mentioned previously store bought goods are increasingly being used for daily consumption, and furthermore, local foods such as breadfruit, pawpaw and \textit{pamplimus} were also being sold in shops on the island, and being purchased by locals. Although the expenses on Ambrym are not as necessary as their New Zealand costs, RSE workers have participated in and observed spending practices at home, hence the investment in their own stores with earnings from the scheme.

\textbf{Weddings}

\textit{Last time I use my money to pay for my marriage. This time for my children (Malcolm 2008)}

As the sun beamed down on our cold bodies while working on a vineyard 15 kilometres from Cromwell township, Malcolm was spending his first month of marriage working on a vineyard with 24 others and me. He was saving money to repay debts from his wedding ceremony and began saving for the child he was planning on adopting. Cohen (2011: 102) also noted that Mexican migrants earmark remittances to help repay reciprocal loans that are made for weddings and the birth of children. In this section, I look at the price of weddings on Ambrym, followed with a discussion drawing on customary ‘bride-price.’ The importance of gift exchange, whether this be in the form of food or material items are a part of wider social obligations and relationships that
engender and strengthen connections. The final part of this section briefly discusses how earnings generated in New Zealand have given workers additional financial means to adopt children and contribute to the livelihoods of their communities.

The ability to marry reduced internal feelings of shame for workers. Although not publically humiliated by not being legally married, Max from Linbul said “inside [pointing to his chest] there is shame in not being married to my girlfriend.” The costs of ceremonies are a deterrent for many couples on the island. Participation in the RSE has enabled at least four of my participants and other relatives to marry. Marriages occur during the Tewe season (June-August). Up to 150 people attended the weddings I observed. In 2012, Dave from Sanesup recalled “last year I made a kastom wedding and that was all of my New Zealand money, nothing left after that.” On average workers remit Vt 400–700,000 (NZD 7000–10,000; USD 5810–8300) per season from New Zealand.

**Price of Weddings**

On a hot July day, the village path near the house had been bustling with people carrying yams, taro, plantain bananas, and the occasional pig that was too big for walking tied to a stick. While preparations for the upcoming wedding were under way I spoke to George the ‘yafu’ of the village about weddings and their costs. George told me that the kastom wedding he made was Vt 398,000 (NZD 5852; USD 4857.16). This appeared to be the average cost of weddings I attended.

This cost did not include the pigs and cattle. George said “we also had five cattle for killing to eat on the table, then three pigs are killed for girl’s family. Then five pigs, alive pigs. Three to Santo and then two to Port Vila”. These five pigs were to be distributed to the bride’s family. George emphasised that the initial figure he gave me did not include the all-encompassing aspects related to weddings on Ambrym.

You know wedding is not [only] when we come and get married. No we are going to step by step. Sometimes when the girl come[s]\(^{135}\) then we are going to make a festive. We make a wedding. Another one when the girls give birth, then we make another food [feast]. Too many foods (he laughs). You know, lucky I went to New Zealand and I earn the money, then I make ceremonies.

\(^{135}\) What George means is when a woman enters the village. On Ambrym it is expected for the women to reside in her husband’s natal village.
The point that George makes is that weddings are not seen as separate from other life-cycle events and many feasts are held in relation to the marriage exchange. Rio (2007: 189) observed that there is a “continuous flow of prestations back and forth throughout the whole trajectory of marriage: from the point when a boy and girl find each other and until they die”. In some cases, these feasts, can last upwards to two weeks and the villages hosting them are also responsible for the feeding of up to 1200 people during kastom ceremonial periods. George emphasised that RSE earnings contribute greatly to kastom ceremonies. While in Ambrym I was invited to several wedding ceremonies and was informed that June to September were the best months for ceremonies because it coincided with harvest time (see also Eriksen 2007; Rio 2007). Every wedding I attended on Ambrym lasted for two days. However, preparations and celebrations begin at least one month prior and many days after the ceremonies end. A wedding begins with a kastom ceremony, followed by a church service the next day.136

Village life is extremely busy with preparations for ceremonies during May and August. Preparing for ceremonies is a timely and costly endeavor. During my fieldwork in August 2011 a meeting was held in Ranon concerning an upcoming wedding. It was decided that the wedding should be postponed until 2012 because there were already too many weddings for the season and it was difficult for communities in the region to host further kastom ceremonies that month. This was primarily due to pressures on the available garden produce and financial resources. I was told that it was “too much money and work for everyone, the couple will have to wait until next time” (Interview, George, Ranon village, 2 August 2011).

While at a wedding in Fantor village (a five minute walk from Ranon village), I stood with two RSE workers while the final preparations were made. Ron and Howard were explaining to me the intricacies of kastom weddings and then Howard said “I’m ready to go back to work in New Zealand, all of these ceremonies are costing me too much

136 Practicing both kastom and church ceremonies was also observed by Hess in Vanua Lava, in northern Vanuatu (2006: 84). She observed that “[T]here is no rule as to which ceremony, kastom or church, should happen first; it depends on the individual circumstances of the parties involved.” In her research on Vanuatu wedding ceremonies, Farran (2004: 265) noted “[S]ome interviewees indicated that it is thought that marriage is illegal unless both kastom and the church wedding are performed.”
money.” I asked if by working in New Zealand were they expected to contribute more at ceremonies to which Howard replied, “[Y]es everyone thinks that because we go to New Zealand that we have much money and expect more from us....It’s a burden sometimes.” The RSE scheme has increased the numbers of weddings, which can be an encumbrance on other non-RSE families. This is another reason why workers are expected to contribute more to ceremonies. It was noted that participation in waged labour in Vanuatu in the early 20th century contributed to the inflation of bride-price (Bedford, 1971: 87). No evidence has suggested this been occurring with RSE workers. However, the increased numbers of weddings, financially backed by RSE workers have put substantial pressure on communities to contribute cash, material gifts (such as mats, buckets, calico and rice) as well as local produce, such as yams, taro and plantain bananas.

**Bride price**

The main problem that most people have with *kastom* weddings is the cost of bride price. This cost was a reason for participating in the RSE scheme by many participants. Eriksen (2008: 73) noted that a national standard of ‘bride price’ was set at Vt 80,000 in 2005 by the National Council of Chiefs, the Malvatumauri.137 Furthermore, as a means of reducing financial pressure for ni-Vanuatu, cash to pay for bride price was revoked in 2006 by the Council of Chiefs,138 although traditional forms of bride price such as the exchange of mats and pigs remained. Bride price is also associated with movement. As observed by other anthropologists (Eriksen 2007; Hess 2009; Jolly 1994; Rio 2007), on Ambrym it is expected that the woman moves to her husband’s village. This is still practiced today. Much of the bride price is to cover the loss of productive labour of the bride who is leaving her village, although the most important aspect of the ‘bride price’ payment lies in the forms of social obligations and relationships that are forged through these payments. Bride-price is “based on a societal fund” and circulated in Ambrym (Eriksen, 2008: 78). The money is redistributed on the island for future weddings.


Gift Exchange and Relationships

Contributions and gift exchanges influence relationships. Shown in figure 48 are prestation piles for a *kastom* wedding. These piles are central to what Rio (2007: 186) calls the “relational economy.” He (Rio 2007: 186) argues that “[T]he heaping of food and money is the vehicle that drives all social transformations on Ambrym, creating a motion that is crucial to Ambrym *kastom* and social reproduction.” During *kastom* wedding celebrations I observed note-takers meticulously documenting gift exchanges between families.¹³⁹ Records of contributions are taken in order to aid in future reciprocal exchanges between families. I also observed differences in exchanges during church and kastom wedding gifts.

¹³⁹ The documentation of bride-price and contributions to prestation piles and *Sakem Presen* was undertaken from the relatives of the bride.
At church wedding ceremonies gifts were usually household goods such as buckets, mats, cloths, toiletries, suitcases, and bags. I was involved in a number of Sakem Presen ceremonies, such as the one shown in figure 49. They began after either the kastom ceremony or the church ceremony. After noting that Sean purchased more than one suitcase every year, I was told that participating in the RSE scheme made goods available such as suitcases for Sakem Presen ceremonies.

After returning from a wedding ceremony in Fantor village, a husband and wife discussed an upcoming wedding in Ranon village. The wife told me she refused to contribute or attend this wedding, as the husband to be did not contribute in any way to her wedding many years before. Her husband was angry about her decision and

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140 Eriksen (2008:73) believes that Sakem Presen was a new ceremony established in the 1960s: “[M]y hypothesis is that the new ceremony is connected to changing kinship practices, and in particular changes in the brother-sister relationship, as a result of town migration and waged labour.”

141 Eriksen (2008: 66) noted that chests and suitcases are often gifts given by the bride’s brother, used to put presents in.
informed me that although the impending groom (his brother) had not contributed to his wedding, it was not in his heart not to contribute to his brother’s wedding. This occurred 14 years before the couple’s wedding. This demonstrates that contributions (or the lack of them) are still remembered. The following year I was told that the groom to be made a sori ritual\textsuperscript{142} to the family and others in the community for not contributing to their past ceremonies and the husband gave him Vt 10,000 (NZD 158; USD 131.14) towards his upcoming ceremony.

The RSE assists in meeting financial obligations of marriage, such as ceremonial exchanges. Additionally, one of the young and single participants further noted “I now get more interest from women because they know I go to New Zealand.” Therefore the scheme is widening choices of potential marriage partners. This research did not inquire into the implications of RSE workers increasing marital options, but this would be worth examining in the future.

Many workers who live in Port Vila ensure that they participate in social obligations that are required of them in Ambrym, to maintain connections not just for themselves but also their children. Another use of earnings is that it has allowed RSE workers from Ambrym, who do not reside on Ambrym, to bring their children home to learn and participate in Ambrym kastom and language. One worker told me that without his earnings his children may not have had the opportunity to connect with his lands or his kin, as they lived in Port Vila and did not have the financial means. His sons have been able to travel to Ambrym and participate in kastom ceremonies.

\textbf{Remittances}

Remittances to developing countries more than doubled over the 1990s, whereas official aid flows showed a declining trend. Migrant remittances have made possible a drastic improvement in the living conditions of millions of households in migrant-sending countries (De Hass, 2005: 1277).

The distribution of international aid has decreased worldwide since the 1990s (De Hass 2005; Crewe and Axeby 2012; Kitt 2010; McGillivray 2005). Remittances have been viewed as a form of ‘foreign aid.’ Anthropologist Leigh Binford notes “[I]ndeed, the Canadian government even goes so far as to count worker remittances as part of its foreign aid package!” (Binford, 2002:1). Likewise, at the beginning of the RSE scheme

\textsuperscript{142} A sori ritual is a process of reconciliation in ni-Vanuatu.
some New Zealand growers called the scheme an aid handout and welfare scheme for Pacific Islanders. Yet, my research participants emphasised that the scheme was good for them and although they appreciated aid from donors, they did not like relying on aid from foreign countries such as Australia and New Zealand. RSE participants did not view the programme as a form of foreign aid. For them it was work abroad and their earnings would aid their own self-development.

There are critics of the scheme who suggest the RSE does little to aid Pacific workers. For example, John Connell (2010b: 115) argued, “[F]or almost all workers, the income brought home had little long term impact and many returnees had exhausted their incomes within two or three months.” It is true that earnings are normally spent, or redistributed quickly upon return to Vanuatu. Many workers will pay their childrens’ school fees in advance, and when they return in May it is the beginning of the tewe season when most kastom ceremonies are held. The consequences of contributing labour migrant earnings to kastom ceremonies and expected family and community obligations, yield the long-term impacts that are often neglected in studies of work migration. Furthermore, as I mentioned in chapter four, holding money can draw unwanted attention from spirits and has often been referred to as a source of anger and jealousy in north Ambrym communities. Although some incomes are withheld from general society, there is an expectation that RSE earnings will be recirculated and shared throughout Ambrym communities.

Remittances from RSE workers are incorporated and make substantial contributions to the dual economies on Ambrym. In this section I discuss the importance of remittances, the processes of remitting earnings home and show how workers also transform monetary remittances into material remittances to be used for improving livelihoods and exchange. I also use Peggy Levitt’s ‘social remittances’ to analyse the transference of knowledge that workers gain while in New Zealand. In doing so I analyse how applicable new skills obtained in New Zealand are in everyday lives in Vanuatu.

All remittances are associated with specific objectives in mind. The majority of funds remitted were allocated for school fees or contributions towards immediate family and community obligations either in the form of ceremonies or with other social obligations in mind. In regards to remittances Eggebo (2010: 38) noted, “topics like obligations and morality have been stripped away from the concept to make it easier to put them into
the economical equation.” Migrant obligations to their families and communities are included in this study; due to the importance and influence they have on RSE workers’ decisions, in participation and redistribution of earnings.

**Remittance debates**
The primary concern of RSE stakeholders is how remittances are spent. Monetary remittances are used primarily for consumption when migrants return home (Brettell 2007; Mares and Macelllan 2006; Pritchett 2006; Martin 2007; Taylor; 1999; The World Bank 2006). There are expectations from policy makers that migrant workers will use their remittances for investment purposes. However, Basok (2002:79) observed that although international labour migration schemes contribute to some economic growth for workers, growth is limited, especially for migrants from rural areas with limited services and infrastructure (Basok 2002; Taylor 1999).

It is depicted as wasteful if a migrant labourer and his family do not attempt to invest some of the capital that he/she has earned (De Hass 2007). Yet the concept of investment itself is a culturally specific phenomenon. Labour migrants spend the majority of their earnings on household needs (Cohen 2005). Cederström (1990: 2) argued household use of remittances is not well understood, which is evident in mainstream economic data collection of monetary remittances.

Even if the money has been spent on education and household consumables these are important investments. The investment into family health, education, or community social obligations should not be dismissed so readily as they are the primary reasons for participating in the RSE scheme. Remittances do not just sustain homes, they help justify policies. Success stories displayed at the office of the Vanuatu Department of Labour such as ‘Bob built a house and a business in his village’, or ‘Jill has been able to harvest more this year with the aid of Pacific workers’ promote and justify the RSE as positive for New Zealand growers and Pacific workers.

A key question raised by Sasin and McKenzie that is often not included in the remittance debate is:

...why would remittances be spent in any different manner than normal income? In theory, increased income helps buy more of all normal goods, including health and education. If a poor household consumes 80% of its total income, so would it consume about 80% of income from remittances (2007: 5).
Which draws back to the question, why should migrants’ remittances be used for development? As Binford (2003) and de Hass (2009) have argued, migrant remittances should not be expected to trigger development, and there are various forms of development that workers aim to achieve. How remittances are valued by migrants and those who study migrants is often ambiguous; as are the intended purpose of remittances and how they should be spent. What cash is available on Ambrym is usually spent on food, school fees, kava and contributions to community activities such as church, fundraisers and participation in the ceremonial economy. As Connell and Conway (2000: 53) state, remittances are a fundamental private transfer of capital, and return migrants represent people endowed with human capital, capable of enriching the social and cultural capital stocks of their island communities. Furthermore, remittances and return migrants’ contributions to social and cultural capital accumulation strengthen familial and communal networks and ties. They not only help to maintain these institutions but enlarge their social fields of interaction, incorporating them into transnational, multilocal networks of support and empowerment.

As an outcome of the RSE there have been a number of investments in Ambrym. These investments are considered as being limited in mainstream studies of productive remittances; but on a social level most incomes from working in New Zealand benefit long-term relationships on the island.

Workers’ remittances contribute towards ceremonial occasions. Connell and Brown (2005) observed this was common practice in the Pacific. Remittance experts and people I have spoken with have differing opinions on workers spending incomes on ceremonies; some argue that it is a waste of money. Sahlins (2005a: 29) noted that contributing and subsidising ceremonial activities, seems a ‘waste’ in the Eurocentric view, considering the ‘poverty’. But personal consumption and our so-called comforts of life are not yet the stuff of which their happiness is made, nor is maximization of material gain in relation to production. What is disguised by terms such as ‘pretige goods’ and ‘ceremonial’ is an interest in imports whose use and exchange develops the larger relationships of community and society, not excluding relationships to ancestors, gods and the cosmos in general.

In relation to remittance and investment debates ceremonies are often depicted as mainly consumption focused. Arguments that they are a ‘waste’ shows a lack of understanding of the value of these ceremonies and their purpose within society. In the context of Ranon, money is spent on ceremonies as an investment that fulfills social obligations (Eriksen 2008; Hess 2009; Rio 2007; Strathern 1988). These financial and
social exchanges create and maintain relationships and identity within communities. Furthermore, these contributions are an investment in migrants’ futures, as they secure impending obligations and relations of reciprocity. Sending money and goods home is part of the migration experience and also reflects the needs and wants of individuals and their immediate kin and communities.

**Remitting money: The Process.**

There were concerns over high remittance costs (fees charged by banks and/or other financial service providers to send money offshore) from New Zealand to the Pacific before the RSE scheme started (Gibson and McKenzie 2006). In 2007 a transaction fee of NZD 25 to send money home deterred many RSE participants remitting funds on a regular basis. However, the scheme itself led to calls to reduce these fees to NZD 20 among some banks for RSE participants (Abel and Hailwood 2009). Yet most migrant workers feel that the fee is still too high and only send money home on a ‘need to’ basis, such as for school fees or for unexpected funeral expenses.

Because of high remittance fees, participants remitted the majority of their earnings in a large sum, about two weeks before returning to Vanuatu. Taylor (1999: 68) observed “[T]he willingness of migrants to remit depends, in part, on economic and savings policies in the host and home countries, exchange rate and risk factors, and the availability and efficiency of transfer facilities.” Workers understand that the fewer times they remit, the less fees incurred during their time in New Zealand. The fee for remitting money in the Pacific one of the highest in the world (Luthria 2009). A report by both the Australian and New Zealand Governments, *Trends in Remittance Fees and Charges* (2010) acknowledged that remittance fees in the region are estimated to be worth USD90 million per year. Remittance fees provide significant profits for providers (Orozco 2006). An increase in remittance service providers has led to competition in the marketplace, reducing costs for migrant workers (Orozco 2006). Recent competition between banks and money transfer agencies, such as Western

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Union, has reduced monetary transfer fees from New Zealand to the Pacific in the last four years (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2012: 31).\textsuperscript{144}

In 2009, economist John Gibson informed me about new developments for remittances in the Pacific. That year the website www.sendmoneypacific.org was established. It is funded by both the Australian and New Zealand Aid agencies, as an initiative to reduce remittance costs. The New Zealand Department of Immigration’s RSE Get Ready Pack, is a booklet that workers are given, providing information about New Zealand including working and living in the country. There is a section on remittances in the booklet describing bank fees for remittances.\textsuperscript{145} The www.sendmoneypacific.org website is promoted in the booklet. This website is useful and gives workers many options on providers for remitting money home. This is only useful if seasonal workers have access to the internet and/or some computer knowledge. Participants in this ethnography primarily sent remittances over the counter at their bank.\textsuperscript{146} Even though there has been a reduction of remittance fees, workers are conscious of how these fees total overall. Most will keep their earnings in bank accounts until the end of their work season (unless funds are requested for urgent matters in Vanuatu).

Seasonal workers can now use mobile money facilities to remit earnings. The telecommunications organisation Digicel expanded into the Pacific in 2006. Since its arrival in the region it has become one of the most popular mobile phone providers in the Pacific islands. Digicel Mobile Money was first launched in the Pacific in 2010.\textsuperscript{147} The standard fee using Digicel’s Mobile Money service is NZD 3 (USD 2.49; Vt 204), making it the most affordable method of transferring money home. However, at the time of writing this thesis (2010–2014), this service was only available in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. Vanuatu was not included. Ni-Vanuatu workers are aware of Digicel’s remittance program but are skeptical of its use and although they were impressed with

\textsuperscript{146} This might change with the introduction of computers in their New Zealand residence.

the low fees, the practicalities and accessibility of this service on Ambrym was of concern.

When workers remitted money, outside of their banks, through the local postal office, they filled out a Western Union form to put the money inside, and gave it to their accommodation hosts. Because they worked during postal and banking trading hours, they would give the form and money to their accommodation hosts to processed on their behalf. On the few occasions when I remitted money for RSE workers, the payment was usually for school fees or *kastom* ceremonies. Workers’ earnings that are not transferred through banking institutions or carried home are often sent back to Vanuatu in shipping containers for individual, family and community needs.

**Remitting Goods**

Every year the men have hired a container to ship goods home to Vanuatu. Containers, such as the one shown in figure 50, costs between NZD 10,000–15,000 (USD 8300–12,450; Vt 680,000–1,020,000) and the price per worker was approximately NZD 300 (USD 249; Vt 20,400), as they shared the cost with other ni-Vanuatu in the region. Workers aim to recuperate these expenses by selling the containers in Port Vila. Nonetheless, every year they have run a loss in doing so. Most seasons they have received between NZD 5000–7000 (USD 4150–5810; Vt 340,000–476,000) for the sale. In 2013 they could not find a buyer. Because of this in 2014 workers did not invest in a container, which will result in fewer material items from New Zealand for families and communities.
As can be seen in figure 50, there are many mattresses taken back to Vanuatu. In Ranon in 2011, 44 mattresses arrived with 17 RSE workers returning from New Zealand. Simon commented that “many workers are bringing mattresses home but most do not have a home to put them in.” (Personal communication, Simon, Ranon village, 2011). This is often joked about on the island. Mattresses are a luxury item that are extremely expensive in Vanuatu and have become the most popular item to bring home from New Zealand.

When workers were filling the container in Central Otago to send goods home to Vanuatu in 2013 I noticed nine wooden chests put in the container. The men said that these chests were for Sakem Presen. Some of the men had crafted them in their spare time in New Zealand. Additionally, workers have been given money by individuals and groups from their communities in Ambrym to purchase items in New Zealand, such as cell phones, cameras, and computers.

Other goods taken in 2013 were bicycles, hand lawn mowers and electric grass cutters, five and ten kilo tubs of laundry powder, fridges and freezers (mainly for those who
live or have family living in Port Vila), couches, chairs, tables, wooden chests, mirrors, ladders, musical instruments (such as guitars and keyboards), cupboards and draw sets, shovels, tools for construction and horticulture, mirrors, second hand clothing and shoes. John told me that on the weekend prior to my arrival they went to the Wanaka recycling shop in Central Otago and they purchased nearly all of the stock, leaving it empty. A number of donations destined for Vanuatu have been given to workers from various communities in Otago.

Alongside others, Ron has taken second hand clothing and goods to Port Vila. The clothing is either sold or given to other ni-Vanuatu in the region. In 2014 Ron’s wife sold the clothing in a market stall and made Vt 92, 000 (NZD 1140.73; USD 957.60). After general expenditures, this money is allocated to family and/or community needs. Brown and Connell (1993) highlighted material remittances in the informal economy of Tonga, and Karen Hansen (2000) has focused on second hand clothing and its impacts in Zambia. Remitting second hand goods can result in financial and social rewards for migrants. Nonetheless, often the cost of remitting is more that the value of the goods sent home. Several workers told me that the origin of the goods or the act of trade held the value of exchange.

Overall there have largely been positive responses to the goods workers return with. I only heard of two complaints. One was the chief’s lament “when it is time for the men to be working in the garden many are not to be found….They were gone watching movies on their portable DVD players that they had purchased while in New Zealand.” This was also stated by a community leader in west Ambrym in 2011 who did not like “time-wasters” such as televisions and DVD players brought home and insisted that the men should invest their earnings wisely. In his view that was on the community.

Two questions I am frequently asked by residents in Central Otago and news media are ‘is the scheme good for workers and does the RSE disrupt their social fabric by taking home western ideas and goods?’ In short the answer is no. The RSE has not generated new demands for these goods. Many of the needs and wants of RSE participants existed prior to the scheme. Remittances have enabled access to goods that are normally out of

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economic reach for many ni-Vanuatu (see Durand *et al* (1996) for comparison with Mexican migrants). At least 90 per cent of the container was filled with household furniture and goods. The remainder consisted of second hand clothing, musical equipment (mainly for churches), solar panels and electronic equipment (computers, cameras, and cellphones) that were anticipated to be sold for profit upon return. In the first three seasons, 2007–2010, workers also returned with chainsaws and small farm machinery that they used in Central Otago. Durand *et al* (1996: 434), observed that Mexican migrants purchased similar goods that they rented out to others. In 2011, I noted that one RSE worker had two chainsaws that he hired for a small fee to people in the community.

How remittances are spent is contested. On the one hand they are considered the property of the migrant. On the other hand, ownership of ni-Vanuatu RSE workers remittances has competing claimants back at home. Even though I have previously discussed the multiple ways remittances can be spent, workers themselves have an ambivalent relationship to setting aside their wages for the ‘common good of the community.’ While they acknowledge and invariably fulfill family and community obligations to give, gift and reciprocate, they also spend their wages to buy goods that they like, enjoy and want. In New Zealand and Vanuatu they are both consumers exercising their own preferences and providers for families and communities meeting expectations to share, distribute and return the benefits that accrue from working in foreign fields.

**Social Remittances**

Cash and material remittances that flow from New Zealand to Vanuatu are being documented by the Vanuatu Department of Labour. Little work, if any has been produced concerning RSE social remittances that are transferred from one place to another.

Social remittances are based on knowledge transference from one area to another by migrants. In this case, knowledge is taken back to Vanuatu and knowledge from workers is also implanted by workers in New Zealand host communities. These remittances, such as education programs similar to Vakameasina are transferrable. Levitt and Nieves (2010) also suggest that social remittances circulate. They have wide reaching consequences and influences among communities and nations. Policy makers
and organisers of seasonal workers educational programs, such as the Vakameasina, suggest that workers will obtain new skills while in New Zealand and share these when they return to Vanuatu to aid in local development.

The transfer of social remittances from New Zealand to communities of RSE workers has been limited. What knowledge and skills workers take home has not been part of this study. Findings so far have been that what knowledge has been learned in New Zealand is shared with RSE workers communities. Workers often discussed and analysed social practices of New Zealanders with their communities, though many of these practices were not applicable to Ambrym societies. However, social remittances gained in labour schemes are not limited to migrants (Levitt 2001). New Zealand host communities have also been recipients of social remittances. Ni-Vanuatu have been consulted and participated with local community members in Central Otago for hunting and fishing. Additionally, annual concerts have provided people in New Zealand with a context for the histories and cultures of Vanuatu. These are examples of social remittances that have resulted from this labour migration scheme. I anticipate the impacts of transferrable social remittances will be a focus of future research in the RSE scheme.

Roles of remittances
There is a correlation between the cash economy and development. The RSE scheme has aided economic, social, and cultural development through not only cash resources but also newly acquired skills gained while in New Zealand. Nonetheless, it is the traditional economy that maintains the majority of ni-Vanuatu livelihoods. Costs associated with Kastom ceremonies such as weddings, hinder the chances of marriage for many ni-Vanuatu. Participation in the RSE scheme has provided revenue for workers and families to engage in customary ceremonies. However, two consequences of this have been the expectations that workers are to contribute large amounts of earnings into the ceremonial economy and the increased pressure on limited resources, such as garden produce, for the elevated number of weddings.

There are international debates about remittances use. In this example, I argue that workers earnings contribute to a number of areas in the social lives of Ambrymese. The financial costs of sending money home restricts how often workers remit. The preferable method is to remit earnings prior to their return home. Large quantities of
material remittances have been sent to Vanuatu since 2008. Requests for goods from New Zealand are made by many in Ambrym. Nonetheless, the expenses associated with shipping and the loss of earnings workers have experienced in recuperating the costs of shipping containers has resulted in a season of small material items that will be taken home in suitcases. Social remittances are transferred to Ambrym but on a small scale, as much of what is learned in New Zealand is not applicable in Ambrym. However, workers have said that education through programs such as the Vakameasina can be applied and give practical life skills that they can share with others. Remittances are largely invested in the community, contributing to educating children, improving water supplies, community projects, the church, and financing social obligations such as kastom ceremonies. Through these avenues, workers earnings are recirculated throughout the island.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis has covered multiple facets of labour migration, all the while drawing attention to workers participating in the RSE to obtain incomes to improve livelihoods at home. By working in New Zealand, ni-Vanuatu have been provided with an additional source of income that can aid in generating individual and local development. This particular form is ‘self-development’. Unlike other forms of development, such as aid given from international agencies, migrant workers are in control of how it is used for individual and community needs. Nonetheless, workers have to negotiate the distribution of earnings, as this money is expected to cover a number of areas in economic, ritual and social life, including assisting in community development.

An important finding of this research is how workers’ earnings are redistributed throughout the island in a number of ways. Whether this is through the ceremonial economy, fundraising or other means of exchange, it is clear that the concept of individual ownership of incomes from New Zealand is contested. Workers negotiate the use of their incomes with their immediate family, extended kin and their communities. Furthermore, they are bound to the prescribed social obligations and requirements that motivated their participation in the scheme.

I have argued that money from the RSE scheme contributes to a number of social and economic spheres on Ambrym and in Port Vila. Using the approach of multi-sited research, regular return visits to Central Otago and Vanuatu, and my personal relationship with workers, their families and employers I was privileged to information that may not have been evident if I had only spent one year on Ambrym or in Central Otago. This approach allowed me to gain information on the experiences of the RSE and follow remittances in multiple locations over a three year period.148

In chapter two I introduced the grower initiated RSE scheme and its aims of providing employers with a reliable workforce. At the same time, policy makers promoted the RSE as a method of encouraging economic development in Pacific island states. The RSE has enabled economic growth in the Pacific, but it may not be in the ways that the

148 Or longer if I include my previous research in Central Otago 2007–2009.
participating governments intended. For example, at RSE meetings I have attended, policy officials have hoped that workers will establish their own businesses on the island and not have to return to New Zealand. With the exception of one man in this study, all workers that have set up small businesses in Vanuatu are continuing to return to New Zealand annually. Workers highlight successes from the scheme in relation to how they use their earnings, either for individual household needs or in ways in which money or material goods benefit their communities.

I have traced historical information on how ni-Vanuatu have experienced past contact with traders, missionaries and labour recruiters. There are some similarities between today’s RSE scheme and the 19th century labour trade, where there were new waged opportunities for the acquisition of goods, money, knowledge and prestige. Providing this historical background to Vanuatu’s labour and employment opportunities contributes to an understanding of how New Zealand’s RSE scheme and Australia’s Seasonal Worker program (SWP) has been viewed by many ni-Vanuatu. Memories of the past have influenced perceptions of current day labour mobility practices, evident in storytelling on Ambrym or through dramatic reenactments performed by RSE workers in Central Otago community halls.

There are distinct differences in the practices in sandalwood and labour trade eras, and within contemporary international work schemes. However, the recruitment methods and experiences of Melanesian labour are largely dominated by stories of blackbirding. One similarity I have drawn from ni-Vanuatu historical labour eras and the RSE include the notion of being selected to work for the community and returning with requested material goods on successive return trips for overseas wages work.

Mobility practices changed when the condominium of the New Hebrides was established by France and the United Kingdom in 1906. Ni-Vanuatu who had always been mobile traders and explorers had restrictions placed on their movements within the archipelago. Waged labour for the French and the British was controversial and recruitment of ni-Vanuatu was often difficult. It was argued that ni-Vanuatu often worked for target incomes and abandoned their contracts once they reached their goals. In the 1960s, employment opportunities improved with the diversification of the economy, which provided new waged income opportunities. Running parallel were employment opportunities in New Caledonia, which is still a favoured waged work
destination for ni-Vanuatu today. Since Vanuatu gained independence, there have been limited cross-border labour schemes for its citizens to participate in. The RSE (and now SWP) are providing ni-Vanuatu new opportunities to aid in achieving improved livelihoods.

Annually, thousands of potential RSE workers apply for positions in New Zealand. There are limited spaces and the processes of recruitment come at a large cost. Women are invited to participate in the scheme, but as I have discussed this is discouraged on Ambrym. Women on the island disagreed on the cultural reasons for this and argued that they too should have the opportunity to work in New Zealand as other female ni-Vanuatu have done. I am unsure if this matter will be resolved, as two years after my conversations with Ambrymese women, they are still absent from the RSE.

Chapter three introduced and explored Ambrym as an island, predominately the Lolihor region. Derogatory names and perceptions of Ambrym have been blamed for the lack of ‘development’ in the region. There are limited opportunities for waged labour on Ambrym, which also explains why seasonal workers are enthusiastically recruited from here. Cash is scarce on Ambrym. The main cash crop is copra, but with so many ni-Vanuatu involved in this sector and the given copra prices (which have tended downwards since independence in 1980), earning money from this is intermittent at best. Still RSE workers invest and participate in the copra industry for cash returns. Workers have also invested in cattle projects. With the growing number of SDAs and the requirement to provide cattle for ceremonial feasts, this will be an investment that will continue to grow, as have the number of RSE workers taking up the opportunity to do so.

Selling local produce can generate small amounts of cash but not enough for a regular income. Island agriculture is susceptible to natural disasters in the Pacific region and these can lead to a need for cash to purchase store bought food. People are becoming more reliant on these goods and this is evident in the number of RSE workers investing in stores in the region. Disrupted transport affects store supplies and profits made in *bisnes* on Ambrym are governed by reciprocal relationships and exchange practices that are not necessarily recognised through the Western lens of business profitability. This has led to ethnocentric views on why RSE workers ‘fail’ in Western business terms.
Attracting tourism to the island was emphasised by Ambrymese as a way forward in generating cash to encourage development on the island. There are limited tourism opportunities on Ambrym, where the main two attractions are the volcanoes and festivals. During festival times, island artifacts and customary performances are displayed to engage tourists with local knowledge and to sell items such as carvings and bamboo flutes. This is limited to a small percentage of people that have achieved the appropriate status to reproduce these artifacts. Only a small amount of tourist cash is generated in the northern areas of Ambrym and changes are being made to local cultural taboos in order to acquire more money in the region. It is expected that RSE workers will invest in the tourism sectors of the island. Conflicting expectations of various groups in different communities have stalled proposed tourism development projects in the region. RSE workers who are expected to fund these projects are hesitant to contribute until there is a clear goal in mind that will benefit their immediate societies.

Incomes from the RSE have established a number of businesses for the recruits themselves, kinsfolk and community groups in the archipelago. The most popular have been power, benzine supply, bakeries, small stores, and in Port Vila buses and taxis. These do not always generate large cash returns because of cultural and economic environments, especially on Ambrym. Available cash on Ambrym is normally re-circulated through various local economies. Earnings from the RSE provide an additional source of cash to be redistributed for individual and community needs. A few workers have provided casual employment for others in their community.

Chapter four documented participation in the RSE and changes that occurred between 2007–2013. I discussed the way Port Vila is a transitional space for workers and I observed that there are a number of concerns that need addressing in hosting workers in the capital. The loss of workers’ earnings in Port Vila and the demands on workers’ hosts can affect social relationships. Workers do compensate kin for hosting their stay; and therefore Ambrymese RSE earnings are finding means of being redistributed in the capital. However, family and communities on Ambrym have complained about the loss of earnings in the capital and suspected inappropriate spending practices by workers and kin in the region.
I also highlighted notions of work on Ambrym and noted that there was a hierarchy in the concepts of paid and unpaid work. This has allowed an analysis of the ways in which RSE participants defined and depicted the work they did on Ambrym and in New Zealand. I also meet with Ambrymese who wanted to participate in overseas seasonal labour schemes and those who did not. Money, time, New Zealand’s cold climate and home sickness were given as reasons for not participating in the scheme.

Participating in the scheme has also led to changes in leadership structures. Ni-Vanuatu team leaders have a number of responsibilities, such as reporting to the Vanuatu Department of Labour, and their employers. Furthermore they are expected to lead, motivate, and maintain group harmony among their team of workers. Appointed leaders in New Zealand do not necessarily reflect leadership structures on Ambrym. This has caused conflict and resistance in the past. However, workers know that upsetting New Zealand leaders could potentially affect their future participation, so resistance is often concealed (Bailey 2009).

The RSE has proved to be beneficial for employers and the productivity of New Zealand’s horticulture and viticulture industries. Hiring offshore labour is more expensive than sourcing local workers. Employers have noted that the benefits have outweighed the costs. Relationships between employer and employees are not limited to the workplace. Employers have also made links with Vanuatu communities through visits and donations.

In chapter five I discussed employers’ pastoral care responsibilities for workers. Initially employers inducted workers into their various communities in Central Otago. Experienced RSE workers have now taken on the role of introducing new recruits into the region and the economic and social norms and values of New Zealand society. Although employers mainly focused on medical injuries resulting from work accidents, they are also responsible for how workers interact with the local community during their leisure time and ultimately have the power to blacklist any RSE worker who is seen as behaving inappropriately. Rules are imposed on workers by a number of stakeholders. The example given here was the alcohol ban imposed by the Vanuatu Department of Labour. This ban has multiple outcomes. Firstly, it distinguishes Vanuatu as being the only RSE sending country to do so; secondly, it is aimed at controlling workers’ behaviour during their downtime and thirdly, it will stop workers
from spending their earnings on the consumption of alcohol in New Zealand so they return home with maximised savings.

Workers have integrated well into the local community, mainly through church organisations that have been an additional support since the initiation of the World Bank pilot project in 2007. Religion encompasses all aspects of workers lives in New Zealand, beginning with daily devotions prior to work, that involve invoking their families and communities at home as a reminder of why they are in New Zealand. Because of the lack of waged employment on Ambrym, the RSE is not only an additional source of income but is also a necessity in order to achieve future development. Others on Ambrym have also observed this and migration is becoming integrated into rural society, where participation in offshore seasonal labour schemes is becoming a goal of many.

In addition to how workers experience life in New Zealand, I have noted how families and communities cope with the absence of workers. Few spouses suggested that life was difficult with their partner in New Zealand. Those that struggled the most were spouses with children under the age of ten, who noted their young cried for their fathers. Because workers come from many villages on Ambrym, labour losses are not that noticeable. Most RSE families have support from other kin in their community. The only lack of support I was made aware of was in Port Vila, where RSE wives have begun their own support group. Workers that have chosen to remain at home, or take a break from the scheme upon the request of spouses have found it difficult to re-enter. Because of this, workers are hesitant to leave the scheme.

Advancement in technologies has aided in maintaining communication between workers, their families and communities. This allows workers to participate in community decisions from New Zealand. As many told me, since the new cellphone tower was erected in North Ambrym they do not feel as isolated from their husbands or wives as before.

Working for the good of the community was a focus of chapter six. It was expected that local development and improved livelihoods would be triggered by RSE incomes. Earnings from New Zealand are recirculated on Ambrym in various ways, through the church, fundraising, and local development projects. This chapter highlighted the various competing claims to workers incomes. The changes in contributions to the
Lolihor Development Council have changed and continue to do so on a regular basis. The LDC first recruited workers and now, due to a number of concerns raised by workers and communities, it is largely omitted from involvement and is no longer a recipient of RSE financial contributions. RSE incomes have been redirected to other councils and projects on Ambrym. This thesis has shown that relationships with money can be both divisive and unifying.

Not only has ni-Vanuatu migration provided changes in livelihoods but evidence of working in New Zealand is reflected in the landscapes of Vanuatu. Symbols representing New Zealand are displayed in areas that RSE workers have used their earnings, such as buses, taxis, wells, shops, and interior and exterior areas of homes. These symbols are linked to the identities of workers. They are a declaration of participation in the scheme and the result of doing so.

New Zealand employers were initially skeptical about workers’ incomes being distributed to the community in 2007, but have changed their views on how workers redistribute their earnings. After learning more about their workers and spending time in ni-Vanuatu communities, employers have now seen and understand why they share their incomes at home and encourage them to maximize their savings. Employers’ interactions with workers and their Vanuatu communities have been beneficial. Employers have not just provided workers with employment but also contributed to workers’ social, material and financial remittances, through donations to the island (such as water pumps and hospital beds), providing financial assistance towards busking transportation, and access to educational training courses.

The main reason for participating in the RSE scheme was to earn money for education. Every worker contributed to a relative’s school fees. Although there have been changes to school fees in Vanuatu this has not resulted in a nationwide reduction of fees as these are variable throughout the archipelago. RSE earnings have enabled children to not only participate in primary schooling but also continue onwards to secondary and for some to tertiary education. Although parents I spoke with in Ranon were ambiguous towards the education system, they also valued their children’s opportunities to gain a higher education than themselves. As a result of the RSE, workers have been given the opportunity to further their education through the Vakameasina. This program has
given workers the tools to further their literacy and numeracy, budgetary and leadership skills, which can be transferred into Ambrymese economic and social systems.

A number of development programs have been initiated with RSE earnings and through establishing new social relations in New Zealand. Not only are workers involved in these projects but they are also receiving support from communities in New Zealand to aid in local projects. The development of an improved tourism sector is a focus for a number of Ambrymese communities. Workers have invested earnings in building guest houses, that will provide a resource for cash for themselves and others in the community that will assist in providing services for guest bungalows. Tourism on Ambrym has increased through contacts workers make in New Zealand.

Chapter seven briefly discussed the dual economies on Ambrym and noted that although the traditional economy is strong, the influence of cash in kastom ceremonies prevents spouses from participating in traditional wedding exchange ceremonies. I used weddings as an example, because a number of workers have participated in the RSE solely to engage in this particular ceremonial exchange. RSE workers are expected to contribute generously to the ceremonial economy and some workers have resented this. On the other hand, the increase of weddings that have occurred due to the influx of RSE earnings to the island has put pressure on other community members and their limited financial and traditional resources. Everyone that attends a wedding is expected to contribute a gift. These gift exchanges form the basis of social relationships on the island. People will enter into debt to contribute, and those that do not give are not seen in good standing.

RSE earnings have contributed to new relationships and connections in kastom learning for those that participate. Workers have had the financial capacity to marry and contribute to weddings of extended kin. In doing so, workers maintain current forms of relationships that involve reciprocity and social obligations. Another use of earnings is that it has given opportunities for RSE workers, who do not reside on Ambrym to bring their children home to learn Ambrym kastom and language.

Workers return with their earnings in two forms of remittances; monetary and material. Additionally workers bring social remittances, which to a limited extent can be transferred to island life. Due to the financial costs of remitting money, workers tend to limit the transfer of funds until the end of their working season. Exceptions to this are if
their earnings are needed at home earlier at the request of a family member. Worker earnings are invested for a number of individual and community orientated purposes. In addition to cash, requests are made for workers to return with material items such as household goods or equipment for community activities. Workers have recently questioned the costs and time of transporting these goods. Overall, financial and material remittances from the RSE have aided in the improvement of livelihoods on Ambrym. It remains uncertain as to how valuable social remittances have been and this indicates an area of further research.

Future research possibilities.
There are a number of lines of inquiry that have emerged from this research. I would like to examine other villages in Vanuatu such as Sanesup in West Ambrym who have lost community members to source permanent waged labour in Port Vila and elsewhere in the archipelago. Conversations from community members have noted that this loss has had serious consequences on social and cultural activities in the region.

Circular migration schemes such as the RSE and SWP are becoming integrated into rural livelihoods. Ni-Vanuatu are not completely dependent on these schemes and at this stage, it is an additional source of income for most. However, I do believe that further attention should be given to Cohen’s (2004) ‘Culture of Migration’ and the dependency of migration and remittances from Reichart (1981) and Binford (2003). As these labour schemes are still recent, long-term evaluations need to be continued in monitoring social and economic consequences.

Blacklisting from the RSE scheme is a grey area. Although workers have been blacklisted for justifiable reasons, I have also documented cases of when they have not. Like Basok (2004) I too have observed that the threat of being blacklisted makes workers compliant while in New Zealand. Conflict between workers and their employers or supervisors will jeopardise future employment opportunities. However, there are also team leaders, family and community members who can also affect chances of participation. The recent alcohol ban can be used as a weapon in evicting workers to allow competitors and rivals into the scheme. Simon said if a man is jealous or did not want him in, he could report that he had been drinking so that he could replace him. In 2011, Dave told me he asked the Vanuatu Department of Labour why was he blacklisted and was not given a reason. How and why workers are blacklisted is
an interesting area of research as although there are reasons for employers and Government departments to blacklist, there is also political motivation in terms of concepts of jealousy and non-sharing that are linked into kinship ties and practices on Ambrym.

In conclusion, through seasonal work in New Zealand ni-Vanuatu RSE workers are reaching their ‘development’ specific goals. The RSE scheme has benefited the livelihoods of ni-Vanuatu seasonal workers by enabling continued school education, housing and infrastructure projects, new business opportunities and an additional source of income to meet *kastom* exchange obligations embedded in culturally significant reciprocal relationships. There are competing interests in the ownership of workers’ wages and how these are distributed. Workers continue to participate due to the ongoing benefits that motivated them to initially migrate. In this thesis I have shown that labour migration is becoming integrated into rural livelihoods in Vanuatu, which reflect the relationships between the individualised governance of money, migration and development in Melanesia. Furthermore, RSE workers are delivering more financial and material remittances that continue to maintain old ties while establishing new social relationships.


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Appendix A: Indicative Interview Questions

Central Otago Indicative Interview Questions

1. How many seasons have you been coming to New Zealand through the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme?
2. What is the main reason for you to come back this season?
3. How has the money helped you in previous seasons? And what have you mainly used the money for?
4. Has being involved in the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme changed your status in the village back home?
5. Would you consider the seasonal work that you do here in New Zealand as a career option?
6. What employment options do you have back home?
7. What are some of the coping strategies that you have in being absent from home? And is there a sense of freedom from village obligations at times?
8. Since the first season have there been any changes with living in New Zealand? Such as more interaction with the local community.
9. What are some of the positive aspects of being involved in the Recognised Seasonal Employers Scheme?
10. What are some of the negative aspects of being involved in the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme?

Vanuatu Indicative Interview Questions

1. How has your husband’s involvement in the Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme affected your daily routine?
2. How many years has he worked in New Zealand?
3. Whose decision was it to go to New Zealand to work?
4. What are the positive aspects of him being away from home for so long?
5. What are the negative aspects of him being away for so long?
6. What does the money from New Zealand contribute to in your daily lives?
7. What does your husband tell you about New Zealand and the work that he does there?
8. How do you think that his absence has impacted on the community as a whole?
9. Can you discuss with me the development projects that have been organised using money from New Zealand?
10. Have you been involved in them and if so can you tell me your experiences?

Sam kwestin blong storian blong risej

1. Yu stap tekpet long hamas yia long wok blong pikim frut, olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan, olsem Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE)?
2. Yu harem olsem wanem long RSE wok ia?
3. Taem yu stap wok long Niu Selan laef blong yu i olsem wanem?
4. Bambae yu plan blong gobak long Niu Selan blong wok long RSE bakegen?
5. Yu tingting RSE i mekem kleksen i go long divelopmen long Vanuatu?
6. Taem man blong yu hemi stap wok long RSE i gat sam janis long laef blong yu o no?
7. Hamas yia man blong yu hemi wok long Niu Selan?
8. Huia i disaed blong go wok long Niu Selan?
9. Olsem wanem ol gudfala samting i stap taem man blong yu i stap aot long haos longwe longtaem olsem?
10. Olsem wanem ol nogud samting i stap taem man blong yu i stap aot long haos longwe longtaem olsem?
11. Ol vatu we i frut blong wok longwe long Niu Selan i mekem olsem wanem long laef blong yufala naoia?
12. Man blong yu hemi talem yu olsem wanem saed blong laef mo wok long Niu Selan?
13. Taem man blong yu i stap longwe long Niu olsem wanem i hapen long ol wok blong komuniti blong yufala?
14. Mi mi gat interes blong ol projek blong divelopmen we oli frut blong ol vatu blong ol wok long Niu Selan. Mi mi glad tumas sapos you save storian saed blong ol projek blong ol divelopmen we oli kamaot long vatu we olgeta man we oli wok long Niu Selan i winim
15. Yu stap tekpat long ol projek blong diveloppmen we i stap gohed olsem ol frut blong ol wok long Niu Selan, yes o no? Sapos yes, yu save storian olsem ol wok long saed blong ol projeck blong divelopmen ia?
Appendix B: Participant information sheets, consent and anonymity waiver forms.

Reference Number 10/150
2010

“Making a Living 2000 Kilometres from Home: The Social Impacts of Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand’s ‘Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme’”.

INFORMATION SHEET FOR
[PARTICIPANTS or PARENTS / GUARDIANS ETC.]

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology. The major aim of this project is to assess the social impact of being involved in New Zealand’s Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme. Moreover, this project will document how being involved has affected the lives of migrant labourers, their families and communities.

The participants required for this project will be any member of the community that has had association with any of the migrant labourers that participated in New Zealand’s labour scheme.

• The only exclusion criteria that I have is that all participants will be over the age of sixteen.
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to discuss your experiences of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme through interviews and be recorded with a digital recorder. These interviews/conversations may happen more than once but should not take more than half an hour to complete. The information that I intend on collecting is on your experiences of New Zealand’s Recognised Employer Scheme. Interviews will be digitally recorded, however casual conversations will not be. All conversations will be confidential. The information that I collect will be used to analyse the social impacts of the scheme.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes the issues of Ni-Vanuatu working in New Zealand and how this affects the family and community. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

There will be no harm or discomfort for you and conversations will be completely confidential. You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University’s research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Reasonable precautions will be taken to protect and destroy data gathered by email. However, the security of electronically transmitted information cannot be guaranteed. Caution is advised in the electronic transmission of sensitive material.
If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Rochelle Bailey or Dr Gregory Rawlings

Department of anthropology

University Telephone Number:- 64-3-4799270

Department of anthropology

University Telephone Number:- 64-3-4794905

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
“Making a Living 2000 Kilometres from Home: The Social Impacts of Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand’s ‘Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme’”.

CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information [video-tapes / audio-tapes: digital recordings] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes the issues of Ni-Vanuatu working in New Zealand and how this affects the family and community. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. If I feel any discomfort or risk to myself during this process, I have the right to withdraw from this project.
6. Due to the fact that this project is self-funded by the researcher there will not be any monetary remuneration for information given.

7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................

...............................

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
“Making a Living 2000 Kilometres from Home:” The Social Impacts of Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand’s ‘Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme

ANONYMITY WAIVER FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this form is to confirm that interviewees for this project agree to their own name being used in the PhD thesis and publications based on the thesis titled “Making a Living 2000 Kilometres from Home”: The Social Impacts of Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand’s ‘Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme.

By signing below I agree that Rochelle-lee Bailey, the PhD student researcher and thesis writer, may use my name in the text and the reference footnotes of the thesis and related publications, in connection with the information covered in my interview. As a result, I will not remain anonymous.

I understand that I can revoke and cancel this anonymity waiver at any time up until the submission of the thesis and or publication of any book or articles that result from it, by informing Rochelle-lee Bailey in writing, by email, telephone, letter or in person. If I revoke and cancel this anonymity waiver in connection with the information covered in my interview, I, and the information I provide will become anonymous.

.................................................................

(Name of participant)

.................................................................

.........................................................
(Signature of participant)
(Date)

.................................................................
Name of Researcher (Rochelle-lee Bailey)

.................................................................

.................................................................
Signature of Researcher (Rochelle-lee Bailey)

(Date)
Wan wan buk blong risej blong ol man we olgeta oli go wokbaot, divelopmen mo olgeta we oli stap biaen long ples blong ol: ol frut we i stap kamaot long sosaeti from ol ni-Vanuatu woka we olgeta oli go stap tekpat long wok blong pikim frut olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan (olsem, long Inglis oli kolem "Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme" [RSE]).

OLGETA MAN MO WOMAN WE OLI TEKPAT LONG RISEJ PROJEK IA

Tangkiu tumas long interes blong yu long projek ia. Ples yu save ridim tok save pepa we i stap ia sloslo bifo we yu disaed sapos yu wantem tekpat o no. Sapos yu disaed blong tekpat long risej ia, mifala i tangkiu tumas. Sapos yu disaed se yu no wantem tekpat long reisej ia, bae yu no gat wan problem we i kam bakegen long yu mo mifala i tangkiu tumas from luk luk gud blong yu long rekwes blong mifala

Risej ia i kam unda olgeta rul blong wan pepa blong digri blong yunivesiti blong Niu Selan we oli kolem Yunivesiti blong Otago we hemi stap long taon blong Dunedin. Bigfala tingting blong wok blong risej ia, hemi lukluk klosup long olgeta janis we hemi stap gohed long sokaeti blong yufala we i kamaot long projek blong pikim frut, olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan (olsem long Inglis oli kolem ‘Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme’ [RSE]). Bambae risej projek ia, em i interes long ol storian blong olgeta man, mo ol woman we olgeta oli tekpat long RSE wetem ol famle mo komuniti blong olgeta we oli stap long Vanuatu.

Olgeta man mo woman we oli stap tekpat long risej projek ia, hem i ingkludum eniwan mo evriwan blong komuniti we hemi bitim 16 yia mo hemi gat
asosiesen (olsem, famle, fren, pikinini, papa, mama, angkel, anti) wetem olgeta woka we olgeta oli go wok long Niu Selan blong pikim frut olsem grep mo apol.

Sapos yu agri blong tekpat blong risej projek ia, bambae mifala i askem yu blong storian long ol wok, tingting mo wokbaot we yu yu mekem taem yu tekpat long RSE. Sapos yu no tekpat long RSE, be yu papa, mama, pikinini, angkel, anti o fren blong olgeta we oli tekpat, mifala i askem yu plis blong storian long ol frut we i stap kamaot long aelan mo taon from wok blong olgeta (i olsem divelopmen long komuniti, olsem wanem i mekem long garen taem ol man oli aot long aelan, mo jioj, kastom mo laef blong ol famle blong olgeta). Sapos yu wantem yu save storian wan wan taem nomo, o sapos yu wantem storian fullup taem saed long ol toktok ia hemi desisen blong yu nomo. Ol storian ia, i stap olsem wan o tu aoa nomo. Bambae mi mi stap long komuniti wetem yufala everiwan we yu stap long ples ia mo mi tekpat long ol wok, plei mo prea long jioj blong yufala olgeta man Ambrym. Olsem mi mi wantem go long garen, jioj, maret, mo lafet we hemi stap long laef, kalja mo socaeti blong yufala. Ol storian blong RSE em i stampa blong ol narafala storian we em i stap klosup long RSE. Mi mi tepem ol storian nomo ia, be mi no tepem ol tok tok we yumi meken evri dei. Bambae mi yusum ol tok save we mi mi karem blong risej ia blong luk luk klosup long ol bisnes, divelomen mo frut blong wok we i stap gohed long societi blong yufala we stamba blong em hemi wok blong pikim frut long Niu Selan.

Wan stamba blong risej projek ia hemi fulup kwestin we i no gat wan wan ansa long evriwan. Projek ia hemi inkludem ol kwestin we oli olbaot nomo. Ol kwestin oli inkludem ol bisnes we ol man Vanuatu oli fasem long ol wok blong olgeta long Niu Selan mo ol frut blong wok ia long ol famle mo komuniti blong Vanuatu. Bambae mi mi no save ol kwestin fis taem finis, bae ol kwestin oli depen long olsem wanem rod ol toktok mo storian blong yumi i tek. Sapos yu no laekem o yu no wantem ol kwestin we mi mi askem bambae yu gat raet blong talem se yu wantem storian i finis finis. Sapos yu talem olsem yu no gat wan problem i kam bakegen long yu. Hemi raet blong yu nomo. Wan lis blong ol kaen kwestin we mi mi interes blong em i stap finis sapos yu wantem luk luk fas taem we yumi no mekem storian yet.
Bambae ol frut blong risej i stamba blong wan wan buk wea em i wan pepa blong tok save wea oli kolem wan pepa blong dokta blong filosofi (PhD) long saed blong "Social Anthropology" we hemi stap long Yunivesiti blong Otago, long Dunedin long Niu Selan. Taem mi raetem bigfala pepa ia i go kasem 100,000 tok wod nomo. Bambae i gat janis se ol pat blong pepa ia i kamaot olsem wan wan buk mo i got janis se mi mi tokbaot ol toktok we em i stap insaed long pepa ia long ol wokshop mo ol konfrens blong ol narafala yunivesiti mo Yunivesiti blong Otago. Bambae bigfala pepa ia mo ol pikinini pepa blong em, bae oli go long laebri blong Yunivesiti blong Otago we ol man mo ol woman we oli stap long yunivesti longwe oli save go long laebri blong ridim em. Mi mi mekem evri wok blong mekem se identiti mo nem blong yu i stap sekret nomo (olsem yes, se i gat janis se bae sam pat blong ol storian blong yu i stap insaed bigfala pepa ia [oslem PhD pepa] be i no gat wan man o wan woman we i save se yu ia). Be sapos yu wantem se "yes bambae mi mi wantem tru nem mo tru identiti blong mi i stap insaed long bigfala pepa ia" bae yu gat raet blong talem olsem. Bae sapos yu wantem tru nem blong yu i stap insaed long pepa ia bae mi askem yu blong saenem nem blong yu long wan narafala fom we yu talem se yu wantem ol man mo woman we olgeta oli ridim PhD pepa bae olgeta oli save tru nem blong yu i stap insaed long bigfala pepa ia.

Sapos yu wantem, yu gat raet blong askem ol kopi blong ol storian blong yu we i stap long teprikod i kam long yu.

Bambae ol tok save we mi mi karem hemi stap insaed wan rum wea i gat wan bigfala lok blong em mo bigfala key blong em. I gat wan wan man mo woman nomo i gat key blong rum ia. Bambae taem risej projek ia i finis finis, mifala i aotem ol tok save we mifala i nomo yusum. Bambae taem risej projek ia i finis finis, mifala i aotem ol tok save we i stap long rum wetem bigfala lok blong em, sapos ol rul blong yunivesiti i talem se mifala i mus wet kasem 5 yia fas taem. Ale afta 5 yia i pass finis mo risej projek ia i finis finis bambae mifala i aotem ol tok save we hemi stamba blong risej projek ia.
Bambae mi mi tekem fulap foto taem mi mekem risej ia. Bae sapos mi tekem wan foto blong yu mi mi askem yu blong talem yes sapos yu wantem mi tekem foto o yu save talem no yu no wantem mi mi tekem foto blong yu ia. Bae sapos yu glad we mi mi tekem foto blong yu mo yu watem se foto ia i go insaed pepa blong PhD blong mi, bambae mi askem yu blong saenem nem blong yu long wan fom blong ol foto. Sapos se yu glad we mi yusum storian blong yu wea i stap long wan teprikod taem mi mekem ol tok tok long ol konferens o i stap insaed long pepa blong PhD blong mi o ol narafala pepa we mi mi raetem, mi askem yu blong saenem nem blong yu long wan niufala fom bakegen.

Mi mi wan woman blong risej mo mi wantem talemaot se sapos yu talem mi wan storian wea yu no wantem wan narafala man, woman o pikinini blong save, bae mi no talemaot bakegen. Hemi impoten tumas long risej blong mi ia. Bambae saed long ol bigfala mo smol tok tok mo storian bae mi putum evriwan tugeta blong luk luk bigfala storian blong komuniti blong yufala, mo mi no talemaot se yu wan yu talem olsem. Bae sapos yu wantem mi mi raetem se yu wan yu talem storian olsem bambae mi askem yu blong saenem nem blong yu long wan fom we i givim raet blong mi blong yusum nem blong yu long PhD blong mi mo ol pikanini pepa we oli kamaot long bigfala PhD blong mi mo ol tok tok we mi tok tok long ol konfrens we oli stap raonwol blong yumi. Bae sapos yu no wantem mekem olsem, ale ol tok save we yu givim i stap sekret nemo. Sapos mi mus yusum ol nem blong wan man o wan woman from ol rul blong lanwis blong Inglis taem mi raetem PhD pepa, bambae mi mekem ol narafala nem we i no stret nem blong yu mo i mekem se yu no gat wan man o wan woman we i save se ol storian ia i blong yu ia.

Sapos yu sanem sam tok tok blong yu long emel bambae mi givim han long ol tok save we i stap insaed long emel ia. Be i gat wan janis se ol tok save we i stap insaed long emel i lus mo i go wokbaot sapos yu sanem olsem. Sapos yu sanem ol emel we i gat tok save we yu no wantem ol narafala man i save bae yu tingting gud fas taem we yu no sanem yet.

Sapos yu gat eni kwestin long risej projek ia, olsem naoia o taem we i no kam yet, bambae yu save kontaktem olsem:
Rochelle Lee Bailey  o  Dr Gregory Rawlings
Dipatmen blong Anthropology  Dipatmen blong Anthropology
Numba blong telefon blong yunivesiti  Numba blong telefon blong yunivesiti:
00-64-3-479 9270  00-64-3-479 4905

Komiti we i stap long Yunivesiti blong Otago we em i luk luk gud blong ol raet blong olgeta man, ol woman mo ol pikinini we olgeta oli tekpat long ol projek blong risej ia em i talem se yes bambae risej projek ia i save gohed. Sapos yu gat eni kwestin long ol risej ia, bambae yu save kontaktem sekretari blong komiti we hemi luk luk gud long ol raet blong ol man, ol woman mo ol pikinini (olsem "Administrator" blong "Human Ethics" komiti) (ph 00 64 3 479 8256). Sapos yu gat eni kwestin long risej ia, komiti ia i luk luk klosup long em nomo mo i no talemaot olgeta narafala man, woman mo o pikinini.
Wan wan buk blong risej blong ol man we olgeta oli go wokbaot, divelopmen mo olgeta we oli stap biaen long ples blong ol: ol frut we i stap kamaot long sosaeti from ol ni-Vanuatu woka we olgeta oli go stap tekpat long wok blong pikim frut olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan (olsem, long Inglis oli kolem "Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme" [RSE]).

FOM BLONG TALEM YES

Mi mi ridim pepa blong tok save finis saed blong projek ia mo mi save olsem wanem projek ia i stap long em. Mi save se pepa blong tok save i ansarem ol kwestian blong mi wea mi gat saed blong risej projek ia. Mi save se mi gat raet blong rekwes ol tok save we i go antap long em sapos mi wantem eni taem nomo.

Me save se:-

1. Mi wan nomo mi disaed blong tekpat long risej projek ia

2. Mi fri blong lego long risej projek ia long eni taem mi wantem mo i no gat eni problem i kam bakegen long mi sapos mi mekem wan disisen olsem

3. Bambae taem projek ia i finis finis oli aotem ol tok save we i gat olgeta nem blong wan wan man mo wan wan woman [olsem kaset vidio/ kaset teprikod/ rekod plet blong komputa], be ol tok save we hemi stamba blong risej projek ia hemi stap insaed wan rum wea i gat wan bigfala lok blong em mo bigfala key blong em i go kasem 5 yia. Ale, bambae afta 5 yia i pas finis oli sakem aot ol tok save olsem.
4. Projek ia hemi inkludem ol kwestin we oli olbaot nomo. Ol kwestin oli inkludem ol bisnes blong ol man Vanuatu we oli fasem long ol wok blong olgeta long Niu Selan mo ol fruit blong wok ia long ol famle mo komuniti blong Vanuatu. I no gat ol kwestin we oli stap fis taem finis, bae ol kwestin oli depen long olsem wanem rod ol toktok mo storian blong mi i tek. Sapos mi no laekem o mi no wantem ol kwestin we i stap, bambae mi gat raet blong talem se mi wantem storian i finis finis. Bae sapos mi talem olsem mi no gat wan problem i kam bakegen long mi. Emi raet blong mi nomo.

5. Bae sapos mi harem nogud o mi luk luk wan trabol mi save se mi mi gat raet blong aotem mo lego long risej projek ia mo mi nomo wantem tekpat long em.

6. Bambae ol fruit blong risej ia i stamba blong wan buk we hemi wan pepa blong tok save wea oli kolem wan pepa blong dokta blong filosofi (PhD) we hemi stap long Yunivesiti blong Otago, long Dunedin long Niu Selan. Bambae i gat janis se ol pat blong PhD pepa ia i kamaot olsem wan wan buk o sam pikinini pepa blong bigfala PhD pepa ia, mo i got janis se ol toktok we hemi stap insaed long ol pepa ia oli kamaot bakegen long ol wokshop mo ol konfrens blong Yunivesiti blong Otago mo fulup narafala yunivesiti we oli stap raonwol blong yumi. Bigfala pepa ia mo ol pikinini pepa mo storian blong em, bae oli go long laebri blong Yunivesiti blong Otago we ol man mo ol woman we oli stap long yunivesti longwe bae olgeta i save go long laebri blong ridim em. Taem olgeta i ridim olsem, identiti mo nem blong mi i stap sekret nomo (olsem yes, se i gat janis se sam pat blong ol storian blong mi i stap insaed bigfala pepa ia [oslem PhD pepa] be i no gat wan man o wan woman we i save se mi ia). BAE SAPOS no, mi wantem se "yes mi mi wantem tru nem mo tru identiti blong mi i stap insaed long bigfala PhD pepa ia" bae mi gat raet blong talem olsem. SAPOS mi wantem tru nem blong mi i stap insaed long ol pepa ia, bae mi gat wan invitesen blong saenem nem blong mi long wan narafala fom we mi talem se mi wantem ol man mo woman we olgeta oli ridim PhD pepa oli save tru nem blong mi ia. Sapos olgeta nem blong wan man o wan woman
i mus stap insaed bigala PhD pepa mo ol pikinini pepa mo tokok blong em from ol rul blong lanwis blong Inglis bae mi save se ol narafala nem we i no stret nem blong mi i stap long em. SAPOS NO mi wantem se tru nem blong mi i stap insaed long bigfala PhD pepa mo ol smol smol pikinini paper blong em mo ol toktok mo storian we i stap long ol konfrens mo wokshop raonwol blong yumi i gat wan invitesen i kam long mi bakegen blong saenem nem blong mi long wan fom we mi talem yes mi mi wantem olsem.

Mi mi agri blong tekpat long projek ia

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(Mak blong mi ia) (Numba blong dei, manis, yia)

Komiti we i stap long Yunivesiti blong Otago we em i luk luk gud blong ol raet blong olgeta man, ol woman mo ol pikinini we olgeta oli tekpat long ol projek blong risej ia em i talem se yes bambae risej projek ia i save gohed. Sapos yu gat eni kwestin long ol risej ia, bambae yu save kontaktem sekretari blong komiti we hemi luk luk gud long ol raet blong olgeta man, ol woman mo ol pikinini (olsem "Administrator" blong "Human Ethics" komiti) (ph 00 64 3 479 8256). Sapos yu gat eni kwestin long risej ia, komiti ia i luk luk klosup long em. Ale afta bambae i givim wan ansa long yu.
FOM BLONG TALEM YES BLONG YUSUM OL FOTO MO O STORIAN WE I STAP LONG TEPIR Kod LONG BIGNala PEPa BLONG PHD MO OL PIKININI PEPa BLONG EM, OLSEM OL BUK MO TOK TOK WE I GIVIM LONG OL KONFERENS BLONG OLGETA MAN MO WOMAN WE OLGETA OLI TEKPAT BLONG RISEJ PROJEK IA

Fom ia em i stap blong askem yu blong talem yes se Rochelle Lee Bailey hemi save yusum wan wan foto blong yu mo o wan foto we yu yu stap long em mo ol storian blong yu we i stap long teprikod long ol toktok blong ol konferens mo bigfala PhD pepa blong em mo ol pikinini pepa blong bigfala PhD pepa.

OLGETA WE OLI TEKPAT LONG RISEJ PROJEK IA

Plis yu mekem mak long wan o tu bokis nomo:

☐ Mi mi agri se Rochelle Lee Bailey hemi save yusum wan wan foto blong mi o wan wan foto blong wan narafala samting (olsem ples, haos o ol narafala man o woman) we mi mi stap long em long bigfala PhD pepa blong hem mo ol pikinini pepa mo tok tok we stamba blong em em i bigfala PhD pepa ia.
Mi mi agri se Rochelle Lee Bailey bambae hemi save yusum wan wan rikod blong toktok mo storian blong mi we i stap long teprikod long ol konferens we stamba blong ol i bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikinini pepa blong em

Bambae mi mi save se mi gat raet blong kanselem fom blong talem yes we i stap ia i go kasem taem we bigfala pepa blong PhD pepa mo ol pikini pepa mo toktok blong em oli finis finis sapos mi talem olsem long Rochelle Lee Bailey long leta, telefon, emel o toktok long hem wan nomo sapos hemi stap yet long ples ia. Bambae sapos mi talem afa bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikini pepa mo toktok blong em oli i finis finis i tulet nomo. Sapos mi kanselem fom blong talem yes ia, bambae mi save se ol foto blong mi mo ol foto blong wan narafala samting we mi stap long em (olsem ples, haos o ol foto blong olgeta narafala man o woman) mo ol storian mo toktok blong mi we i stap long teprikod i nomo inkludem mo i aotem long bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikini pepa mo toktok blong em.

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Nem blong mi                        Mak blong mi

Numba blong dei, manis, yia          --------------------------------------

Rochelle-lee Bailey                      --------------------------------------
Nem blong woman blong risej            Mak blong woman blong risej

Numba blong dei, manis, yia          --------------------------------------
Wan wan buk blong risej blong ol man we olgeta oli go wokbaot, developmen mo olgeta we oli stap biaen long ples blong ol: ol frut we i stap kamaot long sosaeti from ol ni-Vanuatu woka we olgeta oli go stap tekpat long wok blong pikim frut olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan (olsem, long Inglis oli kolem "Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme" [RSE]).

FOM BLONG TALEM YES BLONG YUSUM STRET NEM BLONG MI LONG BIGFALA PHD PEPA

Fom ia i stap blong talem yes se ol storian mo toktok we i stap saed long risej projek ia we olgeta man mo ol woman we oli stap tekpat long risej projek ia olgeta oli agri blong yusum stret mo tru nem blong olgeta long bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikinini pepa blong em we buk taetel blong em i Wan wan buk blong risej blong ol man we olgeta oli go wokbaot, developmen mo olgeta we oli stap biaen long ples blong ol: ol frut we i stap kamaot long sosaeti from ol ni-Vanuatu woka we olgeta oli go stap tekpat long wok blong pikim frut olsem grep mo apol long Niu Selan (olsem, long Inglis oli kolem "Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme" [RSE]). Long Inglis oli kolem bigfala PhD pepa ia An ethnography of migration, development and the left-behind: the social impacts of ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme.

Sapos mi mi saenem nem blong mi long fom ia i min se mi mi agri se Rochelle Lee Bailey we hemi studen, woman blong risej blong bigfala PhD pepa mo woman we hemi raetem bigfala PhD pepa, hemi gat raet blong yusum stret nem blong mi nomo. I min se hemi save yusum stret nem blong mi long ol tok wod, tok save mo ol stamba blong tok wod long bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikinini pepa blong em saed blong ol tok save we mi mi tokbaot taem bambae mi mekem storian blong risej. Ale bae i minim se ol man mo ol woman we olgeta oli ridim bigfala pepa blong PhD olgeta i save se mi ia i stap mekem storian we i stap witem ol narafla tok wod we i stap insaed long bigfala PhD pepa.
Bambae mi mi save se mi gat raet blong kanselem fom blong talem yes we i stap ia i go kasem taem we bigfala pepa blong PhD pepa mo ol pikini pepa mo totok blong em oli finis finis sapos mi talem olsem long Rochelle Lee Bailey long leta, telefon, emel o totok long hem wan nomo sapos hemi stap yet long ples ia. Bambae sapos mi talem afta bigfala PhD pepa mo ol pikini pepa mo totok blong em oli finis finis i tulet finis. Sapos mi kanselem fom blong talem yes ia, bambae mi save se yu no gat wan man o wan woman we i save se storian blong mi i stap long bigfala PhD pepa ia, nem blong mi i no stap long em mo identiti blong mi i stap sekret nomo.

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(Nem blong mi)

.................................................................

.................................

(Mak blong mi)

(Numba blong dei, manis, yia)

.................................................................

Nem blong woman blong risej (Rochelle-lee Bailey)

.................................................................

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Signature of Researcher (Rochelle-lee Bailey)

(Numba blong dei, manis, yia)
Appendix C: Vanuatu Cultural Centre research policy

VANUATU CULTURAL RESEARCH POLICY

1. Definitions

"Kastom": indigenous knowledge and practice and the ways it is expressed and manifested.

"Local community": the group(s) of people that are the subject of the research effort and/or live in the area in which research is being undertaken.

"Ni-Vanuatu": a citizen of the Republic of Vanuatu as defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Vanuatu.

"Products of research": written and printed materials, illustrations, audio and audiovisual recordings, photographs, computer databases and CDs, artifacts, specimens.

"Cultural research": any endeavour, by means of critical investigation and study of a subject, to discover new or collate old facts or hypotheses on a cultural subject; the latter being defined as any anthropological, linguistic, archaeological, historical or related social study, including basic data collection, studies of or incorporating traditional knowledge or classification systems (eg. studies of the medicinal properties of plants, land and marine tenure systems), documentary films and studies of introduced knowledge and practice.

"Tabu": a subject to which access is restricted to any degree. Such subjects can include places, names, knowledge, oral traditions, objects and practices.

"Traditional copyright": the traditional right of individuals and communities to control the ways the information they provide is used and accessed. The issue of traditional copyright arises when individuals or communities either own or are the custodians of specialised (and usually tabu) knowledge and its communication. This knowledge can include names, designs or forms, oral traditions, practices and skills.
Fieldworker”: fieldworkers are permanent voluntary extension workers of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre whose responsibility is to document, maintain and develop kastom in their respective communities. Fieldworkers receive training in cultural heritage management techniques at annual workshops. These workshops have taken place for over 20 years.

2. Guiding principles

2.1 Kastom embodies and expresses the knowledge, practices and relationships of the people of Vanuatu and encompasses and distinguishes the many different cultures of Vanuatu.

2.2 The people of Vanuatu recognise the importance of knowing, preserving and developing their kastom and history.

2.3 Kastom belongs to individuals, families, lineages and communities in Vanuatu. Any research on kastom must, in the first instance, respond to and respect the needs and desires of those people to whom the kastom belongs.

2.4 Research is the documentation and creation of knowledge. As such, research results incorporate the particular viewpoints of researchers.

2.5 Research in practice is a collaborative venture involving researchers, individual and groups of informants, local communities, chiefs and community leaders, cultural fieldworkers, cultural administrative bodies and local and national governments, and must be approached as such.

3. Policy statements

3.1 Objectives:

3.1.1 To ensure that cultural research projects are consistent with Vanuatu’s own research priorities, and to make researchers aware of these priorities.
3.1.2 To establish a clear process by which applications from foreign nationals to undertake research in Vanuatu can be evaluated. This Policy is not intended to apply to research undertaken by ni-Vanuatu, by Government officers in the execution of their duty or at the request of the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu.

3.1.3 To ensure that the number of researchers working in Vanuatu at any one time is manageable, and that researchers are adequately prepared for collaborative fieldwork. For this reason, this Policy distinguishes between researchers new to Vanuatu, and those with previous experience in the country.

3.2 **Responsibility for research in Vanuatu**

3.2.1 The Vanuatu National Cultural Council is responsible for research in Vanuatu under chapter 186, 6(2)(e) of the Laws of the Republic of Vanuatu. It is the role of the National Cultural Council to define and implement national research policies (including those outlined in this document), to define national research priorities, and to sponsor, regulate and carry out programs of research. The Vanuatu Cultural Centre is the executing arm of the National Cultural Council, and is responsible for implementing this Policy.

3.2.2 As part of its function to regulate research, the National Cultural Council will determine whether it is desirable that a foreign national undertake research on a cultural subject in Vanuatu.

3.2.3 Individuals who undertake research without authorisation from the National Cultural Council (for example, on a tourist/visitor visa) risk confiscation of research materials, deportation and refusal of all further entry visas.

3.3 **Priorities for research**

3.3.1 Through the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, the National Cultural Council sponsors an active program of research involving Centre staff and fieldworkers, local communities and foreign researchers. New research proposals should participate in and extend these existing and ongoing research projects. Priority will be given to
projects which involve active collaboration with counterpart ni-Vanuatu researchers.

3.3.2 Priority subjects for Cultural Centre research in the period 2001-2005 are:

- Language description and documentation (orthographies);
- Cultural and historic site documentation;
- Documentation of indigenous histories;
- Case studies of contemporary social change.

4. Process for application submission and evaluation

4.1 Application categories and quotas

4.1.1 The Cultural Council can only support a limited number of researchers at any one time due to its infrastructural capacity and has therefore established a quota system for the number of research permits that will be granted in any given year. The categories in which new research proposals will be considered, and their quotas, are:

a. proposals from new researchers for short-term research (fieldwork for less than 2 months): up to 8 per annum

b. proposals from new researchers for long-term research (fieldwork for longer than 2 months): up to 4 per annum

c. new proposals (short or long-term) from individuals with previous long-term field research experience in Vanuatu: up to 6 per annum

d. projects being undertaken for and on behalf of museums: up to 4 per annum

e. filming projects: no quota at present

4.1.2 In research ventures that involve more than one researcher, a separate agreement is required for each researcher stating exactly what the research topic and capacity of each individual is to be, and which may carry its own unique obligations.
4.1.3 In the case of projects being undertaken by researchers for and on behalf of museums, it is expected that a relationship between the two institutions will be established to facilitate the exchange of information, and that the researcher will then work as part of this institution to institution relationship.

4.1.4 Scientific research projects are the responsibility of the National Environment Unit, and proposals for such research should be forwarded to:

4.2 Deadlines for applications

4.2.1 Applications to undertake research will be assessed and research permissions granted twice a year.

4.2.2 The deadlines for submission are the 30th of September and the 30th of March. Decisions will generally be communicated to applicants within 8 weeks of the submission deadlines.

4.3 Evaluation of applications

4.3.1 The following criteria will be considered in assessing applications:

a. New researchers who can demonstrate that they have previous fieldwork experience elsewhere or that they have undertaken a fieldwork methods training course will be given priority in the application rating process.

b. New researchers must also attach a letter from their supervisor, head of department or from a Vanuatu specialist confirming that the applicant has a good working knowledge of the ethnography of Vanuatu as available in existing published literature.

c. New researchers must also include a declaration of willingness to study Bislama prior to commencing fieldwork

d. Researchers who have previously worked in Vanuatu, must demonstrate that they have fulfilled all obligations under their last research permit before they will be granted a new research permission.

e. The National Cultural Council may refer proposals for assessment to suitable advisers such as fieldworkers, chiefs or academic referees. All researchers must provide
to the Council the name and address of a referee of professional standing to assist in its evaluation of the proposal.

5. Process for approval and fees

5.1 The research proposal must receive the approval of the local community. The Cultural Centre is able to discuss the proposed research proposal with the local community to facilitate this process.

5.2 Fees / Guarantees

5.2.1 An authorisation fee of 25 000 vatu must be provided by the researcher before the research proposal can be approved. Where research involves more than one visit, and this is clearly stated in the Research Agreement, a fee of 5000 vatu is to be paid on each subsequent visit after the first.

5.2.2 Researchers not affiliated with a recognised research institution will be required to provide a deposit of 40 000 vatu to ensure compliance with the conditions for the deposit of products of research as stipulated in section 9 of this document. This fee is retrievable once such deposits are made.

5.2.3 For researchers affiliated with a recognised research institution, a letter from the institution guaranteeing the deposit of products of research by the researcher is required before the research proposal can be approved.

5.2.4 In cases where it is necessary for Cultural Centre personnel to travel to the proposed research location to help facilitate the research venture (either prior to, during or after the period of research), the researcher will cover any costs incurred in such travel.

5.3 All funds received from the researcher will be used by the National Cultural Council to cover administrative and logistical costs incurred in the setting up and implementation of the research venture.

5.3.1 The National Cultural Council may waive any or all of the above fees.

5.4 The approval of a research proposal is signified by the signing of the Research Agreement [Appendix 1] by the researcher and the National Cultural Council, the latter signing on behalf of the local community and the national government.
5.5 As a foreign national, the researcher will be registered as working for the Vanuatu Cultural Centre under the Immigration Act category of a “person seconded to the Government of Vanuatu” (Cap.66, 9(b) of the Laws of Vanuatu).

5.6 Should the National Cultural Council decide to terminate a research venture (see section 10 of this document), the Research Agreement will be annulled and the researcher's visa withdrawn.

6. Traditional copyright considerations
Researchers are obliged to observe and respect traditional copyright protocols. Traditional copyright is protected under the Copyright Act (chapter of the Laws of Vanuatu), and breaches will be dealt with under the appropriate provisions of this legislation (sections 37 and 38).

7. Ni-Vanuatu participation in research and training
There must be maximum involvement of indigenous scholars, students and members of the community in research, full recognition of their collaboration, and training to enable their further contribution to country and community. In most cases, researchers will be attached to a Cultural Centre fieldworker who will direct and advise the researcher. Training will be provided by the researcher in specific areas determined in collaboration with the fieldworker or community leaders, but should be generally concerned with cultural research and documentation skills, and have the aim of facilitating the continuation of research once the foreign researcher leaves the country. The National Cultural Council may nominate individuals to be involved in research and/or trained.

8. Benefits
8.1 Community-based projects
Where research is undertaken with a local community, the research will include a product of immediate benefit and use to that community. This product will be decided upon by the researcher, the local community and the Cultural Centre in the early part of the fieldwork, and the Cultural Centre may have a role in assisting the researcher in its provision. Such products could include booklets of kastom information, photo albums of visual records, simple educational booklets for use in schools (the provision of all
products for use in schools should be coordinated by the Curriculum Development Centre), programs for the revitalisation of particular kastom skills in the community, training workshops in cultural documentation, etc. This product will be provided no later than 6 months after termination of the research period.

8.2 Projects not undertaken with communities
Where research does not involve a local community, the research will only include a product of benefit to the nation (see section below).

8.3 Benefit to the nation
The National Cultural Council, the Cultural Centre or the national government may request any researcher to provide certain products or perform certain services additional to their research work. For instance, researchers could provide assistance to government by providing information from their community research perspective, such as health surveys, information on the viability of certain development projects, etc. They could also provide free consultancies to the Cultural Centre or other national bodies, such as initiating educational projects in their host community.

Foreign researchers can also provide for the Cultural Centre invaluable access to materials on Vanuatu held overseas, contacts overseas, and might be able to facilitate scholarships for ni-Vanuatu students in overseas educational institutions. Any such undertaking(s) expected of the researcher will be stipulated in the Research Agreement.

9. Deposit and accessibility of products of research
Copies of all products of research are to be deposited without charge with the Cultural Centre under the provisions of chapter 88 of the Laws of Vanuatu. Where feasible, research results should be made accessible to the local community through such means as audio or video cassettes or copies of publications, preferably in the vernacular.

Materials to be deposited comprise:

9.1 Interim report. Researchers must submit an interim report of not less than 2000 words no later than 6 months after the research period has ended giving a reasonable precis of their work. This should be in one of the national languages and in 'layman's terms' so as to be of general use to all citizens.
9.2 **Written materials** (manuscripts, theses, publications, maps and diagrams). Published materials including theses must be deposited upon completion or publication. Where publications are in a language not spoken in Vanuatu the researcher must provide a translation of an appropriate selection of their publications, preferably in the language of education in the local community. Copies of field notes, including unpublished maps and diagrams, must be deposited upon completion of the project. The Cultural Centre will not make copies of field notes available to other expatriate researchers until after the original researchers death.

9.3 **Film and video.** Copies of all footage taken, including unedited portions (RUSH) and edited final products in broadcast-quality, must be deposited with the National Film and Sound Unit of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. Unedited footage must be accompanied by information about the subject matter, the film-maker and the filming. Two copies of edited final copies of films and videos are to be provided, one for public screening and the other for deposit in the archives.

9.4 **Photographs.** Copies of all photographs of documentary significance accompanied by explanatory information must be deposited (photographs of key individuals, ceremonies, manufacturing processes, important places, etc).

9.5 **Artefacts.** The removal of any artefacts or specimens from the country is prohibited under chapter 39 of the Laws of Vanuatu. Any artefacts collected must be submitted to the Cultural Centre and may be retained. Artefacts and specimens may be taken out of the country for overseas study and analysis under the provisions of chapter 39(7), with conditions for their return being stipulated in the Research Agreement.

9.6 **Sites.** The Vanuatu Cultural and Historic Sites Survey is to be consulted about the provision of information on any sites of cultural or historic significance recorded.

10. **Termination of a research project**

The National Cultural Council may revoke its approval of and terminate a research venture should the researcher fail to comply with any of the conditions agreed to in the Research Agreement. Should a research project be terminated before its completion, copies of all products of research made prior to termination are to be deposited with the
Cultural Centre as outlined in section 9 of this document. In the case of termination by the local community, the National Cultural Council may reconsider the research project for another locality.

11. Role of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre

The Cultural Centre is responsible for facilitating, coordinating, and administering all research projects in the country and for ensuring feedback on these projects to national government and non-government bodies. In this capacity the Cultural Centre will:

11.1 Identify potential subjects and areas of research, formulate research proposals and invite foreign and ni-Vanuatu researchers to undertake certain projects.

11.2 Facilitate and assist the undertaking of research by ni-Vanuatu.

11.3 Identify and facilitate opportunities for local communities to request trained researchers to assist them with research of their kastom and history.

11.4 Provide advice on obtaining permission to conduct research and on conditions of work and living in potential areas of research to interested parties.

11.5 Assist in the formulation of research proposals to involve input by ni-Vanuatu, and nominate persons for involvement.

11.6 Provide advice to the National Cultural Council.

11.7 Facilitate and ensure awareness of the research proposal in the local community and assist the members of the community in making a decision as to their involvement.

11.8 Educate local community members and the researcher(s) as to their rights under the Research Agreement.

11.9 Assist the local community and the researcher in determining the product of immediate benefit and use to be provided by the researcher and assist in its provision.

11.10 Inform the local government, area council of chiefs and any other relevant regional and national bodies of the undertaking of a research project.
11.11 Monitor the research venture with a view to ensuring compliance with the Research Agreement and providing feedback to relevant national bodies.

11.12 Assist the researcher.

11.13 Receive and caretake deposited products of research.

11.14 Facilitate the provision of products of research to schools and assist the National Curriculum Centre in their preparation.

11.15 Publicise this policy within Vanuatu and to overseas research institutions, universities, etc.

12. Commercial ventures

Where any of the products of research are to be used for commercial purposes, a separate agreement between the National Cultural Council and the researcher will be made specifying the basis on which sales are to be made and the proceeds of sales are to be distributed. The details of this agreement will be recorded in section 12 of the Research Agreement. The National Cultural Council will be responsible for distributing the funds received to the designated individuals, communities and institutions within Vanuatu. Where research is engaged in for commercial purposes, it is the responsibility of the researcher to make all informants and suppliers of information aware of this fact, and to come to an agreement with them on the amount of royalty to be paid on received data. The National Cultural Council has to approve any such agreements relating to commercial outcomes from research. Copies of all commercial products of research are to be deposited with the Cultural Centre as specified in section 9 of this document.
## Appendix D: ESU debrief form.

### ESU DEBRIEF FORM

For the Purposes of Subsection 21(2) of the Employment Act No.25 of 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details blong waka</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Family Name:</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) First Name:</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Middle Name:</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woke blong ve evasi</th>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) How long have you been Unemployed?</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Your previous Work</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Did you have a job before?</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Please give an example of a job you were</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) If you have been employed, how long have</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Please give an example of a job you were</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information blong visa</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Your full visa information</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) If your visa has expired</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General fitihai long slim</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Would you recommend your</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Have you had any contact</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thank you for filling up our form.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESU will be happy to provide you</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E: ESE data form

**ESU DATA FORM**

For the Purpose of Section 23/31 of the Disabled Employment Act 1947

 veículo man/woman with disable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Name of vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Name of man/woman with disable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Medical Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Description of disable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Kol/Fim man/woman we raping**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Name of Kol/Fim man/woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Relaxation by the man/woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Description of disable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Ko/Fim wong man/woman we raping**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Name of Ko/Fim wong man/woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Relaxation by the man/woman</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Description of disable</td>
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<td>Comment</td>
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**Ko/Fim wong man/woman we raping**

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<td>Description of disable</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Kontak blong man/woman long tembong**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Name of Kontak blong man/woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Relaxation by the man/woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Description of disable</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
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**Kontak blong man/woman long tembong**

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<td>3.</td>
<td>Description of disable</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Thankyou Tumas***