
FEASIBILITY STUDY & PROJECT REPORT

ToakLink Shipping Project

Connecting Vanuatu's underserved outer islands with affordable, reliable maritime transport — empowering farmers, fishers, and communities across five provinces.

FUNDING GOAL

A\$615,412

PROVINCES

5

FAMILIES IMPACTED

2,000+

ToakLink Community Association

South East Ambrym Area Council, Vanuatu · GlobalGiving Partner

toaklink.com

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SECTION 01

A Lifeline for Vanuatu's Outer Islands

"Without affordable shipping, my fish often go bad before I can sell them."

— David, Fisherman, South East Ambrym

Many communities across Vanuatu's outer islands, particularly South East Ambrym, are economically isolated due to unreliable and expensive maritime transport. Farmers lose significant portions of their harvest, fishers cannot reach buyers before their catch spoils, and families pay inflated prices for basic goods.

ToakLink Shipping will purchase and operate a 20–30 metre cargo and passenger vessel to provide affordable, reliable inter-island transport across five provinces: Tafea, Shefa, Malampa, Penama, and Sanma. Structured as a community cooperative, members hold equity, receive discounted fares, and share in profits — ensuring the project is owned by the people it serves.

This report presents a comprehensive feasibility study alongside the GlobalGiving project details, providing donors and stakeholders with a complete view of the project's viability, projected impact, and path to financial sustainability.

SECTION 02

Isolation Is Holding Communities Back

Farmers in South East Ambrym lose up to 40% of their crops due to unreliable transport, while fishers struggle to sell their catch before it spoils. Families pay high prices for essential goods because of irregular, costly imports. Without affordable shipping, small businesses suffer, incomes remain stagnant, and the community stays economically isolated.

The main ferry operator does not extend service to many underserved harbours, leaving residents cut off from markets, healthcare, education, and essential supplies. A sustainable transport solution is needed to break this cycle and unlock economic growth.



SECTION 03

A Community-Owned Shipping Service

ToakLink Shipping will operate a dedicated vessel ensuring affordable, consistent transport for farmers, fishers, and businesses. The vessel will carry 100 passengers and at least 4 trucks of cargo per trip, with an onboard shop supplying goods directly to outer island shopkeepers.

Reliable Transport	Consistent scheduled service to harbours that current operators don't reach, focusing on South East Ambrym and underserved ports across five provinces.
Lower Costs	Reduce transport costs by up to 50% through affordable fares and a 20% member discount on all passenger and cargo rates.
Onboard Commerce	A floating store supplying goods and merchandise to shopkeepers across the provinces, promoting local trade and reducing supply chain costs.
Income Growth	Improve market access to boost local incomes by up to 30%, creating jobs and building long-term economic resilience in the community.
Essential Supplies	Deliver medicine and school supplies to 2,000+ families, enhancing health and education outcomes across the outer islands.
Community Ownership	Cooperative model where members hold equity shares, receive profit distributions, and have a direct voice in governance and operations.

Technical Requirements: The vessel (20–30m) must accommodate 100+ passengers, carry at least 4 trucks, and include proper seating, ventilation, toilet facilities, and an onboard shop. Both new and used vessel options will be evaluated with marine surveyor inspections to verify technical specifications and maintenance history.

SECTION 04

Routes & Pricing Strategy

All routes depart from Port Vila, connecting the capital to outer islands that are currently underserved or not served at all by existing operators. The competitive advantage lies in reaching harbours that the main ferry operator does not cover.

PROVINCE	ISLANDS	ADULT FARE	MEMBER FARE
Tafea	Tanna	10,000 VT	8,000 VT
Shefa	Epi	7,000 VT	5,600 VT
Malampa	Ambrym, Malekula, Paama	7,000–10,000 VT	5,600–8,000 VT
Penama	Pentecost, Ambae	7,000–10,000 VT	5,600–8,000 VT
Sanma	Santo	12,000 VT	9,600 VT

Student fares are set at 50% of the adult rate. ToakLink members receive a 20% discount on all passenger and cargo fares, incentivising membership and building a loyal customer base. Pricing is competitive with existing operators while offering service to routes they do not cover.

Market Position

The primary competitor, Vanuatu Ferry, does not extend routes to many underserved harbours. This creates a clear gap in the market that ToakLink will fill. The onboard shop adds a unique revenue stream and convenience that competitors do not offer, providing goods directly to outer island shopkeepers during each voyage.

SECTION 05

Cooperative Profit Sharing

ToakLink operates as a community cooperative. Members contribute equity to capitalise the project and receive shares proportional to their contributions. Revenue flows from three streams: passenger fares, cargo transport fees, and onboard shop sales. Profits are distributed through a transparent formula.

<p>40%</p> <p>PATRONAGE REFUNDS</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>MEMBER EQUITY</p>	<p>20%</p> <p>RESERVE FUND</p>	<p>10%</p> <p>COMMUNITY INVESTMENT</p>
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Profit Sharing Formula

Individual Share = (Patronage Proportion × Patronage Allocation) + (Equity Proportion × Equity Allocation)

Example: On \$100,000 net profit, a member with 2% patronage proportion and 1% equity proportion receives \$1,100.

Member Benefits: Discounted fares (20% off standard rates), profit distributions, collective purchasing power, and priority booking. A portion of profits is reinvested into vessel maintenance, upgrades, and potential route expansion. Reserve funds provide a financial cushion for emergencies.

SECTION 06

Donation Tiers

Every contribution brings reliable transport closer to the families and communities who need it most. Below are the donation options available through the GlobalGiving project page. Both one-time and monthly recurring donations are accepted.

AMOUNT (AUD)	YOUR IMPACT
\$15	Fuels the boat for one trip delivering fresh produce, school supplies, and essential goods to the community.
\$38	Supports a farmer, fisher, or teacher in transporting goods or supplies to market or school.
\$77	Covers shipping of medical and school supplies to remote island families, improving health and education access.
\$154	Contributes to vessel maintenance costs to guarantee reliable trips for farmers, fishers, and schoolchildren.
\$385	Sponsors community training for youth and women on expanding small businesses using the shipping service.
\$769	Funds safety equipment and life jackets for passengers including school children.
\$1,539	Supports a full month of operations, ensuring consistent transport of food, medicine, and supplies.
\$7,693	Major contribution toward the vessel purchase, accelerating the project timeline significantly.

All amounts in Australian Dollars. The average donation on GlobalGiving is approximately \$28 USD.

SECTION 07

Identifying & Mitigating Risks

A thorough risk assessment ensures sustainable operations and builds donor confidence. The following table summarises key risks identified in the feasibility study, their assessed likelihood and impact, and the planned mitigation strategies.

RISK	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Vessel breakdowns	Medium	High	Regular maintenance schedules and backup service agreements with other operators.
Fuel price fluctuation	High	Medium	Fuel-efficient operation practices and fuel price hedging strategies.
Inadequate funding	Medium	High	Diversified funding through member equity, GlobalGiving, grants, and community fundraising.
Competition	Medium	Medium	Unique routes to underserved harbours, competitive pricing, and cooperative loyalty.
Accidents	Low	High	Comprehensive safety training, regular emergency drills, and compliant safety equipment.
Environmental spills	Low	High	Strict regulatory adherence, crew training, and emergency response plans.
Regulatory changes	Low	Medium	Regular liaison with Vanuatu maritime authorities and compliance monitoring.
Demand fluctuation	Medium	Medium	Market research, customer feedback loops, and adaptive marketing strategies.

SECTION 08

Vessel Regulatory Requirements

ToakLink is committed to full compliance with all maritime regulations set by the Vanuatu authorities. The following outlines the key regulatory requirements for operating the vessel within Vanuatu's territorial waters.

Vessel Registration	Mandatory registration before operations commence. If previously registered abroad, deregistration from that jurisdiction is required. Registration renews every 5 years.
Safety Assessment Fee	Mandatory safety condition assessment before importation. Covers inspection to ensure the vessel meets safety standards. Subsequent assessments conducted every 12 years.
Value-Added Tax	VAT fee levied by customs upon importation at prevailing rates. This cost is budgeted into the vessel acquisition phase.
Environmental Compliance	Strict prohibition on disposal of fuel or dirty oil into waters. Proper disposal measures and environmentally responsible operations required at all times.
Documentation	All registration, SAF, VAT, and environmental compliance documentation maintained and available for inspection by relevant authorities.

SECTION 09

Building a Self-Sufficient Economy

By removing transport barriers, ToakLink Shipping will empower South East Ambrym and surrounding provinces with a stronger economy, improved health outcomes, and better education access. This project represents an investment in a community-owned enterprise that creates lasting, self-sustaining change.

Projected Community Outcomes

- Increased household income, reducing financial strain on families across the outer islands.
- Expanded business opportunities and reliable market access for local enterprises and traders.
- Reduced dependence on external aid, fostering community independence and self-reliance.
- Essential goods reaching communities consistently, even during natural disasters and emergencies.
- Job creation in maritime operations, trade logistics, and supporting service industries.
- Membership growth driving financial stability, enabling route expansion and reinvestment.

As the cooperative grows in membership, so does its financial stability and potential for service expansion. This growth creates a virtuous cycle where increased benefits attract more members, leading to further growth, route expansion, and sustained community reinvestment.

Help Connect Vanuatu's Outer Islands

Every dollar brings reliable transport closer to the farmers,
fishers, and families who need it most.

globalgiving.org/projects/toaklink-shipping

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