

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study for the Construction of a Gravel Access Road (6km) from lipanda-YaAmiti Settlement to Andreas Amushila Primary School (PS) in the Omusati Region - Application for Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC)

Proponent:

Ministry of Works and Transport



Project Consulting Engineer:

Caldera Consulting Engineers



Environmental Consultant:

**Serja Hydrogeo-Environmental
Consultants CC (*Serja HGE
Consultants*)**

February 2026

1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT) intends to construct an access gravel road from lipanda YaAmiti to Andreas Amushila Primary School (AAPS). The access road aims to improve accessibility from lipanda YaAmiti Settlement (Clinic and Combined School) and the Primary School. The proposed access road will span a 6km distance, starting from the lipanda YaAmiti Clinic (passing between Oheke and Otshoogolo Villages) to Eenkombo Village, where the Andreas Amushila Primary School is located. The road route falls within the Etayi Constituency and a small portion of the road ending in the Elim Constituency, Omusati Region. The locality maps are shown in Figure 1, Figure 3 and Figure 3.

The road construction will commence upon completion of the project design by Caldera Investments Consulting Engineers cc, who will administer the construction contract and supervise the construction works. Furthermore, other activities associated with gravel road construction include the abstraction of road construction materials from one or two borrow pits along the proposed route, as well as water supply for construction near the road route.

The road is currently a single-track pathway comprising sand, making travel difficult during the rainy seasons, particularly for small vehicles (non-four-wheel drive vehicles). Thus, upgrading the existing route to a gravel road is necessary so that the road will serve the purpose of:

- Improving access to services between lipanda YaAmiti Clinic and Combined School and Andreas Amushila Primary School,
- Improving rural and regional accessibility, and
- Reducing road user costs.

The project will involve inter alia the following:

- Upgrading of the sandy single-track roadway to gravel road standards,
- Provision of and Improvement of drainage facilities and features,
- Establishment of the 30m road reserve.

1.1 Need for an environmental clearance certificate (ECC)

The road construction and associated works, such as the abstraction of construction materials and water to supply the road construction works, are listed activities in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2012) of the Environmental Management Act (EMA) No. 7 of 2007 that may not be undertaken without an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC). The listed activities that are relevant to the proposed project activities are as follows:

-Listed Activity 10.2: the construction of the route determination of roads and the design of associated physical infrastructure where -

(a) It is a public road

(b) The road reserve is wider than 30 meters; or

(c) The road caters for more than one lane of traffic in both directions

Associated activities: mining and quarrying activities for sand and gravel from borrow pits

-Listed Activity 3.1 The construction of facilities for any process or activities that require a license, right, or other forms of authorization, and the renewal of a license, right, or other forms of authorization, in terms of the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining Act), 1992.

-Listed Activity 3.2 Other forms of mining or extraction of any natural resources, whether regulated by law or not.

Water resources development – to supply the road construction

-Listed Activity 8.1 The abstraction of ground or surface water for industrial or commercial purposes

Subsequently, to comply with the EMA and its EIA Regulations and ensure environmental sustainability, the Proponent, through the consulting engineer (Caldera Investments cc), has appointed Serja Hydrogeo-Environmental Consultants CC (*Serja HGE Consultants*), independent environmental consultants (environmental assessment practitioners), to apply for the project ECC on their behalf.

An application for the ECC is being launched with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT)'s Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry (DEAF) by Serja HGE Consultants. Upon screening of this Background Information Document (BID), Serja HGE Consultants will be required to prepare an Environmental Scoping Report and Environmental Management Plan & Rehabilitation Plan (EMRP) in an application for the ECC. The required documents (Scoping Report and EMP/EMRP) will be submitted to the MEFT for evaluation and to consider issuing the ECC for the project.

1.2 The Purpose of this document

It should be noted that this Background Information Document (BID) is not an Environmental Scoping Report nor an EMP, but a non-technical summary of the Project's environmental assessment.

The BID is aimed at sharing first-hand, summarized information about the proposed project activities. It also provides public guidance and a basis for their participation from the beginning of the environmental process, and registers as interested and affected parties (I&APs) raise issues on the proposed activities.

The information obtained from the I&APs will then form the basis of the EIA Scoping Report, and or EMP/EMRP to help the MEFT in making an informed decision and consider the issuance of the ECC.

1.3 Project need and desirability

The access road from lipanda YaAmiti Settlement will efficiently serve the areas along the route, thus providing improved and better access to the health and educational centers (lipanda YaAmiti Clinic and Combined School) and other nearby growth and social centres in the area, along and near the route. Thus, the project will serve significant economic activities and services along the road.

Furthermore, the constructed gravel access road will ease the access of locals and travelers alike to the area to access the clinic, school, and nearby areas such as settlements and villages with ease.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will involve the upgrading of the existing sandy single-track from the lipanda YaAmiti Settlement to Andreas Amushila Primary School.

The proposed road follows a westerly trend from the lipanda YaAmiti Settlement (at the Clinic) via Oheke Village (passing between Oheke and Otshoogolo Villages) until Andreas Amushila Primary School in the Eenkombo Village. Furthermore, the road construction to gravel standards will address the problem of small pipe culverts and low-level water crossing structures, the widening of the road to increase capacity, and providing additional road structures where applicable.

In addition to the above, the road construction will also address the erosion aspects through the drainage systems to be designed.

Road construction materials from one or two borrow pits with quality material sites (to be identified and sited by materials personnel), as well as sources of nearby raw and fresh water, will be determined.

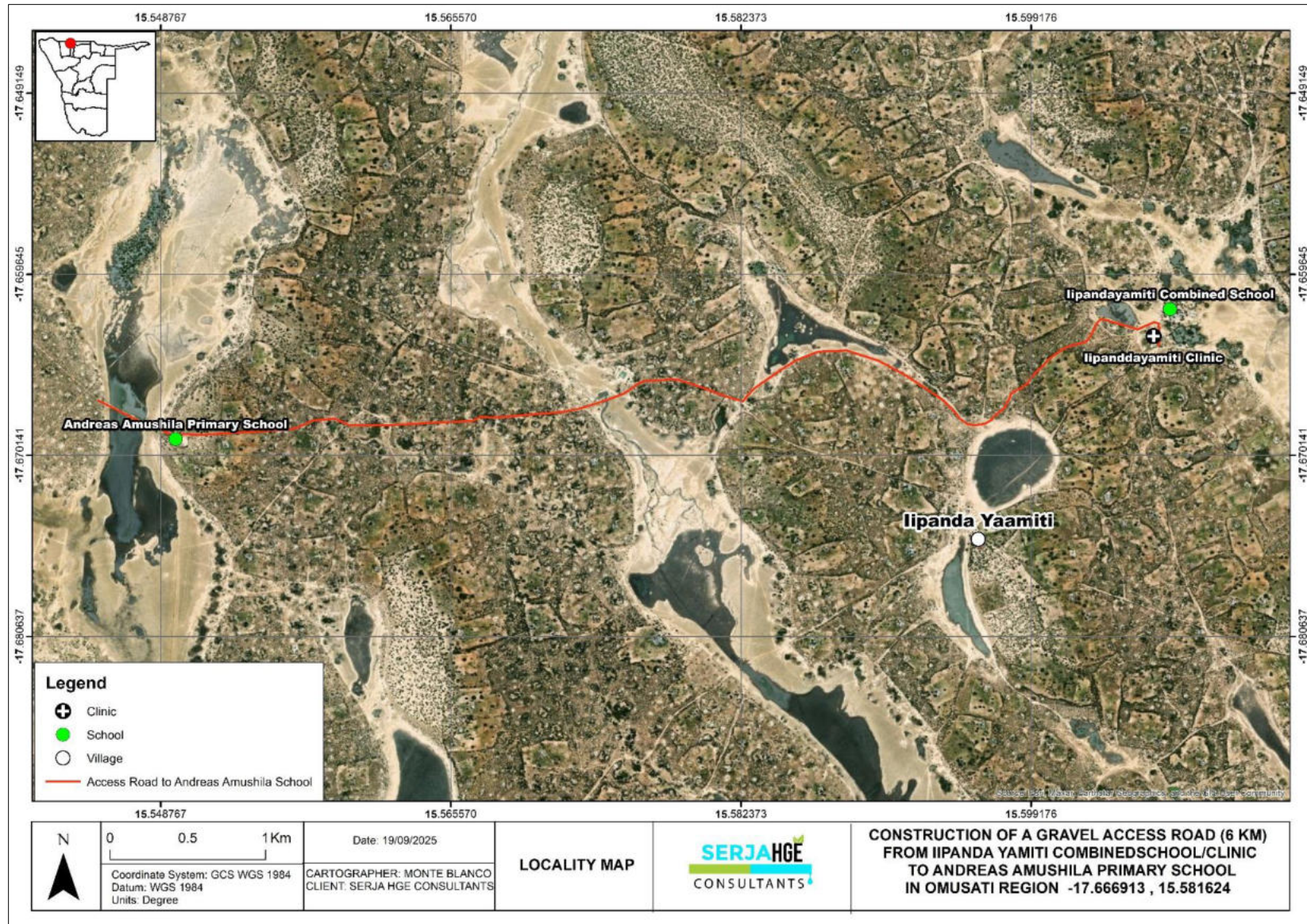


Figure 1: Locality map of the proposed access gravel road from Iipanda YaAmiti to Andreas Amushila Primary School in the Omusati Region

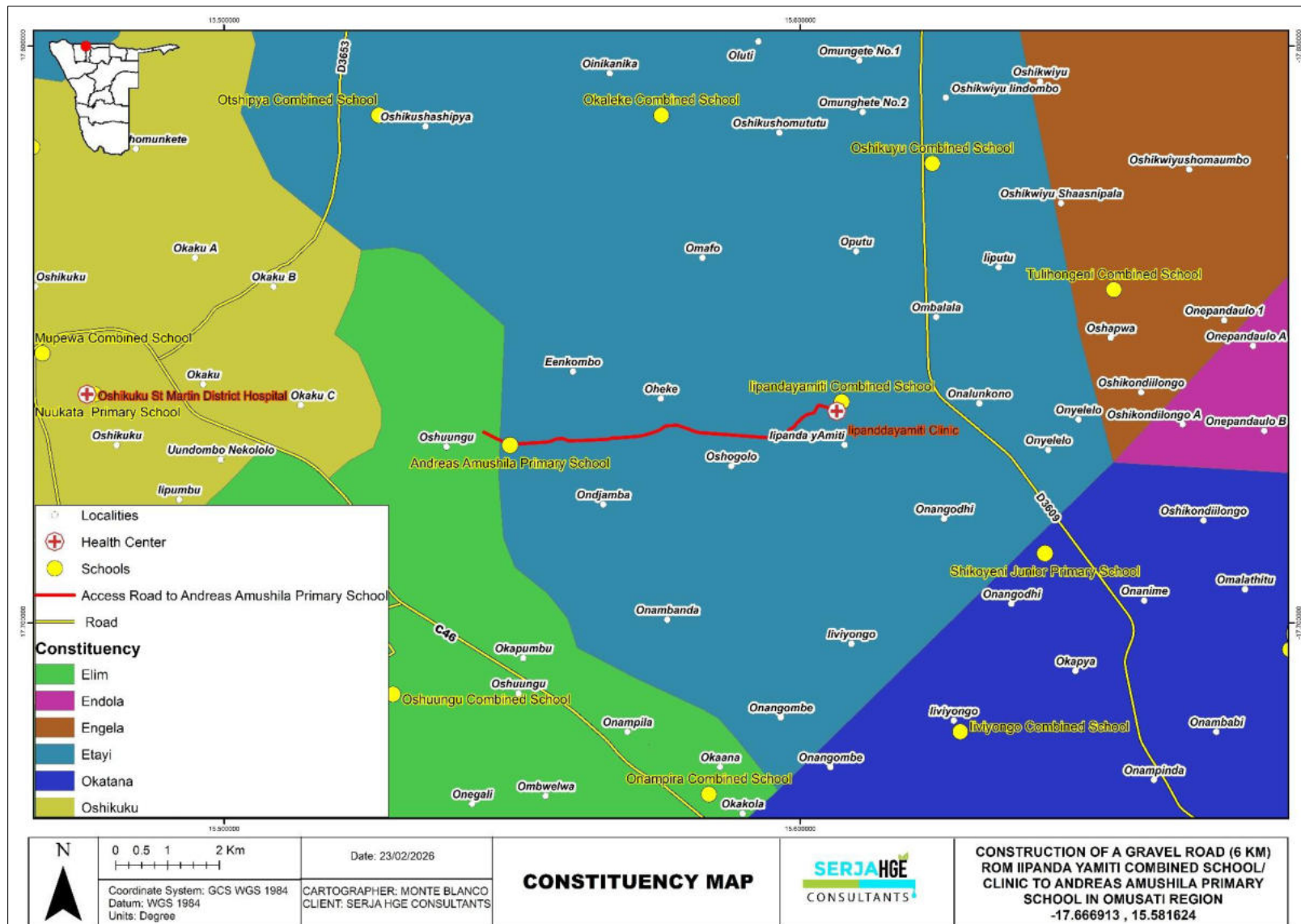


Figure 2: The regional constituency map (with villages) for the proposed access road connecting Iipanda YaAmiti to Andreas Amushila Primary School



Figure 3: The regional constituency map (zoomed in) for the proposed access road connecting Iipanda YaAmiti to Andreas Amushila Primary School

2.1 Resources and Services Infrastructure

2.1.1 Human resources

The road construction will potentially employ about 150 people or more. The workforce will comprise safety officers, the resident engineer, contracts manager, land surveyor, quality control technicians, maintenance artisans, general foremen, operators, labourers, security guards, etc. Locals will be prioritised for employment (semi-skilled to unskilled labour).

2.1.2 Contractors' Accommodation

Local labourers will be commuting to the project site from their homes near the road. The skilled project workforce that is from outside the area will be accommodated in camps in lipanda YaAmiti, and in Eenkombo Village, or they will opt to commute from either Oshakati or Omungwelumbe. Therefore, no need for on-site accommodation associated with the project works. However, should it become necessary that on-site temporary accommodation is required, permission will be needed from the affected Village headmen.

2.1.3 Water supply

The water supply for the project will be assessed during the EIA Study, i.e., surface water or drilling of new boreholes for the project along the route. The water will likely be stored in a lined earth dam near the road. The water will be used for the actual road works (concrete) and human consumption (drinking water) on site.

2.1.4 Fuel supply

Diesel will be used for machinery and equipment, and a fuel generator to ensure an uninterrupted fuel supply to the project. The fuel will be stored in a 23,000-liter temporarily installed fuel tank at a selected point along the proposed road to ensure an uninterrupted supply during construction.

2.1.5 Occupational health and safety

All project workers will be supplied with appropriate and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) while carrying out project activities on-site. The site will also be equipped with at least five fully furnished first aid kits.

2.1.6 Accidental fire outbreaks

The site vehicles, campsites, and machinery will be equipped with fire extinguishers in case of accidental fire outbreaks.

2.1.7 Waste Management (Solid Waste)

All waste generated from the project activities will be sorted, stored on-site in designated waste containers, and transported to the nearest approved solid waste dumping site in a Town such as Oshakati. Consent and approval to dispose of solid waste on the Town dumpsite will need to be obtained from the Oshakati Town Council before doing so.

2.1.8 Human waste/sanitation

The appointed contractor will establish portable toilets for the workers and project-related visitors. The toilets will be emptied according to the manufacturer's instructions and as regularly as deemed necessary.

3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The construction of new roads is associated with some impacts, both positive and negative, and these are as follows:

3.1 Positive impacts (benefits)

-Socio-economic development through temporary job (employment) creation in the area during the road construction phase for one hundred and fifty (150) people or more.

-Improved accessibility: better road connections enhance accessibility to remote rural areas, facilitating the transportation of goods and services, and access to healthcare and education centers in the area.

-Economic development: better roads can stimulate economic growth by attracting investment, promoting tourism in this part of the Omusati Region, and other neighboring regions such as Oshana and Ohangwena.

-Safety: The new road with improved design and signage can enhance road safety, thus reducing the risk of accidents and fatalities.

-Social cohesion: the road will improve connectivity that can strengthen social ties within rural communities by enabling easier access to growth centres, schools, healthcare centres (such as the clinic), and other social services.

3.2 Potential negative impacts of the road construction

-Soil and water pollution: improper handling of wastewater may lead to pollution of surrounding soils and eventually water resources systems (through wastewater runoff and infiltration).

-Habitat destruction: excavation of road construction borrow pits can lead to the destruction of natural habitats for plants and animals. This can disrupt local biodiversity and reduce the availability of resources for animals and people.

-Soil erosion: The removal of large amounts of soil and vegetation from borrow pits can increase the risk of soil erosion, especially during heavy rainfall events.

-Depletion of local groundwater table: excavation of borrow pits may affect the local water table, leading to changes in groundwater levels. This can impact the availability of water for vegetation that relies on groundwater as a water source in the area.

-Land use change: The conversion of natural landscapes into borrow pits can permanently alter landscapes, affecting the aesthetic value of the area.

-Deforestation: Road construction may require the clearing of trees and vegetation along the route, leading to habitat loss.

-Potential displacement of properties such as fences, pipelines, and or homes to allow for sufficient road reserves.

-Impact on air quality: dust and particulate matter generated during the excavation of materials (sand and gravel) and transportation (the movement and operation of heavy vehicles and machinery) can compromise air quality in the surrounding area.

-Water pollution: Runoff from roads can carry pollutants such as oil, salt, and heavy metals into nearby water bodies such as *oshanas*, impacting aquatic ecosystems.

-Noise associated with the movement of heavy machinery and trucks can disturb locals and animals.

-Disruption of hydrological systems by borrow pits can alter natural drainage patterns, causing changes in surface water flow in the area and potentially exacerbating flooding or drought conditions in the area.

-General environmental pollution through the mishandling of project-related waste associated with the project.

-Occupational and community health and safety: Improper handling of materials and equipment may cause health and safety risks to workers and locals. Community safety can also be compromised by unfenced borrow pits or abandoned borrow pits (that are not properly rehabilitated to safe conditions).

-Potential archaeological and cultural heritage impact: borrow pits may impact local cultural heritage sites or traditional land use practices through inadvertent unearthing of such resources (sites and objects). There is a potential of uncovering unmarked graves along the proposed road route. Thus, this will be assessed during the EIA Study.

-Potential impacts of occupational and community health and safety risks due to the inadvertent unearthing of old war explosives (e.g., unexploded ordnance/UXO) along the road route. Earthworks activities (establishment of borrow pits and actual road construction works) could trigger the unearthing of UXO. Therefore, this aspect will be ascertained and assessed during the project design phase (including the EIA process at consultation meetings) to determine the need for UXO clearance by the Namibia Police Explosives Unit before carrying out such activities.

4 EIA PROCESS STEPS

The following steps are followed for this EIA Study:

- **Step 1:** Project initiation - compilation of the BID, ECC application, and registration at the DEAF, and developing the stakeholders' list.
- **Step 2:** Baseline assessment - Literature and legal review of applicable data sources.
- **Step 3:** Ongoing Public Consultation and facilitation (throughout the EIA process)

The EIA notifications were placed in 2 newspapers for two consecutive weeks in the *New Era and Windhoek Observer* on the 16th & 23rd of February 2026.

- **Step 4:** Information sharing - Circulation of the BID to pre-identified stakeholders/I&APs and the public who request EIA registration.
- **Step 5:** Public consultation meetings, site visits, and assessment. Community consultation meetings will be held in Eenkombo and lipanda YaAmiti Villages.
- **Step 6:** Compilation of the Draft Environmental Scoping Assessment Report and Environmental Management & Rehabilitation Plan (EMP/EMRP), and Review of documents.

- **Step 7:** Final EIA Reporting and Submission of the Scoping Report and EMP/EMRP to the Environmental Commissioner at MEFT for evaluation and consideration of the ECC.
- **Stage 8:** Follow up with MEFT on the status of the evaluation of the submitted EIA documents and decision on the ECC.

4.1 Details for consultation and engagement meetings

The consultation and engagement meeting will be held in the project area (closer to the road route) as per the following details:

1. **Date:** Wednesday, 04 March 2026
Time: 10:00
Venue: Andreas Amushila PS (Eenkombo Village)
2. **Date:** Wednesday, 04 March 2026
Time: 14:30
Venue: lipanda YaAmiti Settlement Gathering/Meeting Tree (lipanda YaAmiti Village)

4.2 Comments submission and deadline for comments

All concerns, issues, and/or comments should be put **in writing** (email, short messages (SMS), WhatsApp, or handwritten letters) to be considered in the Scoping Report as well as in the Draft EMP/EMRP.

Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAPs):

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The last date for registration as I&APs and or to submit comments, concerns, and issues is **Friday, 27 March 2026.**

