

**Narrative Report on the Home Gardening Workshop  
Held with the Tuvalu National Council of Women  
Funafuti, Tuvalu on 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2014  
*Sponsored by the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States Project***



## **Introduction**

The workshop was officially opened by the Prime Minister, Honourable Mr Enele Sopoaga and witnessed by His Excellency, the Chinese Ambassador, His Excellency, the Taiwanese Ambassador, cabinet ministers, the Secretary to Government, permanent and assistant secretaries, heads of departments, non-governmental organisations, and Tuvalu National Council of Women (TNCW) members from Funafuti and all outer islands.

In order to minimise cost and maximise time and effort, the opening was designed as a four-fold event – the opening of the TNCW Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Home Gardening Workshop, opening of the National Youth Mock Parliament, launching of the National Gender Policy, and opening of the Secretaries' Gender Workshop.

The Honourable Prime Minister expressed his deep appreciation for this kind of arrangement as it ensured cost savings and also gave participants an opportunity to witness the developments and achievements of the women of Tuvalu.

The Home Gardening Workshop was organized by the TNCW and the technical training was provided by the Tuvalu Department of Agriculture. Financial assistance for the workshop was provided by the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project.

The aim of the Home Gardening Workshop was to enlighten 39 women, particularly those from the outer islands, on agricultural activities that can benefit them, their families and ultimately their community.



**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014**

The TNCW AGM began with presentations by TWNC leaders from Funafuti and the outer islands. Issues raised during the presentations include the continuation of the home gardens, sewing and cooking workshops and revival of handicrafts that no longer exist in the TNCW handicraft center. Recommendations made on the first day of the AGM included a request for donors to provide micro-financing for women on the outer islands and the implementation of food security and climate change adaptation activities such as replanting of mangroves and other trees for coastal protection.





**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2014**

The meeting participants were divided into their respective island communities and this was an opportune time to discuss their issues before it was put to the meeting for deliberation.

The meeting organisers also brought in SPC consultant, Bikenibeu Paeniu, who presented on handicraft costing. Paeniu stressed the importance for handicrafts to be of good quality and to be sold at a reasonable price. The cost of each handicraft item should depend on time spent making the item, quality and labour cost. High selling prices will lead to a lot of unsold items that will eventually become unsuitable for selling.



Handicraft prices are now being reviewed for overseas markets and the women will focus their efforts on improving the quality of their items. The TNCW Coordinator expressed her appreciation for the consolidation of handicraft prices. The TNCW is now tasked with educating the women on how to do costing based on quality and other factors.





**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2014**

### **Home Gardening Workshop**

The Tuvalu Government Department of Agriculture Officer, Uatea Vave presented on the preparation of a garden bed and nursery for seedlings. According to Vave, Tuvalu has very limited nutrients in its soil, so composting is recommended for planting greens and vegetables. Vave also shared the composting process – mixing rotten leaves, soil, pig waste and plain sand with water and then leaving it for a few hours before planting.

The presentation equipped the women for the home gardening competition where only five types of vegetables and greens will be planted in the gardens – cucumbers, tomatoes, cabbages, water melon and capsicum – and each island community will be assessed on certain criteria pertaining to the gardens. The women are very excited about the competition.

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2014**

On the second day of the workshop the women were taken on a field trip to the nursery where the GCCA: PSIS project Agriculture Technical Officer, Tavau Teii gave a brief presentation. Most of the women had never seen a setup such as the one in the nursery and this prompted a lot of questions from them.



One of the workers at the nursery did a demonstration of how to make composting. Although the sun was very hot, the women did not want to leave.

From the nursery, two hired trucks were ready to transport the women to the GCCA: PSIS agroforestry demonstration site at the far northern side of Tekavatoetoe. The site which had been cleared by Teii and his team is for planting eatable plants such as fala, olesi, pulaka, guava, etc. At the site the women saw readily available holes for transplanting the eatable plants from the nursery. According to Teii, transplanting should take place the following week after making the composting holes. The women asked many questions and explored opportunities like these



for the outer islands. It is much easier to find land for these kinds of projects on the outer islands rather than on Funafuti with its limited space.

There are two islands selected for the demonstration sites under the GCCA: PSIS agroforestry project, Nukufetau and Funafuti. If the trial goes well, then it may be possible to extend the project to every island. The women are hopeful and strongly recommend focus on the outer islands, since Funafuti often benefits from such projects.

The field trip took three hours before the women returned to the workshop room for a brief summary presentation and filling of evaluation forms.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2014**

The participants returned to their islands with the materials and equipment for designing their own home garden. The materials and equipment were divided amongst the participants from the central, northern and southern islands.



A competition will be held in April 2015 to determine which island has developed the best home garden. The women have all been briefed by the President on preparing the garden beds and planting the seedlings in a tray for the competition.

Agriculture extension officers on the outer islands will be helping the women with developing their gardens. They will be informed of the actual time of planting and the time for inspection. TNCW has a weekly radio programme which will be used to inform the women on any matters relating to the competition.



### **Closing of the Workshop**

The women showed great appreciation to the European Union for the financial assistance which has given them an opportunity to learn vital skills in home gardening. The TNCW AGM provided the opportunity for the women to come together and share ideas and knowledge, which they can then take back to their fellow sisters on the outer islands.

The TNCW President also thanked the GCCA: PSIS project for the assistance in arranging the workshop and hopes to have another opportunity like this in the future for those women who were not able to attend. The President thanked all the participants for a well-attended AGM and workshop. Thanks also to the trainers from the Department of Agriculture for taking time out of their busy schedule for the workshop. It was a great honour and privilege for the women.

### **Recommendations and the Way Forward for Women**

- This competition should be an ongoing activity for all women in Tuvalu.
- A project in re-planting of mangroves on eroded areas of the outer islands is needed.
- Food security should be maintained using traditional knowledge.

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Field trip pictures...

