

Background information

- Tuvalu National Council of Women was established in 1980 during separation from the Gilbert and Ellice island colony.
- Formed by women who came from Gilbert (Kiribati) working under the umbrella of the Women Ekalesia (Church institution)
- Group of empowered women strongly came together to form women organisations from the 8 island communities including outer islands, administered by selected officials from island communities to manage and run the council now became an umbrella body for all women organizations Tuvalu National council of women was first established in 1980.

Objectives

- Its objectives at that time – was to upgrade the standard of living of women of Tuvalu to the better – now the focus has been change to gender equality, inclusion of women in decision making bodies at all levels, maintain culture and tradition, improve the livelihood for economic empowerment of women, conduct trainings to all women, access to opportunities, women and climate change as a new input.
- The Council was established mainly for women to improve their status, to be more recognized in decision making and in all areas of development in the country. Women are vulnerable to nearly everything and they are victims to domestic violence and violence against women.
- Women should also be made aware on the importance of culture and tradition and to understand the importance of why women should be involve in all areas of development and other relevant institutions of decision making.

Projects of TNCW

- Sewing (ongoing)
- Handicrafts (ongoing)
- Snack bar (still on hold)
- Credit Scheme (still on hold)

TNCW have lost lots of revenues due to the demolition of their centre in order to make spaces for the air terminal. They are now occupying one of the PIF's house temporarily awaiting the allocated house approved by government opposite the terminal to the northern side to be vacant.

Credit Scheme project

This initiative was initiated in 2001 allowing only women who actively participated in island communities activities and as members as well to loan. The scheme went on well from the beginning and unfortunately women gradually failed to pay up their loans. Only projects such as poultry farm, piggery, side road food selling were allowed hence the loan only limited to \$300 or \$500 depend on the cost of the business, and also to make sure more women could access to the allocated fund of \$5000.00 only.

The 8 outer islands were each given \$5000 with the aim to assist women in their business endeavours and of course to make more money to enable more women to access to loan. Some islands did quite well in their credit scheme and are benefitting from it, whilst some islands still on the recovery process. It has been a very beneficial initiative to the women of Tuvalu and has helped them a lot with their children in schools. Especially women that do not have any other means of income at all really appreciate the assistance provided by TNCW.

OPPORTUNITIES BEEN ATTAINED

- Women had undergone through massive changes since its establishment
- Attending lots of exposures and training overseas learning from other countries on handicraft makings and on various issues on women affairs.
- Conducted workshops on cultural reviving of weaving mats and other Tuvalu artifacts.
- Promote Tuvalu traditional cooking using own recipes and ingredients available in Tuvalu. (TNCW has its own traditional cookery book)

WOMEN AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Home gardening
- Replanting of mangroves for coastal protection
- Costly to engage women in jobs as such
- Assist women on the outer islands on their development plans to incorporate climate change issues and to strengthen culture and tradition.

Snapshots on some of the women projects on reviving the knowledge of weaving mats etc.



Revival of mat weaving workshop



More shots of women products on climate change

