

Kura Tauī'anga Reva

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SRIC Projects on Palmerston Island

Although Palmerston Island is situated in the Southern Group of the Cook Islands, it is one of the remotest islands to access. Transportation is only by sea which means that implementing projects on the island is dependent on the local shipping schedule, which could lead to months of delay.

Palmerston Island was one of three islands who were the first recipients of the SRIC project, the other two being Atiu and Aitutaki. In 2014, the SRIC Programme with funds provided by the Adaptation Funds through UNDP Samoa office, rolled out the household water tank project for the three islands. Each household on Palmerston received a 5,000litre water tank. Since the completion of the project, the SRIC office haven't had the opportunity to visit the island to assess and gauge the community views on the SRIC project. On Saturday 6 February, a SRIC team of three braved the boat ride to Palmerston. Besides delivering more project materials to the island, the team interviewed

(pictured below).



SRIC water tank labelled on Palmerston island (Photo by Celine Dyer)

According to the nurse on the island, that extra water tank gives the residents peace of mind which keeps them happy, lowering stress levels thus reducing the illness rate on the island. Mr Arthur Neale, the Executive Officer emphasised that the assurance of water security for each household is gratifying whilst also increases the water storage capacity on the island as a whole. Readily accessibility to water supply eliminates the mundane task of carting water from community water tanks and encourages households to set parameters on managing their water usage.

Tie down project – Palmerston Island



Materials for the Palmerston tie down project at Avatiu harbour ready for shipment (Photo by Mia Teaurima)



Ana Tiraa putting a SRIC sticker on one of the water tanks on Palmerston Island 9 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Some residents to gauge their views on the SRIC water tank project and affix the SRIC stickers on them.

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The tie down project was in response to an urgent appeal from the Palmerston Island EO, Mr Arthur Neale. The initiative was to assist prepare the residents during the cyclone season. Considering that Palmerston island lies on the cyclone path and being an El Nino year with prediction of increased cyclone activities, the SRIC team mobilised to deliver materials before a cyclone makes a direct hit on the island. It took the team from December 2015 to February 2016 to source and deliver the required materials to Palmerston. Some materials were air freighted from New Zealand to meet the shipping schedule. The residents on Palmerston were elated with the quick response from the SRIC programme.



Materials in storage on Palmerston to begin the tie down project 17 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

SRIC Presence on Nassau Island

The SRIC programme has certainly made a positive impression on the residents of the tiny island of Nassau with a population of less than 70 people. Nassau was the first island to receive a packaged project consisting of an aluminium boat with outboard motor and trailer. Since there are no other private boats on the island, the community is fully dependent on the SRIC boat for fishing for their families.



Materials for the Nassau Uwi Kuru project on the boat to Nassau (Photo by Celine Dyer)

According to the people of Nassau, the boat has helped the community with fishing for food since the only other boat is strictly for unloading cargo.



Porua Jack and Celine Dyer with the SRIC boat on Nassau 11 Feb (Photo by Ana Tiraa)

The SRIC Focal Point of Nassau, Pamanini Tuatai was proud to show off the SRIC office which is based in the Bluesky building with the only furniture a long table.

Even though the office is lacking in this regard, the positive aspect of the situation is the proximity to the communication network as most of the work done by the Focal Point requires constant communication with the SRIC team in Raro.

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Nassau SRIC Focal Point Pamanini Tuatai outside the SRIC office in Nassau (Photo by Celine Dyer)

SRIC CC delivering on commitments

At the Northern student's workshop last July, the SRIC programme made a commitment to fund feasible and sustainable climate related project ideas generated from the workshop. Those ideas were developed into full proposals by the SRIC team with engineering design and advice provided by project engineer Ben Parakoti. Working with the SRIC Focal Points on each island, the procurement of project materials was carried out and those completed were shipped to the respective islands. Nassau school was the first to receive the complete package of materials to implement their project.



Materials at Avatiu harbour for Nassau (Photo by Mia Teaurima)



On the receiving end, Pamanini ensuring all fencing materials is accounted for in Nassau 11 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

The Uwi Kuru project is to fence off the planting area to keep the wondering animals out. The fencing will cover an area approximately 300 metres of taro plantation closer to the village in Nassau. The school also plan to use part of the area for agriculture training as part of the school activity.



Section of the Uwi Kuru that will be fenced in Nassau (Photo by Celine Dyer)

The Nassau school will be involved with the implementation phase of the project by taking photos during the different stages of construction and ensuring that the SRIC signage is posted on the fence. They will also make a report to the SRIC office on completion of the project.

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People of Nassau singing and dancing to show their appreciation for the Uwi Kuru project materials landed on 11 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

It was a joyous occasion for the people of Nassau when the project materials were finally off loaded. They celebrated with singing and dancing to show their gratitude and appreciation to the SRIC programme for delivering on its commitments.

What Ula and Victor left behind in Pukapuka



Sandbanks in the lagoon moved around by cyclone Ula 12 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Ula and Victor have come and gone, but not without leaving their marks on Pukapuka that the leaders are still contemplating what action or response to undertake, if any. Cyclone Ula moved and build up the sand bank pictured above, and also reduced the causeway at Yato to rubble. If that

wasn't enough damage, Victor came along and did its own thing, infiltrating the taro planting area and killing the taro plants. The only cause of action for the people was to harvest the taro whether ready or not and store them in their freezers. The extent of the damage on Pukapuka caused by these two culprits while journeying in the region is yet to be assessed.



Flattened causeway at Yato village, Pukapuka (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Before cyclone Victor Jan 2015 (Photo by Celine Dyer)

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After cyclone Victor 12 Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Pukapuka School project

Materials for the Pukapuka school project were also landed even though not complete, but it will allow for the commencement of the work to proceed. Community taro planting area of approximately 1.2kms will be fenced off to keep wondering animals out, and drainage to prevent future flooding. This project will assure sustainable food source for the people when struck by such disaster like Victor.



Section of the area to be fenced in Pukapuka (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Fencing material in Pukapuka for the students project Feb (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Restoring an Important Damaged Forest Habitat by Dr Michael White from Penryhn Island

Tongareva's Community Environmental Society – is progressing well in our efforts to find comfortable ways of living in a changed climate. For us in the North climate has already changed: it's not some future hypothetical event. It is real and serious. December 2015 was the hottest month globally in 135 years of data records; January 2016 even hotter. People can destroy an environment in hours, yet it takes years to repair it – if indeed it can be restored! So we need to stop all activities that harm our world, and only do the things that are beneficial. Destroying things just for money is the height of folly. Nature takes time to grow. Our philosophy is simple '*give more than you take*' – the true meaning of sustainable use.

Tree loss was a serious problem in 2015, some loses were a combination of natural causes: tidal over wash, elevated salt-levels, limited rainfall, increased solar & u/v radiation, and insect damage. However, some mature trees were needlessly knocked down at Omoka. Even if you replant now it takes about 10 years for a coconut tree to reach maturity; hardwoods even longer.

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Trees are our best defence against climate change. They provide shade, conserve moisture, improve soil, give us food, building materials and medicine; they are perfect for reducing coastal erosion and land-based run-off; and are important habitats for numerous species. A mixed tropical forest is an amazing and diverse ecosystem. It also *fixes* the carbon we produce in our daily activities. Both villages at Tongareva are busy planting fruit trees this month while we have some rain.

SRIC CC is helping with two components in our wide-ranging plans. 1. Establishing a tree nursery to raise local saplings ready for transplanting. We are collaborating with our Agriculture Officer and Tongareva Marine Resources Centre to create this garden. 2. Construct a water-catchment and observation post near a biodiversity hot-spot. The forest behind our main honu (sea turtle) nesting site is being lost through climate impacts: we've been replanting since May 2015, but because there is no fresh-water on that motu, and it didn't rain for six months, the hardwood trees, such as tamanu, did not survive; the purapura are still OK. Omoka nursery will rear saplings, which we'll transplant on the motu and then water until successfully established. Thomas Taime (Tongareva's climate focal point) signed the contracts for building supplies at Rarotonga (Dec/Jan climate newsletter).

For those unaware, the sex of honu embryos is determined by nest incubation temperature: more females emerge from warmer nests, more males from cooler eggs. As global temperatures rise it is harder to produce male honu. Our situation worsened because the collapsing forest meant our main nesting area now gets sun all day long; previously the trees provided morning shade.

Thanks to Dr Michael White for this write up.



Dead trees on Akasusa motu Mangarongaro (Photo by Dr Micheal White)



Honu tracks on motu Mangarongaro (Photo by Dr Micheal White)



Tree nursery to be established here (Photo by Dr Michael White)

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SRIC will provide guttering & tank to provide water for the nursery (Photo provided by Dr Michael White)



SRIC team meeting with Atiu students to prepare them for the upcoming student's workshop (Photo by Mia Teaurima)

Two members of the SRIC team were also on Atiu island to assess the progress of the projects there. The construction of the Atiu cold press coconut oil hut is near completion. Once this is done, then the fittings for the process plant will be sourced and installed. Given that all goes well, the coconut oil plant could be in business within a few months. The team also met with the students who will attend the workshop in Raro and briefed them on the expectations of the workshop and how to prepare themselves for it. According to the team

report the students are excited to be part of the workshop.

Kura – Kuriri

We welcome three new people to our team this month;

Pat Tuara-Demmke as the National Project Coordinator for the Third National Communications.

Teariki Rongo the SRIC CC Focal Point for Mauke.



Lucky Topetai the SRIC CC Focal Point from Pukapuka currently undergoing training.



Till next time – Ka kite