



Reports on Member of Parliament grants and discretionary donations in the Cook Islands

MARCH 2016 – REPORT 2

COMMUNITY GRANTS

May 2015

Moeau Services – Occupational Health Provider

Moeau Services is an occupational health service provider that works with Te Vaerua Rehabilitation Service, Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Health. Working together these organisations provide services and support for persons with disabilities and serious injuries. The everyday things that able persons can do can be a struggle for disabled persons and these organisations help and support persons with disabilities by providing goods and services such as wheel chairs, therapy session to address mobility issues.

The request for financial support from the Cook Foundation was submitted by Donna Smith, an Occupational Therapist of Moeau Occupational therapy services.

The Cook Foundation granted funds for materials, airfares and accommodation for a carpenter to modify home environments that were identified as being unsafe or of concern to the most vulnerable of the elderly population on the Island of Atiu.

During September/October 2014 Moeau Services as part of the Te Vaerua rehabilitation team visited the island of Atiu at the request of the Atiu Disability Coordinator (Jude Isaia) to provide assistance to their people who required Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy (OT) support. Moeau Services were to complete home assessments to identify those people that were considered 'at risk' within their homes, as well as provide training for their disability.

Below is a before and after photo of the toilet facility in one of the 11 homes in Atiu. An elderly couple lived in the home, and struggled to use their bathroom facility due to mobility issues and back pain. The bathroom needed rails and a shower chair with arms. The couple find it a lot easier to cope with their personal cares now with the rails in place.

Also known as Enuamanu (the island of birds) Atiu lies 187 kilometres northwest of Rarotonga with a small population of 472, and is divided into 5 villages.



August 2015

Cook Foundation supports autism workshop

Autism Cook Islands Inc. is an organisation that aims to empower parents, caregivers, and persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) through a series of training, implementation and one on one session's. Autism is a learning disability and severe challenging behaviour. Adults and children with Autism are educated with different learning methods and skills to assist with their education and wellbeing.

For the past two year, Kerry Patterson. a psychologist who specializes in Autism Spectrum Disorder, has been living on Rarotonga and working privately with a family who has a child with ASD. She was about to finish her contract and has offered ACI support in terms of training and one on one support prior to her leaving the island. In August the organisation wished to utilise Kerry's expertise as they intended to hold a series of sessions open to the public for ACI parents and families. The purpose of this program is to give parents/caregivers/families the opportunity to gain more knowledge and have a better understanding on what the disorder is, behaviour management strategies, how to improve speech and language skills, the list goes on. The organisation proposal was seeking funding to cover costs for the ASD specialist while the workshop was being held.

The Autism Training workshop proved to be a success, with 15-20 people, mostly parents and teacher aides attending the sessions. This training has been organised by the Autism Cook Islands which is made up mainly of parents. Below is a photo of Kerry (psychologist) presenting at the August workshop.



December 2015

Wheelchair Ramp installed

Te Vaerua Rehabilitation Service is a non profit organisation that provides support and services for persons with disabilities and serious injuries. Te Vaerua is made up of a clinical team consisting of a physiotherapist, occupational therapist and a rehabilitation assistant. They also employ a equipment maintenance person and an administrator. The service provided is the only community rehabilitation service in the Cook Islands.

The Rehabilitation service requested funding from the Cook Foundation to fund a ramp to be built in a home for a man who is 33 years of age who has arthritis in his ankles and feet. Arthritis is a progressive disorder and often comes and goes, but this young man has endured pain from having this disorder for 8 months. He has been using a wheelchair to mobilise since January 2015 but it is difficult to access his house without a ramp, he has to climb up 5 steps to his front entrance, drag his wheelchair inside once he is at the top of the stairs to enable him to mobilise around the house, otherwise he would have to crawl. The ramp was installed with the assistance of funding from the Cook Foundation which enabled the young man to be more independent with greater mobility around his home.

Dec 2015

Rakahanga Growers receive support from the Cook Foundation

The Agriculture/Growers group of community members on Rakahanga are planting dragon fruit and will provide the fruit for the Rakahanga community and Manihiki residents.

With MP Toka Hagai's return to Rakahanga in January, there was a growers meeting where the new office bearers were formed and the supplies of cement for poles and PVC pipes for the dragon fruit planting was discussed, as the growers wanted to increase the quantity of dragon fruit they are able to grow.

Toka Hagai granted a request to the Cook Foundation for the funding of cement and PVC pipes for the dragon fruit planting. The growers have already trialled the dragon fruit and it seems to be doing well.



Rakahanga is part of the Cook Islands, situated in the central-southern Pacific Ocean with a small population of 127.



It is a very remote island and people can only travel by boat to visit Rakahanga. Manihiki is around 1299 km from Rarotonga and is a large atoll with 60 motu (small islands) that make up the perimeter. The population is approximately 280.



Cook Foundation assists the Aotearoa Society DEC 2015

The Aotearoa Society is a legally incorporated society, the principal asset and focus is the administration of the Aotearoa Hostel adjacent to the Auditorium area in the area occupied by other island hostels. The hostel provides Marae-style accommodation with supporting ablution and cooking facilities. The Hostel is available for a range of activities for people of all kinds of cultural backgrounds e.g. Cook Islanders, New Zealanders, Maori groups, and others.

Derek Tinia Fox is the current president of the Aotearoa Society.

The Centre was extended in 1992 to allow for large groups from overseas to use for community activities and accommodation.

In recent times there has been an increase in locals and visitors utilising the hostel accommodation. For example the Tupapa-Maraerenga cultural group often use the facilities for their practice sessions; the yoga group occasionally use their facility etc. The Society have been planning to refurbish and upgrade their facilities. They were granted funds from the Cook Foundation for gutters and a water tank for when there is stress on the water supply in the summer. They already have one water tank but would like to catch the rainwater off the hostel roof and store it in another tank for later use.



Mar 2016

Cook Foundation provides funding for homework program in Vaimaanga

The Homework Hub is a program set up by members of the Vaimaanga community. The program is for students from year 4 to year 13 (8 years and onwards) who would like to develop good study habits and learn more within the teaching program. The Homework Hub promotes good study habits for children/teenagers in the Vaimaanga community.

A request was granted from the Cook Foundation to fund school supplies and tablet devices for the students. It is anticipated that there will be approximately 20 students joining the homework hub. A qualified NZ teacher will provide support for the students in learning literacy, numeracy, and use of technology and will assist the children who have special learning needs. The Homework Hub is beneficial as it promotes learning and develops an increase in children's skills and work habits.



Vaimaanga is a village on the south side of the island in Rarotonga.



The homework program will be held at the Vaimaanga meeting house and will run every Thursday during school term time- Juniors: 3.30 – 4.30pm Seniors: 4.30 – 5.30

Nadine Newnham (below) is a Cook Foundation trustee, trying out the new tablets funded by the Foundation.



MP GRANT
ALBERT NICHOLAS, MP FOR AVATIU, RUATONGA AND PALMERSTON

Cook Foundation assists Atupa Youth with community cleaning.

The Atupa Youth consist of members from within the Atupa district who are very active and enthusiastic in contributing to the community by carrying out monthly cleaning of road sides, homes, and public areas around Atupa and Panama. The Cook Foundation granted a request to purchase a blower and chainsaw to assist the youth group.

The Atupa Youth group have a committed working team of about ten young people and at time others join in to help when they can. The increasing amount of waste on Rarotonga is of concern for the Atupa community as it creates an untidy look in the village and gives the impression that the community do not care about their surroundings. The people of Atupa and Panama and the community are making proactive decisions to ensure their village is clean and tidy.



The Atupa chairman, Charlie Tamangaro (Jnr) is responsible for looking after all their work equipment.

The request to purchase the blower and chainsaw will assist the team in taking care of the village.