

OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE

WOMEN AND WATER

"WOMEN REPRESENTATION IS IMPORTANT TO WATER RESOURCES CONSERVATION"

Women are amongst the most important users and guardians of water and as such, play a significant role in water resource management.

WATER AT THE CORE OF WOMEN'S TRADITIONAL TASKS

In the Samoan culture women are referred to as "o pae ma auli o aiga", which depicts the woman's special role as the backbone and peace maker of every family, household and community.

Water is critical and is at the core of a Samoan woman's traditional responsibilities. Water is used for household care and health, and in their everyday duties women are most often the collectors, users and managers of water within the household. Water is also used by subsistence women farmers, who manage small vegetable and garden patches which needs irrigation outside of the house. These roles provide women with significant knowledge about water resources in terms of quality, supply, as well as storage. Their knowledge of water resources demonstrates the importance of women to the success of water resources development and conservation programmes.

WATER, SANITATION AND WOMEN

Women are the promoters of sanitary practices within their homes, because good health, cleanliness and good hygiene is always their foremost responsibility. It is this responsibility that makes women diligent in securing good quality water for their everyday activities.

However, when access to water is restricted, women are often forced to accept lower-quality water, thus subjecting their entire families to greater risks of diseases, because many illnesses can be transmitted by contaminated water.

WOMEN IN WATER RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

As highlighted before, women have primary roles involving the collection and utilization of water as well as the promotion of sanitary practices, and yet they are hardly involved in water related projects. Recent documentations however, have just indicated the linkages between women's participation and the success of water resources



Village women doing their washing in the river.

management projects. According to these new findings water related projects which do not involve women participation are more likely to fail. This has led to the increase in water management projects which encourages the participation and the consideration of women's views, together with other

SAMOAN WOMEN - AS WATER RESOURCES MANAGERS

Samoan Women Committees have spearheaded many projects ranging from small income generation projects to community-based conservation initiatives. Some of these initiatives include the rehabilitation and protection of water sources like coastal springs. In the village setting these women look after water sources and promote sanitation practices, and thus their involvement in water resources management projects is significant.

It is envisaged that future water related projects would focus more on increasing the capacity of Samoan women, as well as recognizing them as a focal group within the villages, which focuses at maintaining the integrity of water sources, and ensuring effective water supply and services. Providing women with basic plumbing knowledge,

storage mediums, as well as training on village education and awareness raising techniques, will without a doubt enhance communal water resources conservation and management. Women committees are often very organized and together with governmental organizations, can host monthly village awareness programs in the form of dances, oratory speeches and play competitions. These activities can increase awareness about water in the village, leading to improved water conservation.

BENEFITS OF ACCESS TO WATER

Benefits for both women and children will result from better access to quality water resources. These benefits include:

- Economic benefit: Better access to water gives women more time for income-generating activities, the needs of family members, or their own welfare and leisure. The economy, as a whole, therefore also benefits.
- Benefit to children: Freed from the drudgery of water collection and management, children, especially girls, can go to school.
- Empowerment of women: Involvement in water related projects empowers women, especially when project activities are linked to income generating activities. This gives women the chance to earn and expand their income.



Women
consultation on
water resource
management.



For more information contact our Water Resources Division - MNRE at Matautu
ph - 25421 or 25419

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CHILDREN'S CORNER

Children aged 9-14 are invited to answer the following corner. The name of 3 students with top scores at the end of every month will be posted under the "Children's Corner" for special prizes. "Children's Environment Awareness 2007 Awards will be given to 10 students with top total scores in November during the 2007 National Environment Week".

FILL IN THE GAPS

In the Samoan _____ women are referred to as o pae ma auli o aiga, which depicts the woman's _____ role as the backbone and _____ of every family, _____ and community.

Women are promoters of _____ practises within their homes, because good _____, cleanliness and good hygiene is always their _____ responsibility.

DEFINE THE FOLLOWING TERMS

1. hygiene
2. task
3. access
4. sanitation
5. quality

LONG-FORM

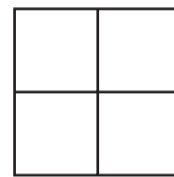
1. MNRE
2. SPREP
3. UNEP
4. UNDP
5. GEF
6. UNESCO

COLOUR
THE PICTURE

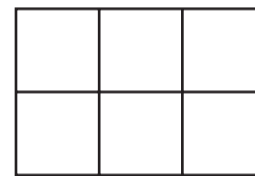


STICK PUZZLES

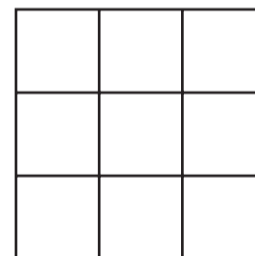
While this kind of puzzle is usually called a matchstick puzzle, it can be worked easily with toothpicks or, on a large surface with pencils. Try it out kids and then draw the answers on a piece of paper and bring it together with your other answers.



1. Remove three sticks from this layout and replace them to form three squares.



- 2 (a). Take away six of these seventeen sticks and leave two squares.
(b). Take away five sticks and leave three squares.



- 3 (a). Take away eight sticks and leave two squares.
(b). Arrange the eight sticks you took away to form two squares and four triangles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following companies for sponsoring our children's corner.

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- West End Co
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- McDonalds Restaurant

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Resource Development Section

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