

Selena's Reflective journal: Rotuma Trip August-September 2012.

I have been very fortunate and privileged to be given a chance to travel to Rotuma and work with motivated members of LajeRotuma Initiative. The journey there took 2 days from Suva by boat. Although the journey was a little rough by sea, upon arrival the beautiful scene of pristine blue waters and white sandy beaches was breathtaking. The team was made up of four whom was briefed well on the purpose of this trip to Rotuma mainly to conduct the scoping of soft beaches around the island and facilitate a first workshop on leadership management principles with the Rotuma Women Association. The seagrass monitoring at Maka Bay was part of the workshop Day 2 activities.

The first week's duties was focusing on the beach scoping exercise that involved a lot of walking and taking photographs of the beaches from many angles noting the erosion signs. It was not an easy task thus the timing of low tide enables us to observe the full length of the beach. However, I got to learn about the extraordinary sites that have never visited but know only from stories, beaches of Lulu, Vaioa and the caves along the rocky coastline of Itumuta.

The second week of the trip involved the facilitation of the 3-day workshop with the 40 women from the women clubs. The program included hands-on activities and presentations concerning the role of women in the family, village, district and island in a changing environment. The second day of the workshop was field trips by groups to the forest and setting butterfly traps, the group with the elderly women stayed back at the women's resource centre for screen printing and the making of 3-D island model. The fourth group of women walked down to Maka Bay to conduct the seagrass survey as part of the annual monitoring of the Maka Bay by LajeRotuma. As part of my field experience, I was given the opportunity to present on the understanding of the water cycle. I was worried at first but Rupeti helped me with translation of some of the expressions in Rotuman and my presentation went well.





Group at Maka Bay, Selina on far right