

TUTU Rural Training Centre

Background

The TRTC was established by the Society of Mary on Taveuni in 1969 tracing its origins to a Sydney monastery that ran a Marist Brothers training course for Pacific islanders and which was transferred from Sydney to Taveuni. The Society of Mary in the Province of Oceania owned 480 hectares of freehold estate at Tutu on the island of Taveuni. The Brothers came from the eight Pacific regions in which the Society was involved. The Brothers were given one year of religious training followed by a year of technical training in agriculture, carpentry and related subjects. At the same time, non-formal adult education training courses were developed for lay people from the province of Cakaudrove, which became the Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC). The two programmes (the Formation Centre for Marist Brothers and TRTC) have, from the outset, run in parallel but as separate entities.

Core business

The mission statement of the Centre is 'to provide a place/presence in which the people of Cakaudrove are empowered to become more autonomous and take charge of their lives in a rapidly changing world' with its prime objective being to train people to return home to farm their own land.

Activities

Over the years, the TRTC has been flexible and, to some degree, experimental in its approach to rural training. This has enabled the Centre to make changes in its efforts to develop more effective programmes to prepare for rural self-employment. The courses on offer today at the TRTC have evolved significantly from the original courses. The five courses now offered are the Young Farmers; Married Couples; Young Single Women; Parents and Village Courses.

The Tutu 'experiment' has been highly successful in equipping young people to be successful farmers on their own land. The experience of Tutu has shown that that rural youth can earn good livelihoods from the farming of their own land.

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