

Newsletter

December
2017
Issue 12

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>PIFON partners with the University of the Sunshine Coast to implement PARDI 2</i>	2
<i>Effective advocacy and Policy Engagement (PIFS/PIFON)</i>	3
<i>PIFON launches Strategic Plan 2017-2020</i>	3
<i>Regional Fiji meeting on World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020</i>	4
<i>Asia Pacific Women's Farmers Forum in India</i>	4
<i>PLANGO partnership on MTCP2 co-hosts FO side events in Port Vila, Vanuatu</i>	5
<i>Women empowerment to further agriculture in the Pacific</i>	6
<i>PIFON participates in 13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women</i>	7
<i>PIFON represented at the Australian Women in Agriculture conference</i>	8
<i>Expanded Regional Steering Committee (ERSC) Meeting held in Ahmedabad, India</i>	9
<i>More stories</i>	10

2017 "Stars of Oceania" awards for PIFON

The event was held on Wednesday, October 04, 2017 at the H. Rex Lee Auditorium in Utulei, American Samoa, the first time the event has been hosted outside of Hawaii since its inauguration in 2006. The event's purpose is to recognize, honor and appreciate excellence in leadership by Pacific Islanders and long term residents' for their service to the people of Oceania and communities at large they live in" was the sentiments of University of Hawaii's, Pacific Business Center Program Director, Papalii Dr. Tusi Avegalio, the primary organizer of the event.

The event promotes the Stars as role models and inspirations towards positive achievement.

The focus of the 2017 Stars of Oceania is on leaders of inspiration and accomplishment primarily women. The leadership theme of this year's Stars of Oceania is: 'Triumph Through Resilience and Healing; GOOD LEADERS LEAD, GREAT LEADERS HEAL.' The theme underscores the nobility and strength of women to overcome challenges and to rise above self-limiting doubts to achieve their potential. It promotes actions so that women do not live in fear, intimidation or discrimination. The theme also draws from the cultural wisdoms of ancestors that point to healing and leadership as gifts to those willing to accept the responsibility with the moral courage to do the right thing.

PIFON was conferred an Oceania Institutional award based on its research and agriculturally based organization promoting self-reliance, regional collaboration and sustainable development in the Islands helping its Pacific island members to become stars in their own right.

PIFON's Program Manager, Lavinia Kaumaitotoya was conferred a Star of Oceania for her work and leadership in the area of Women in Agriculture program with PIFON and the research and agricultural work undertaken by PIFON through the Breadfruit research and extension work, and its climate change adaption programs that is enabling many Pacific island women to be leaders and healers in their communities.



PIFON partners with University of the Sunshine Coast to implement PARDI 2

The Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) is very proud and equally excited to partner with the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) of Australia in implementing the second phase of the Pacific Agribusiness Research in Development Initiative (PARDI) project. PARDI 2 builds on the achievements of its predecessor, PARDI which was implemented over the period 2010-2015 aimed to provide sustainable livelihood improvements in Pacific island countries (PICs). The FJD 4.2 million (AU\$2.6m) project is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and will be implemented over 4 years to be completed in June 2021.

PIFON has been a part of the project design from its early stages and fully supports its overall objectives, implementing partners and proposed methodology. PIFON believes that farmer organizations have a critical role in agricultural research and extension in the region and as such see PARDI 2 as a unique opportunity to build new partnerships and ensure smallholder farmer engagement throughout PARDI 2 and future ACIAR initiatives.

The overall aim of PARDI 2 is 'to identify and understand how agribusiness development opportunities can contribute to improved economic growth and livelihoods in the Pacific islands'. This 4 year project will be active in Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga.

A two-day inception workshop for PARDI 2 was held at the South Sea Orchids conference facility in Nasau, Nadi, Fiji Islands from 25th October.

Approximately 30 participants attended the workshop and included representatives from the various Pacific partners namely, SPC, USP, PIDF, PIPSO and Pacific Island Government Ministries, Australian Government development and trade initiatives such as PHAMA, MDF, M4C, and related donor and NGO activities and agribusinesses (private sector) in the Pacific.



PARDI 2 Inception Workshop participants at South Sea Orchids, Nasau, Nadi

Effective advocacy and Policy Engagement (PIFS/PIFON)

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) has recently signed a one year contract valued at a quarter million with the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) to strengthen the capacity of farmer organisations in effective advocacy and policy engagement.

Policy advocacy is new to Pacific farmer organisations, in this particular context, it is about enabling the right environment to ensure a dignified life for farming families, to better meet consumers' needs more appropriately and more effectively, thereby helping to stem possible future food crisis.

PIFON is developing this as its new program to allow its farmer organisations to share experiences, improve their knowledge, and understand the concept of policy engagement and advocacy and its relativity at a regional level. The program also aims to identify priority policy issues affecting smallholder farmers in the region and means for addressing these issues with farmer organisations as a driving force. Additionally, this program also allows farmer organisations (FOs) to grow and develop partnerships with existing and potential partners, using PIFON's signature farmer to farmer (F2F) learning exchanges to know how to continue to build and maintain relationships, how to foster better relationships and how to forge new ones. In this way, FOs can begin to build relationships with development partners, in this case, PIFS to implement and carry out intended programs, where necessary using the network, and assist to maximise membership reach with such partnerships.

Expected outcomes of this partnership include a toolkit for effective advocacy and policy engagement for farmer organisations, national farmer forums on policy and advocacy in Tonga and Samoa, a regional policy brief and short video to support it and 2 regional events to bring together PIFON members on advocacy and policy engagement.

PIFON launches Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Six program areas that PIFON's farmer organisations predominantly work in was unveiled as its Vice Chairman, Mr Minoru Nishi officially launched PIFON's Strategic Plan II (2017-2020) document at a dinner during the Pacific Week of Agriculture at the L'Houstalet in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 18th October.

The launch was attended by representatives of IFAD, EU, CTA, ACIAR, USC, AWiA and its Farmer Organisation representatives. Mr Nishi stated that PIFON's Strategic Plan II laid the pathway for the network's work for the 2017-2020 years which was the result of many consultations, Learning & Planning meetings that were conducted to bring together the aspirations of its members. This was the result of its farmer organisations member response which was very member driven and very member focused.

PIFON used its Strategic Plan review and many of its publications as the building block to formulate its plan.



STRATEGIC PLAN II

2017 - 2020

Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network

PIFON

Regional Fiji meeting on World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020 (WCA2020) contributes to Sustainable Development Goals

Highlighting the importance of reliable statistics and data for policy development, including national agricultural censuses, a week-long Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) workshop for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to food and agriculture, and the last in the series of regional roundtables on World Census of Agriculture 2020, was held in Nadi, Fiji from 06 November.

For FAO, assisting governments to produce accurate statistics for informed decision-making, and the agricultural census that is a key pillar in national statistical systems and an important data source for both users and producers of statistics, has become critical to the Organization's work in support of its member countries.

Organized by the FAO Sub regional Office for the Pacific Islands, and involving over 40 participants from countries across the Pacific as well as regional and international organizations, the workshop aims to improve awareness about the 21 SDG indicators for which FAO is a custodian agency, and in developing a harmonized approach to collecting and using agricultural and rural statistics in the Pacific.

PIFON as part of its Event Management Services helped to organize the logistics, travel, accommodation and provided Secretariat services for this event. PIFON is excited to partner with FAO in the future on similar events.

Asia Pacific Women's Farmers Forum in India

Women farmer leaders from 13 countries including a representative each from PNG WiADF and the PIFON Secretariat gathered in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India for the Asia Pacific Women Farmers Forum, held from October 4-6, 2017. Discussions at the forum included initiatives to be taken to reduce poverty and hunger in families and communities, the challenges and obstacles faced when performing their roles in society development and the strategies and actions planned to be implemented to fully achieve their potentials as key stakeholders in sustainable development.

The women feel that their work and contributions is still under recognized, undervalued and underpaid. Women are most vulnerable during natural disasters. Their voices are seldom heard at community, national and global levels. Opportunities to uplift their conditions are inadequate to respond to the gross inequalities that they face. Without proper incentives and opportunities, without an enabling environment, the women's contributions to reducing hunger and poverty in the world will not be unleashed in the scale of millions. For these reasons, the women are asking the Governments to provide an enabling and favorable environment to strengthen their contributions to sustainable development.

An outcome of this event was a Declaration expressing commitment to reducing hunger and poverty and to sustainable development.



Maria Linibi of PNG WiA during her panel presentation at the Asia Pacific Women's Conference held in Ahmedabad, India



Participants of the Asia Pacific Women's Forum presenting their Declaration to the members of the RSC Meeting in Ahmedabad, India

PIANGO partnership on MTCP2 co-hosts 3 FO side events in Port Vila, Vanuatu

PIFON in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations (PIANGO) hosted three farmer organization (FO) side events at the Pacific Week of Agriculture in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 16 – 18 October, 2017.

Pacific Women in Agriculture with the theme, Inspire, Innovate and Impower was the first side event focusing on inspiring stories, innovative systems and empowering case studies from PIFON's network of women who are working in the sector. An outcome of the event was a Pacific Women in Agriculture Declaration by the attendees for Pacific Leaders to hear their voices on women in agriculture.

The role of farmer organisations in climate change adaptation was led by Dr Andrew McGregor the lead author for the recently published SPC book '*Vulnerability of Pacific Island agriculture and forestry to climate change*'. The event presentations were on actual work being done by PIFON members in the network who were walking the Climate Change talk from Pest Management, The Breadfruit and Open Pollinated Seeds Program, and the Tutu Rural Training Centre's story of Climate Resilience Agroforestry. This event discussed strategies and FO initiatives to help farmers adapt to climate change. A key message from FOs to policy makers was discussed and endorsed as an outcome of the event.

The third day was an organized farmer to farmer (F2F) learning exchange trip by PIFON's Vanuatu member, Farm Support Association that taught the farmers on sustainable cropping systems, pineapple and floriculture and income generation for FOs through input supply.

This was the first ever Pacific Week of Agriculture and this was held on 16 – 20 October at the National Convention Centre in Port Vila, Vanuatu.



Participant delegates at the Women in Agriculture Day One workshop at the Owen Hall, Port Vila, Vanuatu during the Pacific Week of Agriculture activities

Women empowerment to further agriculture in the Pacific

Over 50 women and men farmer leaders, partners and stakeholders from ten Pacific Islands gathered for the inaugural Pacific Women in Agriculture (PWIA) Forum in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 16 October 2017. The inaugural meeting focused around the theme “Inspire, Innovate, Impower”. The forum heard that while women and girls are most vulnerable during natural disasters, their voices are seldom heard at community, national, regional and global levels.

The workshop was organised to coincide with the Pacific Week of Agriculture currently underway in Vanuatu that week October 16 - 20. It provided an opportunity for participants to share success stories and the challenges they encountered in their respective countries. Ronald Hartman, IFAD’s Pacific Country Director in his official opening remarks stressed the importance of empowering women as they tend to invest back into their families, communities and economy. “All women need to be empowered, to have more influence in decision making and to address gender inequalities in the agriculture context. Women in agriculture also need our support and to have access to models that work and can be replicated.”

The one-day workshop organized to support Pacific women in agriculture ended with an outcome statement that called on government and development partners to actively support women farmers in the Pacific to ensure that their rights are protected. It also called for allocating dedicated funding for farmers organisations focusing on leadership and management capacities to run specific women’s spaces with their male counterparts in farming organisations.

The event was organised by the Pacific Islands Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) in partnership with the Pacific Islands Association of Non Governmental Organisation (PIANGO) with funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) under the Medium Term Cooperation Programme for farmer organisations in Asia and the Pacific Phase II (MTCP II) project.



Participant delegates at the end of Day One of the Pacific Women In Agriculture workshop pictured above at the Owen Hall, Vanuatu

PIFON participates in 13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women

The 13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, hosted by the Pacific Community (SPC), was held from 02 to 05 October 2017 in Suva, Fiji with the theme being ‘economic empowerment of Pacific women’.

Meeting participants included representatives of 20 SPC member countries and territories – American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna – and civil society and academic institutions, CROP agencies, and international and regional non-governmental and development partner organisations.

The conference objective was to identify strategic measures and make recommendations to support the economic empowerment and wellbeing of Pacific women. The purpose of the Conference was to share experience, reflect on progress and challenges, and identify strategic and practical measures to accelerate progress towards women’s economic empowerment at national and regional levels.

In accordance with the conference purpose, PIFON organized a parallel session on Pacific Women in Agriculture to drive the role of farmer organisations in agricultural research, extension and engagement of women. The session aimed to inspire more female farmers and to explore more innovative ways of empowering women in the agricultural sector. A representative each from the Floriculture Support Association (FSA)/South Sea Orchids (SSO), the PIFON Secretariat on behalf of the PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation (PNG WiA) and two from the Nadi Farmers Network shared experiences through case studies on ways forward to effectively support women’s economic empowerment and progress regional agenda for gender equality through agriculture. Vitila Vuniwaqa of Nadi Farmers Network also a survivor of a car accident who later got partially paralyzed about seven years ago, encouraged the women present at the event, “Go for it, start small and then expand” pushing forward her theme and motto of ‘Beating the odds’. SSO, PNG WiA and Nadi Farmers Network are farmer organisation members of PIFON.

An endorsed outcomes and recommendations document relating to the conference objectives was a deliverable from this event which was circulated to all participants of the conference.

L-R: Aileen Burness of South Sea Orchids/Floriculture Support Association and Amran Yusuf former owner/proprietor of Marama Jaz Private Charters speak on innovative ideas for Women in Agriculture; Vitila Vuniwaqa proprietor of Vee’s Organics inspires women to “Beat the odds” and do business in agriculture.



PIFON represented at the Australian Women in Agriculture conference

The Australian Women in Agriculture conference 2017 was held in Brisbane, Australia from September 22 – 24 with its goals being “Security Australian Agriculture – Sustaining families, farming and our future”

Conference delegates heard speakers on ‘Sustainable and Stronger You’; ‘Keeping you on the track when you live and work “off the track”’, ‘Farming Cooperatives & Collaboration’; to the very practical ‘Getting on Boards’ ‘Obtaining grants’, ‘Farm Safety’ ‘Agriculture Scholarships’, ‘Workplace wellness’ to the complexities of ‘Sustainable Business and Lands’, ‘A Sustainable and Innovative Future’

The event strongly focused on Sustainable Agriculture and included farmer field trips on the 22nd and 24th which supported the theme and showcased Australian women in their outback farms walking the talk, and feeding Australians.

PIFON was represented at this conference by PIFON Board Member and President of the PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation (PNG WiADF), Mrs Maria Linibi and PIFON Programme Manager, Mrs Lavinia Kaumaitotoya.



PIFON representatives pictured with the Australian Women in Agriculture International Committee members at the AWiA Conference held at the Oakwood Hotel, Brisbane

Expanded Regional Steering Committee (ERSC) Meeting held in Ahmedabad, India

PIFON was represented at the 3rd Regional Steering Committee (3rd RSC) that was held in Ahmedabad, India from 06-09 October, 2017 by PIFON's Manager, Programme Manager and Finance Manager including a Board Member.

The meeting was held over 3 days and covered reports from the SIS mission leaders that was undertaken prior to the ERSC meeting. The meeting heard that the MTCP II program is the best program currently being funded by IFAD and is working in 3 regions, South East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific, with 19 countries, 2,000 Farmer Organisations and 20 million farmers reached during this program phase. Since the last Regional Steering Committee Meeting held in Laos in 2016, the program has skyrocketed giving confidence to many of the farmer organisations that are part of the program.

Additionally, the ERSC discussed the ending of MTCP II in 2018 and the probable extension of an MTCP3 whereby parameters for its concept note was identified which included resource mobilization strategies and action points.



Country delegates at the ERSC meeting pictured touching the fundraising bowl to start the investment folio for possible next phase funding initiated by Peter Situ (seated front with glasses)

The Pacific SIS Review which included country travel to PNG concluded that PNG has good/youthful lead farmers, and though farmers are remotely located, they are able to access markets because of the strong infrastructure in place in the country. A strong point was that PNGWiA has a beneficial partnership with PNG's National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) and therefore is able to access quality research interventions for implementation to its members. This was a very strong point that is being recommended to be written up as a case study from the Pacific.

The Farmer to farmer field trips included exciting field trips organized by SEWA to the remote Federated Salt Farmers and showcased its wider SEWA network in the rural areas of Ahmedabad where the participants were able to individually meet with SEWA's wide network of farmer organisation groups. One such FO was RUDI, where many of them were women who carried out livelihood and sustainable programs to feed their families working out of harsh farming conditions yet making it work as a collective group using technology such as mobile sms, advisory radio services to reach their members.

Continued on next page

Cont...Expanded Regional Steering Committee (ERSC) Meeting held in Ahmedabad, India



The Pacific delegation pictured with the Chinese delegation at the closing ceremonies of the ERSC held in Ahmedabad, India



Participant delegates visiting the salt farms for the Federated Salt Farmers in the remote deserts of Ahmedabad, pictured here on site at one of the bore holes pumping out salt water from 26 feet deep below for salt farming, water pumped had 16-20% salinity, and needed to achieve a 25% salinity for market requirements.

The participants were also able to take time out to visit the home of the late Mahatma Gandhi, a famous son of Ahmedabad.

Learning and Innovation—The MTCP2 Knowledge Management Fair

A Knowledge Management (KM) Fair was held in between the Expanded Regional Steering Committee (ERSC) sessions in Ahmedabad, India. The KM Fair involved submissions by various regions participating in the MTCP II program for South East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific. The KM inputs were to demonstrate learning and innovative activities that the farmer organisations had completed in the past year under the 3 components of the MTCP II program. The 3 components of the MTCP II program are primarily:

- * Strengthening Farmer Organisations and its networks
- * Farmer Organisation participation in Policy Process
- * Farmer Organisation Services and involvement in Agricultural Development Processors

All the 3 regions entered their KM entries and there was excitement in the air as each member country was distributed with paper money to vote for the winning entry however with a specific rule that a region could not vote for its own entry. All the entries (many video's, others were sales pitch for activities undertaken) were showcased to the participants, thereafter baskets were lined up at the end of the room to allow voting and placement of paper money into the baskets according to the countries choice of winning entries.

The Pacific entry was able to win the 2nd overall place for its PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation PNG WiA entry on 'Solar powered Agro-Processing Machines', a video highlighting the solar powered machines developed for PNG WiA for various farm tasks to make working on the farm easier especially for women farmers, this is the same video that won the Pacific KM Fair at its 2016 event that was held in Fiji.

Hearty congratulations to PNG WiA for their innovative solar solutions that won.



The Pacific team with Maria Linibi of PNG WiA holding the winning 2nd place Certificate for the KM Fair

Supervision and Implementation Support (SIS) Mission to PNG

A SIS mission consisting of a 3 member team (Peter Situ, Lany Rebagay, Lavinia Kaumaitotoya) travelled to PNG to visit with PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation (PNG WiA), the travels were on 18 – 24 September and involved travel to Mount Hagan in the highlands to the Jiwaka Province, then returning to Lae, the base for PNG WiA and NARI offices.

The travel involved meeting Jiwaka youth farmers and participating in the Jiwaka Market Day where the SIS members witnessed the array and diversity of vegetables grown locally from spring onions, capiscum, bulb onions, pineapples, pawpaw, lettuce, soyabean, carrots, rice, banana's, water melon, tao, corn, kumala, citrus, vanilla were some of the items on display.

Additionally, meeting highland citrus farmers, experiencing the Jiwaka EcoTourism Centre in Koswa with its community training centre and Cathy Piango of PNG Women in Coffee who has been able to secure a lease at the domestic Mount Hagan Airport Terminal to retail PNGWiC products.

In Lae, the SIS members met with PNG WiA staff and NARI officials including the Director General of NARI to , reaffirm the commitment of the MTCP II program for PNG WiA. The NARI/PNG WiA partnership was a highlight finding for the SIS Mission and an exemplary remark made at the ERSC Meeting in Ahmedabad, India on Lessons Learnt from the Pacific SIS Mission.



SIS team members pictured with members of the Koswa PNG WiA group who run their very own Jiwaka Ecotourism Centre, Koswa village, in the highlands of Jiwaka Province, PNG

SPC Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Mission—Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu

As part of its contribution to the Pacific Agricultural Policy Program (PAPP) that is nearing implementation completion, PIFON participated in a Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Mission to Taveuni, Tonga and Vanuatu with SPC official and an EU Representative.

The ROM mission began with a visit to Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) to view the results of the Regional Soil Health Conference that TRTC hosted in 2015, and its breadfruit program which saw participants attend the Pacific Regional Breadfruit Roundtable in 2016. A visit was also made to Tei Tei Taveuni's (TTT) Waiyevo centre to demonstrate TTTs services and its farmer members. The next stop for the ROM team was to Tonga with meetings and visits to GroFED, MORDI and Nishi offices whilst witnessing the work on the ground that these farmer organisations were carrying out with its members. The final leg of the ROM mission was to Vanuatu with Farm Support Association's work at the Napil Rural Training Centre, in Tanna Island.



Jan Douwe (EU PAPP Reviewer) with Peter Kaoh of Farm Support Association and the nominated youth women farmer of Napil Training Centre inspecting her farming plot in her village on Tanna Island where peanuts, corn, taro, pumpkin and various vegetables were planted. PIFON Programme Manager, Lavinia Kaumaitotoya looks on.

Tutu Rural Training Centre in Fiji—converting breadfruit and other locally grown fruit and vegetables into nutritious and delicious processed food

To facilitate Tutu’s transition to breadfruit processing, technical assistance and training has been provided by the eminent food technologist Dr Richard Beyer. This has involved a partnership with the Pacific Island Farmers Organization Network (PIFON), of which Tutu is a foundation member.

Dr Beyer delivered his first agro processing training in September 2017. Following a week of intensive “hands on” training, 14 new “food scientists” emerged from amongst Tutu staff. Using the excellent facilities provided by the Training Centre a whole spectrum of locally grown fruits and vegetable were transformed into food products some of which are of international standard.

Dr Beyer in his report to PIFON following the Tutu training noted:

Excitement was generated when new equipment, funded through PIFON, was commissioned to produce breadfruit flour in large quantities. This is used for partial replacement of flour in baking but will eventually find use as a thickener in a range of future products. Simple demonstrations of jam, chutney and pickle making saw delegates sprint out of the starting blocks to mass produce preserves, chips, chutneys and sauces of all flavours. Not only do these items make good use of fruits and vegetables previously going to waste, transformed into products, they will compete against imported ‘junk,’ drinks and snacks. Those made out of local crops have a much higher nutritional value. Exciting sauces and chutneys made from Tutu’s tomatoes, papaya, chillies will add much excitement to the usual dalo, cassava and vudi and will ensure that important nutrients such as vitamin C, vitamin A and fibre are added to diets. Cordials and juices have been made entirely from local crops. Such is the interest that there is much anticipation that these wonderful products will eclipse such dietary demons as two minute noodles and the cola range of drinks.



Marcotted breadfruit coming into production just three years after planting



State of the art peeler used at Tutu for breadfruit



Dried chips into breadfruit flour



Delicious and nutritious breadfruit bakery products made from breadfruit at Tutu

PIFON represented at the Pacific Island Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS) Annual Forum

The SPC EU funded PAPP project in partnership with Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (PIRAS) through funding support from the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) held a forum bringing together representatives from PICTs to dialogue on the challenges and explore ways to collaboratively mobilise resources and share knowledge and experiences to build capacities of stakeholders. The underlying philosophy was to empower smallholder farmers in the Pacific by strengthening the capacity of agricultural extension and advisory services (EAS).

The objectives of the forum were as follows:

- * To identify capacity building needs for extension services in the region
- * To showcase and document best practices in research and extension across the Pacific
- * To strengthen advocacy needs and policy gaps for research and extension services
- * To strengthen knowledge management processes to support research and services in countries

PIFON was represented at this forum via its members from PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation (PNG WiA), Farm Support Association (FSA) of Vanuatu, Tutu Rural Training Centre (TRTC) and Fiji Crops & Livestock Council of Fiji (FCLC) who showcased their Good Practices in: Youth Empowerment and Training in rural advisory services (RAS), and Empowering farmers role in RAS.

The event was co-organized with the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) and the South East Agricultural Research Centre (SEARCA). Approximately 50 participants attended the event which was held over a span of three days from 29– 31 August 2017 at the Novotel Hotel in Nadi, Fiji.



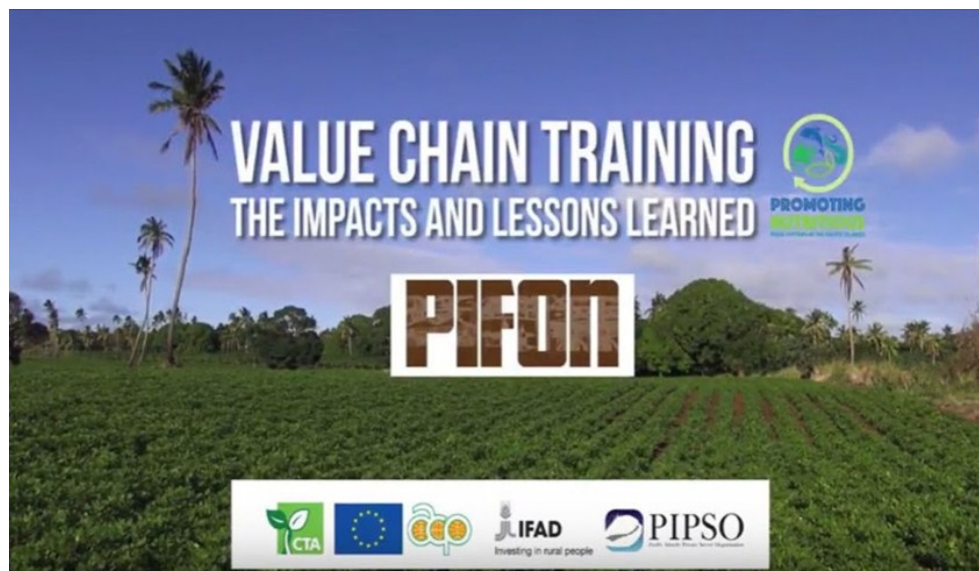
PIFON members at the PIRAS Annual Forum discussing best practices in research and extension

PIFON Video Release—Value Chain Training: The Impacts and Lessons learned

PIFON has released a new video production capturing the lessons learned from farmer orientated value chain trainings in Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu. Since 2014, PIFON has been working with its farmer organization members to pilot new approaches to value chain training for farmers and other stakeholders that lead to real impacts. This new video captures feedback from farmers, farmer organisations, traders and the public sector about how this type of training has impacted them and also what can be done to improve on the approach taken.

This video was produced in collaboration with the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA) and the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) under an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) funded project “Leveraging the Development of Local Food Crops and Fisheries Value Chains for Improved Nutrition and Sustainable Food Systems in the Pacific Islands”.

The full video is available on the web at: <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/videos/>



A success—Tonga’s 1st trial export shipment (GroFed)

Six months of waiting finally pays off for Growers Federation of Tonga (GroFed) growers following the success of their first trial shipment of export sunrise papaya to New Zealand. Not only did the consignment pass the MPI screening but there was also good feedback from the customers of Fresh Direct. “The customers’ feedback was very positive on quality” says John Hunter of Fresh Direct.

The GroFed team acknowledges the hard work and team effort from all the stakeholders involved for contributing to the success of its first trial shipment – Tonga Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestries (MAFF), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, NZ (MFAT), Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program (PHAMA), Tonga Airports Limited, Air Terminal Services in Tonga, Air NZ Cargo. PIFON is also acknowledged for assisting GroFed through trainings on Papaya Value Chain and Papaya production.



GroFeds 1st trial shipment of export papaya to Fresh Direct in NZ

Timor Leste-PIFON partnership bears fruit for local farmers

A recent monitoring and support mission carried out by PIFON to its member ANAPROFIKO in Timor Leste has concluded that the partnership is bringing about tangible results for farmers. ANAPROFIKO became a member of the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network in 2015. Following a series of consultation meetings and a scoping mission by the PIFON Manager, Kyle Stice it was agreed that PIFON would request for Timor Leste to be an expansion country under the IFAD/SDC Medium Term Cooperation Program Phase II (MTCP II), with ANAPROFIKO as the



ANAPROFIKO President, Joanico Ximenes, presenting ANAPROFIKO results

National Implementing Agency (NIA). This proposal was agreed by the MTCP II Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting in Laos (June, 2016). The signing of the LOA between ANAPROFIKO-TL and PIFON was completed on August 1st 2016. A recent mission to Timor Leste has confirmed that a number of important activities were conducted over this initial project period, including:

- * Training for farmer groups on proposal writing
- * Training for farmers on seed quality control
- * ANAPROFIKO Visit to member groups for consultation on FAO conservation agriculture

- * Participation in seed learning exchange and open pollinated seed roundtable
- * Consultation meeting on open pollinated seed learning exchange and open pollinated seed roundtable
- * Consultation meeting with MAFF on seed quota and pricing
- * Capacity building for ANAPROFIKO secretariat

Over 220 farmers were directly involved in these activities, including 151 males and 71 females. The monitoring and support mission also aimed to expand the number of farmer organisations that could possibly benefit from MTCP II and work to integrate these FOs into other ongoing development projects, to achieve these goals the team was accompanied by a representative from La Via Campesina based in Jakarta and two representatives from the Asia Farmers Association based in the Philippines.

Kastom Gaden Association's new recruitment

This year has seen a slow down of the Kastom Gaden Association (KGA) activities in the Solomon Islands with its funding coming to an end. KGA has been instrumental in the Solomon Islands for carrying out grant projects for various donor agencies for the last 10 years and serving the various communities in the Islands however in 2017, the Board of KGA regrouped itself and reworked itself to prioritize its activities now with an emphasis on sustainability.

Under this new process, KGA has taken on the services of Mr Pitakia Tikai, an expert in his field and someone that is not new to the work being done by KGA. Mr Pitakia is KGA's new Programme Coordinator, additionally KGA has also recruited a new Finance Officer and Field Technician.

PIFON congratulates and welcomes KGA's new staff.

Samoa Farmers Association helps co-organize the Global “HOME OF THE MA’AFALA” Breadfruit Summit 2017

The humble ulu described as “one of the most important crops of the 21st century” was the focus of the Global “HOME OF THE MA’AFALA” Breadfruit International Summit that was held at the TATTE Convention Centre, Samoa in October.

In his opening address, Samoa’s Minister of Agriculture Hon Lopao Natanielu Mua said, “This multipurpose tree which has been promoted as the “tree of life” improves soil conditions and protects watersheds, and also helps mitigate climate change effects when planted on open lands. All parts of the tree are used to provide food, timber and animal feed; even the male flowers if properly processed can be used as a mosquito repellent, and the latex from the bark has medicinal properties.”

The Pacific & Global Breadfruit Summit brought together leading traditional, community, scientific and technology experts, farmers and product developers to share the benefits of the breadfruit (ulu) tree.

“The first international symposium on breadfruit research and development was held in April 2007 in Nadi, Fiji. The meeting focused on key issues related to breadfruit conservation, research, and development, and made recommendations concerning projects and future priorities.

The next meeting was the Two Samoas ‘Ulu Summit’ held in December 2012 which highlighted the need for joint research efforts to improve the utilization of the under-utilised breadfruit. The summit deliberated on important matters relating to the primary production, post-harvest technologies and value-added processing, to produce gluten-free flour and other food products, with the desired outcome of establishing a breadfruit flour industry for both Samoas to tap into the US market for gluten-free products.

Three more international breadfruit focused meetings followed – the 2015 International Breadfruit Conference on Commercializing Breadfruit for Food and Nutrition Security held in July 2015 in Trinidad and Tobago, the 2016 Global Pacific and Hawaii Breadfruit Summit held in August 2016 in Laie, Hawaii, and the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) – Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable held in September 2016 in Nukualofa, Tonga”.

In Samoa, the 2017 Pacific and Global “HOME OF THE MA’AFALA” Breadfruit Summit aspired to bring experts in their respective fields to share ideas on improving and developing a production models that introduces the concept of orchards with a focus on multi-cropping. It aims to address supply issues, processing options and technologies, comparative and competitive value of breadfruit, market demands, supply chain issues and logistics.

“A major outcome desired from this summit is to consolidate and to bring into the mainstream the breadfruit product development efforts, in order to up-scale and commercialize the breadfruit into the markets”

Samoa Farmers Association was a core member of the organizing committee that hosted the 2017 Global “HOME OF THE MA’AFALA” Breadfruit Summit.



Special Tribute to Mr. Peter Linibi

We, PIFON and all its members, take this opportunity to extend our deepest heartfelt condolences to PIFON Board Member, Mrs Maria Linibi and her family on the loss of her dearly beloved husband, Mr Peter Linibi on 29 October 2017.



Peter Linibi at the Tutu Rural Training Centre nursery in Taveuni, Fiji

Mr Linibi was an amazing person all round and we feel blessed that we got to know him through his hard work with PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation (PNG WiA).

We celebrate the life of a good man and mourn his passing with Maria.

Mr Linibi recently hosted the MTCP2 SIS mission team in PNG with Maria, the Leader of the MTCP2 SIS Mission, Mr Peter Situ wrote, " Such sad news. I have such vivid memory of Peter and can't believe that just happened. It was my luck and honor knowing him in September when I visited PNG. My condolences to Maria and the family. God be with them!"

Lany Rebagay, also a member of the MTCP2 SIS Mission said, "We are deeply saddened by the news. We were honored to have met Mr.Peter Linibi, his gentle and warm spirit has indeed been a strong pillar of support for Maria and for all. On behalf of AFA and the Asia-Pacific FO partners in MTCP2, we would like to express our deepest condolences to Maria and her family. May the loving hands of God comfort them in their times of grief."

May God continue to pour his blessings upon and comfort Maria and her loved ones.



The regional event held in Taveuni, Fiji that Peter Linibi attended on behalf of the PNG WiA

Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
Dec 04-08, 2017	International Civil Society Week (ICSW)	Suva, Fiji
Dec 04 — 08, 2017	Monitoring Implementation Supervision (MIS) Mission— AFA/PIFON	Suva, Fiji
Dec 06-07, 2017	Sub regional Steering Committee Meeting (SRSC), Learning & Planning Meeting	Suva, Fiji
Dec 08, 2017	PIFON Board Meeting, AFA/PIFON Partner Meetings	Suva, Fiji
Dec 11 — 12, 2017	Coconut Industry Development Programme (CIDP) Value Chain Steering Committee Meeting	Nadi, Fiji