

Newsletter

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PIFON's 2016 Annual Report now available

PIFON recently released its Annual Report 2016 documenting its activities implemented in 7 of its member countries of Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, PNG, Samoa and newly joined Timor Leste. The report covers the progress of all the activities associated with its two major projects – EU funded SPC PAPP and IFAD/SDC funded MTCP II and the World Rural Forum partnership for 2016.

2016 was a challenging and exciting one with many 'firsts' amongst its other achievements for the year.

- PIFON hosted its 1st and 2nd regional events outside of Fiji. The 1st was 'The Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable' held in Nuku'alofa Tonga, co-hosted with its Tonga Farmer organisations of GroFed, MORDI and Nishi Foundation. The 2nd was 'The Pacific Open Pollinated Seed Roundtable' co-hosted in the Solomons with its farmer organisation member – Kastom Gaden Association (KGA)
- The PIFON network membership increased to nine countries after Timor Leste (ANAPROFIKO) and New Caledonia (Chamber D'Agriculture) joined.
- The PIFON Secretariat office moved into its own office at Legalega, Nadi, Fiji. The Mid-Term review for the IFAD/SDC funded MTCP II program was completed with PIFON obtaining a point 4 score in its review, scoring the highest as a region under the program.
- PIFON's Strategic Plan review conducted by Dr Lex Thompson which paves the way for PIFON's new Strategic Plan II : 2017 – 2020
- PIFON's successful Farmer to Farmer exchanges between its farmer organisations for Pineapple between Fiji, Tonga and Samoa; Vanilla between Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu, Breadfruit between Fiji and Tonga, Papaya between Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, Seeds between Solomon Islands, Brisbane and the PIFON network members.
- The successful end of a two year partnership with the EU funded SPC PAPP which saw PIFON host 28 activities with its member farmer organisations under this project.

To download a copy of this report visit <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/PIFON-Annual-Report-2016.pdf>



Participants to the Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable at the Nishi Trading breadfruit orchard in Tongatapu

PIFON gets inducted into World Rural Forum, Bilbao, Spain



Abel Lara (PDRR), Fernando Lopez (COPROFAM), Lyam Darjee (AFA) and Afamasaga Toleafoa (PIFON) pledging their support for the World Rural Forum's Decade on Family Farming campaign

PIFON was formerly accepted as a member of the World Rural Forum (WRF) representing farmer organisations from the Pacific, during the recent WRF General Session in Bilbao, Spain on 23 February, 2017.

As its first undertaking as a member of the forum, PIFON Chairman, Afamasaga Toleafoa, pledged PIFON's support for the World Rural Forum's campaign to have a Decade on Family Farming to be endorsed by the UN General Assembly.

The main objective of the Family Farming Decade will be to continue improving public policies for family farming and increasing implementation. It will focus on the following topics: Improvement of the access to natural resources and suitable technologies, promotion of the role of youth and women, improving the access to local and regional markets, access to credit, mitigation of climate change, and the strengthening of family farmers' organizations.

These would facilitate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Launch of Solar Rice Mill Project hosted by PNG WiA with DFAT

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Julie Bishop and Honorable Vice Minister Senator Concetta Ferrivantti-Wells, Minister for Development for the Pacific officially launched the Solar Rice Mill Project on 9th March, 2017 in Lae, PNG in partnership with PIFON's member – PNG Women in Agriculture (PNG WiA).

The "Solar Rice Mill Project" is a (DFAT) PNG Incentive fund co-funded by PNG National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI) and TRUKAI Rice Industries who is not only a major rice distributor in PNG but also a major Private Sector funder & Sponsor of PNG WiA. The project is in support of women in Solar Rice Milling in PNG with PNG WiA being the recipient of the 80 Solar Rice Mills with a value of K2.5 million (AU\$2 million).

The equipment is built to specifications to support rural women in PNG who grow rice but cannot mill given there is no electricity and solar power is the only alternative. Cassava, Taro, Banana, Corn and Sweet Potato flour is also produced via the use of these solar mills.

The solar power energy produced now enables rural women in PNG to charge their mobile phones, have light at night and even enjoy the luxury of using a fan and watching movies.



Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Julie Bishop and Honorable Vice Minister Senator Concetta Ferrivantti-Wells, Minister for Development for the Pacific launch the Solar Rice Mill project whilst the President of PNG WiA, Maria Linibi and others look on

Nishi Trading and MORDI to lead Tonga Breadfruit Project to combat lifestyle diseases

PIFON members Nishi Trading and Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovation Tonga Trust (MORDI TT) in collaboration with the Government of Tonga, Government of Japan, JICA and Tokyo University of Agriculture have recently launched a new project entitled “Improvement of Livelihood and Health Conditions of Tongan People by the Effective Utilization and Processing Products of Breadfruit”.

The project was launched at Nishi Farmon 14 March 2017 by the Honorable Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry and Food Hon. Semisi Taelangi FAKAHAU and Mr. Tetsumi MURATA the Acting Ambassador for the Embassy of Japan in Tonga .

The total project investment is ¥73,541,000 over a period of 5 years mainly targeting the Island of Tongatapu with focus on small-holder farming households, rural communities and related private sectors. The funding of the project is from JICA Partnership Program (JPP), set-up in 2002 to support and cooperate with the implementation of projects formulated by Japanese Universities, Japanese NGOs, Japanese Local Governments to utilize their accumulated knowledge and experience in assisting activities for developing countries.

Tonga is the highest ranked country in terms of obesity along with many health-related problems caused by high dependence on imported food. The project aims to combat lifestyle diseases and poverty issues that arise from the increasing dependency on imported food. In order to decrease the dependency on imported food and to improve livelihood of local people, they re-evaluated traditional food resources to use them more efficiently. Based on previous extensive research and survey by the Tokyo University of Agriculture, breadfruit was found due to its abundance. Breadfruit was chosen for its versatility and high processed value.



Hon. Minister for MAFF, Hon. Semisi Taelangi Fakahau and the Acting Ambassador for the Embassy of Japan in Tonga, Mr. Tetsumi Murata planting a breadfruit tree to mark the official launching of the breadfruit project.



Professor Noriaki Iwamoto from Tokyo University of Agriculture showing the Hon. Minister samples made from breadfruit. These samples include bread made from breadfruit flour and cakes

PIFON participates in GAFSP CSO Mission to Timor Leste

The Asian Farmers Association (AFA), La Via Campesina (LVC) and Pacific Islands Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) team visited Timor Leste from February 13-17 to conduct its first Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) (<http://www.gafspfund.org/content/about-gafsp>) CSO mission.

The objective of the mission was to determine the status of the project, inform relevant CSOs including FOs and farmer groups about the GAFSP project and obtain feedback regarding its progress.

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) fund was established in 2010 and is being used to support the government of Timor Leste proposal, entitled “Sustainable Agriculture Productivity Improvement Project” (SAPIP). The GAFSP steering committee formed in 2014 became the voice of the concerns and interests of the smallholder farmers and also the advocate for the involvement of producer organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects submitted to and financed by GAFSP.

As a result of this consultation it was agreed that farmer organisations would have a standing seat on the project steering committee of SAPIP.

The Asian Farmers Association (AFA), a regional alliance of national farmers’ organization in Asia, representing 14M small-scale women and men farmers within 16 countries. It is the support organization for the Asia CSO representative providing technical, administrative and logistical support to the CSO Asia.

La Via Campesina is the international movement which brings together millions of peasants, small and medium-size farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world. LVC comprises about 164 local and national organizations in 73 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas representing about 200 million farmers altogether.



The GAFSP delegation discussing the progress of the project

7 PIFON member countries sign LOA's in 2017 1st Qtr

For the first time, all seven NIA's have signed their LOA's within the first quarter and received their funding to carry out member activities. The programs that will be carried out by the NIA's in their member countries are largely categorized into major work areas, these being (i) Breadfruit and Seeds (ii) Women in Agriculture and Nutrition (iii) Sustainable Agriculture (iv) Youth and (v) Organisational support & capacity building.

Under its MTCP 2 funding, PIFON has some of its farmer organisation members as national implementing agencies (NIAs) in 7 of its 9 member countries. These farmer organisations are Kastom Gaden Association (KGA) for Solomon Islands, Tei Tei Taveuni (TTT) for Fiji, Farm Support Association (FSA) for Vanuatu, Growers Federation (GroFed) for Tonga, Samoa Farmers Association (SFA) for Samoa, PNG Women in Agriculture (PNGWiA) in PNG and National Commercial Seed Producers Association of Timor Leste (ANAPROFIKO) in Timor Leste.

Additionally a new area that PIFON has introduced to its NIA's is Family Farming. Family Farming in the global context involves enabling the right environment to ensure a dignified life for farming families to better meet consumers' needs more effectively, thereby helping to stem possible future food crises. In the simple Pacific context, this relates to advocating for policies that affect the smallholder farmers.

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 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.

A practical guide to better postharvest handling for Samoan smallholder farmers now available

Professor of Horticulture at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia, Dr Steven Underhill is the author of and has recently published the 'Better postharvest handling for Samoan smallholder farmers - A practical guide'. The book was developed in response to Samoa's need to improve the quality of its horticultural products in order to remain competitive in domestic and export markets. It highlights the importance of good postharvest handling practices as identified in Samoa's recently released Agricultural Sector Plan (ASP) 2016 – 2020). Dr Underhill is also the Principal Research Fellow for the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation at the University of Queensland in Australia.

To download a copy visit <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/publications-2/>.



The practical guide for Samoan smallholder farmers aimed at improving horticultural product quality

Two women leaders on the PIFON Board

At its recent Annual General Meeting held in Sigatoka, Fiji, the PIFON members unanimously voted in another female member, Maria Linibi of PNG WiA to become the second woman in the history of PIFON to join the ranks of its Board Directors.

It was only at its last AGM that Serenia Madigibuli (Tutu Rural Training Centre) was voted in as the first woman, now PIFON has two women who make up the total of 5 members that provide governance to the PIFON Secretariat and the Network with a membership reach of +80,000 farmers.



First woman PIFON Board member, Serenia Madigibuli of Tutu Rural Training Centre

Maria who was not present when the voting took place, due to her commitments with PNG WiA's DFAT Solar Rice Project launching in Lae, PNG, with the Honorable Julie Bishop and Senator Concetta Ferrivantti –Wells, was excited when advised of the results of the voting. She was overwhelmed with the support entrusted to her and thanked the network members for having the confidence in her, promising to push the work.

Maria is a core member of the steering committee that is instrumental in organizing the



Newly elected female Board member, Maria Linibi of PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation

first ever Pacific Women In Agriculture Conference that will be hosted by PIFON in Apia, Samoa on October 11 – 13, 2017.

PIFON to provide Value Chain Analysis training to Fiji MOA staff

Eighteen staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Fiji involved in Research, Extension, Economics, Planning and National Surveys will be part of a value chain (VC) training by PIFON at the Coral Coast Christian Camp in Deuba, Fiji from 25 – 28 April, 2017.

The Ministry of Agriculture in Fiji identified in its assessment of capacity deficits, the need for capacity building exercises to contribute to improving the enabling environment for developing evidence-based policy and planning for its staff.

In partnership with FAO, PIFON and the Ministry will link up and it will be the first time that PIFON will extend its Value Chain Analysis training to Ministry officials who are critical actors in the Value Chain. PIFON has always provided this Value Chain training to its farmers and members who are mostly the first actors along the Value Chain.

The objective of the training is to build the capacity of Ministry of Agriculture staff to apply value chain analysis to guide the development of targeted sector and sub-sector policies, strategies and action plans *based on the 'Agricultural Value Chains Guide for Pacific Islands'*.

This objective also contributes to the overall objective of the FAO FIRST initiative, which is to *increase food and nutrition security and sustainability of agriculture production systems by strengthening the enabling environment* in the form of policies; programs and legal frameworks; financial resource allocation and capabilities and; governance and stakeholder coordination.

PIFON hosts 2017 Annual General Meeting

At the Hideaway Resort on the Coral Coast of the Fiji Islands, the PIFON Annual General Meeting brought together 22 representatives from its nine FO member countries. The 1 day meeting was held on 09 March, 2017 following a Learning and Planning meeting on the 08th and concluding the following day with its Board meeting.

The adoption of changes to the Articles of Association (AoA) and the adoption of the PIFON Strategic Plan 2017-2020 were priority on the AGM agenda. An online voting system was endorsed to be a new process under the AoA that allowed members who were not present to nominate and vote ahead of the Elections, giving them a voice in the governance of PIFON.

As is the requirement, election of Board members was needed, Minoru Nishi (Nishi Trading, Tonga) and Afamasaga Toleafoa (Samoa Farmers Association, Samoa) were re-elected with new inclusions to the Board in Maria Linibi (PNG WIA, PNG) and Moses Pelomo (Kastom Gaden Association, Solomons). Clement Hadosaia of KGA resigned and was awarded a PIFON Certificate of Appreciation for being a member of the Board of PIFON since 2013, and his contribution to the network since 2008.

Both Afamasaga Toleafoa and Minoru Nishi were re-elected as PIFON's Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively during the Board Meeting on March 10, 2017. PIFON's financials for 2015 were adopted and the 2016 draft version presented.

The date for the Pacific Women in Agriculture (PWIA) was confirmed and the adoption to co-organise the International Global Breadfruit Summit (IGBS) was made supporting the proposed date from the organizing steering committee in Samoa. Importantly, the role of Samoa Farmers Association to co-host with PIFON the PWIA and the IGBS will allow PIFON members to travel to Samoa to be a part of these two exciting regional conferences in October 2017.

The 3 day meeting was supported by the IFAD and SDC funded MTCP II project.



All PIFON member countries were represented at the 2017 Annual General Meeting in Hideaway Resort, Coral Coast, Fiji



Outgoing Board Member, Clement Hadosaia of KGA being awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by Chairman Afamasaga Toleafoa on behalf of PIFON



Field trip to Mahen's Export in Bilalevu, Sigatoka

PIFON forms partnership with CTA to strengthen value chain analysis & training in the Pacific

PIFON has signed a contract with the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA) on 22 March 2017 to support the implementation of a project titled “Leveraging the Development of Local Food Crops and Fisheries Value Chains for Improved Nutrition and Sustainable Food Systems in the Pacific Islands”.

The project assignment purpose is twofold:

- Analyzing and mapping existing market channels, major constraints and potential market opportunities within selected priority value chains (VCs). The study will adopt the participatory value chain approach which gives prominence to the farmer’s perspective and identify weaknesses to be resolved and opportunities for increasing profits for small-scale farmers along with the other actors involved in the chain. While promoting sustainable agricultural practices, it will assist farmers involved in the selected VCs to better understand the business world in which they operate as well as meet the needs and expectations of what consumers want and how to better address them to gain more lucrative markets. By analyzing the VCs challenges and opportunities through farmers’ perspective, key information is obtained that should lead to better decision making at farmer organization level and also to targeted support by policy makers, donors etc. Better decisions result in higher and more sustainable income for the actors in the chain.
- Documenting lessons learnt from pilot farmer-oriented value chain trainings. PIFON has conducted a series of farmer-oriented trainings in different VCs in the Pacific. Building on the work done in those VCs, the study should be able to present in great detail the benefits and outcomes of the farmer-oriented trainings and also evaluate their effectiveness in tackling constraints in the VCs.

The main objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of the Pacific Island governments, farmer and private sector organizations and sub-regional institutions to develop strategies and programs, as well as mobilize financing that can effectively enable rural people to increase their access to nutritious and healthy food. As part of the project, PIFON also signed a contract with PIPSO to cover the communication aspect of the project.

CTA is embarking on this project with co-funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) as a key partner.



MARK THE DATES

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
October 2017 (tba)	Pacific Week of Agriculture	Vanuatu
October 11 – 13, 2017	Pacific Women In Agriculture Conference (PWIA)	Apia, Samoa
October 16 – 20, 2017	International Global Breadfruit Summit (IGBS)	Apia, Samoa