

Newsletter

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PIFON signs Declaration of Commitment with IFAD

The Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) signed a historic Declaration of Commitment (DOC) with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) related to the engagement with farmer organizations in the region. The declaration was made official during a signing ceremony on 21st November, 2016, by Afamasaga Toleafoa, PIFON Chairman and Ronald Hartman, IFAD Pacific Country Director and witnessed by approximately 30 participants from around the region.

“This is the first official declaration of this type between IFAD and farmer organisations anywhere in the world and we are very proud to have established this partnership which will allow for greater impacts of our programs down to the small-holder farmers of the Pacific” said Mr. Hartman.

The DOC represents an agreement between the two organisations on the important role of Farmer Organisations in agricultural development in the region. Specifically, the DOC is intended to:

- Enhance relationships between PIFON and IFAD related activities
- Increase the opportunity for both parties to complement each other’s programs
- Establish better network and linkages between IFAD and PIFON members
- Develop policies, strategies and/or programs that will allow mutual benefits to its members.

PIFON and IFAD Pacific agree that a relationship between the two organisations provides many opportunities to bring the voice of farmers in the region to policy makers and planners and that both parties will continue to explore opportunities to capitalize on this relationship such as the IFAD Farmers Forum.

PIFON is the sub-regional implementing agency for the IFAD/SDC funded Medium Term Cooperation Program for Farmer Organisations in Asia and the Pacific—Phase II (MTCP II), which runs through until 2018.



Afamasaga Toleafoa, PIFON Chairman and Ronald Hartman, IFAD Pacific Country Director sign the Declaration of Commitment at Lagoon Resort, Pacific Harbour, Fiji on November 21, 2016

PIFON hosts the 2016 Pacific IFAD IPs Workshop

Twenty six participants from around the Pacific region convened at the Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour, Fiji from November 21 – 22, 2016 for an IFAD regional consultation workshop that was organized by PIFON in preparation for the Third Global meeting of Indigenous Peoples Forum.

PIFON in its capacity as a service provider and as part of its business model agreed to organise the Pacific Consultation workshop in collaboration with The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to prepare for the global meeting. *Economic empowerment of indigenous peoples, with a focus on women and youth* was the overall theme for both the regional and global meeting, scheduled to take place at IFAD Headquarters in Rome on 10 and 13 February 2017.



The Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD is a concrete way for IFAD to institutionalize consultation and dialogue with indigenous peoples' representatives. The meeting was an opportunity to share experiences related to economic empowerment for women and youth.

Regional Participants of the IPs workshop attended a cultural show and dinner with the family owned, award winning, Discover Fiji Tour company in Navua, Fiji.

Partners take stock at PIFON-SPC Impact Workshop

PIFON Farmer Organisation Members, SPC representatives and stakeholders from both the public and private sector participated in a PIFON-SPC Impact Workshop on November 23rd to reflect on the past two years of the partnership.

PIFON signed a partnership agreement with SPC in October 2004 to collaborate on the implementation of the EU-SPC Pacific Agricultural Policy Project (PAPP). The partnership agreement outlined a two year program valued at FJD 400,000. The partnership focused on three broad components of the PAPP project which directly align with the PIFON Strategic Plan 2013-2016.

The Impact Workshop revealed that over the short two years of the partnership, over 24 distinct activities were completed with 12 National Farmer Organisations directly involved in implementation. Approximately 30 national and local farmer organisations from 8 Pacific Island Countries are directly benefitting from the partnership. The impact workshop also highlighted that an estimated 500 farmers directly benefitted and over 5,000 indirectly benefitted from the program.

Having celebrated so many achievements in such a short time, PIFON and SPC are now discussing next steps for the partnership that will build up these successes for the benefit of Pacific Island Farmers.



Maria Linibi of PNG WiADF presents on the impacts of her work under the PIFON-SPC Partnership at one of six 'impact stations' which allowed stakeholders to engage directly with the FOs who implemented and benefitted under the partnership

PIFON concludes MTCP II Sub Regional Steering Committee Meeting

The PIFON MTCP II Sub Regional Steering Committee (SRSC) meeting this year took place on Nov 24, 2016 at the Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour, Fiji. This was attended by ten (10) participants comprising of representatives from the six (6) National Implementing Agencies (NIAs), Farmer Organisation representatives and PIFON secretariat staff.

Each delegate presented their country reports of 2016 for the benefit of the Sub Regional Implementing Agency (SRIA) and the other NIAs. Each country report also highlighted some of the issues and lessons learnt going forward.

An update on the Pacific Breadfruit and Seeds Programme and other regional activities was provided by the PIFON Secretariat which is also the SRIA. Reporting was also made on the MTCP II Mid-Term Review Report, finance, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation issues.

Resolutions agreed to at the meeting will be implemented in 2017. The next SRSC meeting is scheduled for February 2017.

Farmer Organisation Consultation on Family Farming



Peter Kaoh of FSA identifying and addressing policy constraints impacting smallholder farmers of Vanuatu

PIFON recently signed a partnership contract with the World Rural Forum as a partner and signatory to Family Farming. In 2014, the UN declared it as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), a resolution was then adopted that the good work would continue into a decade thus the initiative is now called IYFF+10.

Family farming is a means of organizing agriculture where the production is managed and operated by a father, mother, children of a family unit working together to toil their land and provide for their food security or livelihood.

In the Pacific it is widely practiced but it is often called subsistence farming, farming, smallholder farming, traditional farming, indigenous farming or organic farming.

At the policy levels of the UN, the Family farming initiative pushes to enable the proper enabling environment to ensure a dignified life for smallholder families, indigenous communities, fishers and pastoralists; and to meet consumers' needs more appropriately and more effectively.

At its first session held at the Lagoon Resort in Pacific Harbour on November 25, 2016, PIFON members recognized the important role that their farmer organisations must play in strengthening policy issues. There was agreement that representation at forums nationally and regionally is needed to raise their voices on their issues.

The IYFF+10 initiative promotes the fact that family farms produce 80% of the world's food in terms of value, thus confirming family farming's vital importance for global food security and food sovereignty for present and future generations.

Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable held in Tonga

The PIFON/Nishi/GroFed/MORDI organized Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable held in Nuku'alofa, Tonga on Sep 15 – 16, 2016 was a very successful event. The objective of this roundtable was to bring together PIFON members and other partners who are actively involved in breadfruit research and development in the Pacific to share experiences, get updated and work to synergize regional breadfruit activities. Discussions on the context for breadfruit development in the region as well as PIFON's Pacific Breadfruit and Seed Programme (PBSP) were the focus subjects.

A clear recommendation coming out of the roundtable for farmer organisations was to consider the significance of breadfruit in the local context for addressing the challenges of climate change, nutrition and food security. The wide variety of applications of breadfruit in cropping systems make it a tree that should be considered by all farmers and farmer organisations should make a concerted effort to raise awareness about breadfruit and its possible applications.

The Roundtable also concluded that governments should consider the evidence presented through the roundtable report and other sources related to the importance of breadfruit for the Pacific region in terms of addressing the challenges of climate change, food security, livelihood and nutritional platforms. Governments should use this evidence to inform national plans and strategies related to the agricultural sector so that breadfruit is given the extension, research and development attention it requires.

Finally, it was concluded that donors and development partners should consider the evidence presented through the roundtable report and other sources related to the importance of breadfruit for the Pacific region in terms of addressing the challenges of climate change, food security, import substitution, nutrition and livelihood platforms. Development partners should use this evidence to inform their development priorities related to the agricultural sector so that breadfruit is given the research and development attention it needs.

This event, a first of its kind for the region, was co-funded by the EU funded SPC PAPP (Pacific Agriculture Policy Program) and IFAD/SDC funded MTCP II project.

Proceedings from this roundtable will be released by PIFON in due course.



Participants to the Pacific Breadfruit Roundtable event pictured at Nishi Trading Packhouse, Utulau, Tonga

Pacific Open Pollinated Seed Roundtable held in Solomon Islands

The Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) organized a Pacific OPS Roundtable event with Kastom Gaden Association (KGA) and Zai Na Tina Farms. The event was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands on Oct 31 – Nov 01, 2016 was a successful event being the first of its kind, attracting at least 60 participants from around the region.

The two day roundtable event brought together PIFON members and other partners who are actively involved in open pollinated seed research and development within the PIFON network to share experiences, get updated and work to synergize seed activities. Discussions on the context for open pollination seed development in the region as well as PIFON's Pacific Breadfruit and Seeds Programme (PBSP) were the focus subjects.

Additionally, there were organized field days to KGA, Zai Na Tina farms, champion farmers etc.



Shalendra Prasad and Sant Kumar of Fiji having a discussion on eggplants with Lasa Aiono of Samoa

Pacific Open Pollinated Seed Learning Exchange to Brisbane

The Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) in partnership with Terra Circle Australia co-organized a Pacific Open Pollinated Seed Learning Exchange that was held in Brisbane on October 25 – 29, 2016.

This event targeted PIFON Farmer Organization members who work in the area of open pollinated seed production. A total of 11 farmer organisation representatives participated in this event from 6 countries (Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, PNG and Timor Leste).

The Learning Exchange included technical presentations, field visits and hands on training. Specific topics for the Learning Exchange included: variety selection, growing, processing, packaging and storage of Open Pollinated seed. Sites visited include: Green Harvest Seeds, Edens Seeds, UQ Gatton and QDAFF. The Learning Exchange also included visits to suppliers of seed processing and packaging materials.

A report from the Learning Exchange is now available on the PIFON website .



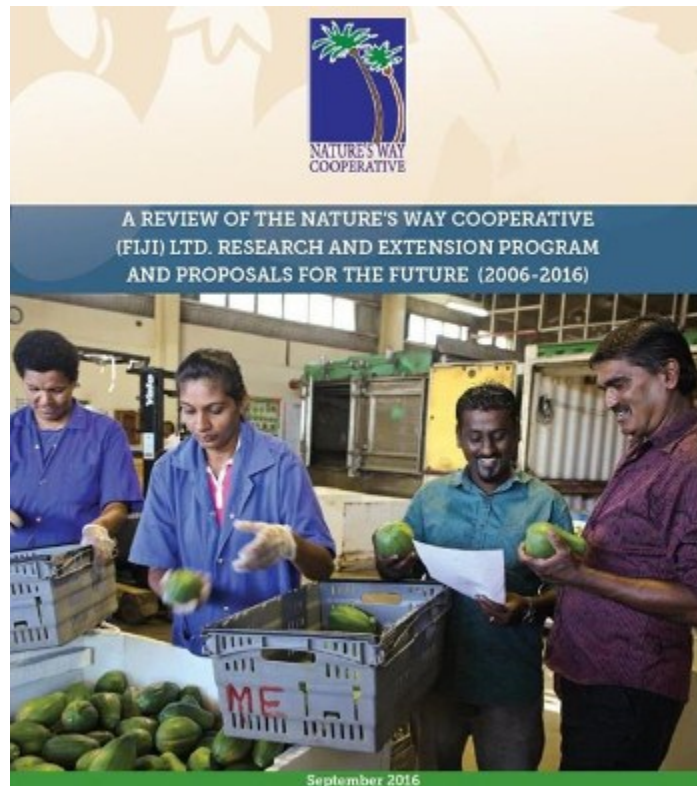
Joeli Nataki of Nature's Way Cooperative tries out the manual seed processor at Eden Seeds

Nature's Way Cooperative releases its Research and Extension Programme Strategic Review 2006—2016

PIFON foundation member, Nature's Way Cooperative (NWC), has recently released a report entitled "Review of the Nature's Way Cooperative (Fiji) Ltd. Research and Extension Program and proposals for the future (2006 – 2016)". This report covers ten years of research and extension work supporting Fiji's fresh produce export sector and gives valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges for farmer organisations involved in research and extension.

This review was commissioned by the NWC management and board and supported through the EU funded SPC PAPP project. The review is intended as a management tool and for the information of NWC's 300 members who make up the cooperative. NWC remains a leading example in the Pacific region of the important contribution a farmer organisation can make to agricultural research and extension when it works in an appropriate partnership with government and private sector.

Nature's Way Cooperative (Fiji) Ltd (NWC) was formed in 1995 to undertake mandatory quarantine treatment on behalf of Fiji's fruit export industry for four commodities, namely, papaya, eggplant, mango and breadfruit. NWC's core business is the quarantine treatment of fruit fly host products and also provides an effective field service (NWC Research and Extension) to closely support this.



To download a copy of this review report visit <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NWC-Strategic-Review-Full-Documents-FINAL.pdf>

PIFON represented at the Hawaii Pacific Breadfruit Summit

A Global Breadfruit Summit held at the Polynesian Cultural Centre in Laie, Hawaii on September 15 – 16, 2016 was attended by Kaitu Erasito and Lavinia Kaumaitotoya representing PIFON. Both participants made presentations at this important forum with Kaitu presenting on the breadfruit research and development work of Nature's Way Cooperative (NWC) whilst Lavinia presented on PIFON and the Pacific Breadfruit and Seed Program (PBSP) and the role of farmer organisations in agricultural research and extension. The summit was attended by various experts and professionals on Breadfruit including those from around the South and North Pacific, US Mainland, Caribbean and Japan. The Summit was hosted to create a global breadfruit network that honours and sustains the breadfruit tree with the weaving of traditional wisdom and modern science and technology to raise the common good of man and nature. It was agreed that a follow up summit would be held in 2017 with the Minister of Samoa who was part of the Samoan delegation raising their hands to host in Apia, Samoa.

A PIFON report from the event will be available on our website soon.

AFA-PIFON Capacity Building Workshop

A capacity building workshop was organized and implemented by AFA for the PIFON Secretariat staff from Sep 27 – 30, 2016. The purpose of the workshop was to re-tool and mentor the staff to ensure that the team was levelled-off and consistent in the interpretation of the MTCP2 logframe plan and budget.

Topics covered in the three and a half day workshop included the review and adjustment of quantitative and qualitative targets, the 2017 work plan and budget and the review and upgrading of the PIFON M&E, Finance and Procurement Policy/Procedures and KM plan. The PIFON team are now in a better position to conduct training on KM, Finance and M&E at the Learning and Planning meeting in November.

PIFON Secretariat staff with AFA staff at the PIFON office in Legalega, Nadi, Fiji



PIFON Board Meeting #6 held in Tonga

The 6th PIFON Board Meeting was held in Nukualofa, Tonga at the Growers Federation of Tonga facility on 14 September, 2016. At this meeting, PIFON's Internal Audit Report was presented and adopted to be a guiding and monitoring tool for the Board providing good governance overall. PIFON has been healthily checked off as being transparent and accountable of its funds by the auditors.

The Final Report from Dr Lex Thompson on PIFON's Strategic Review which had some key elements and lessons to learn and work from was also accepted by the Board. The Strategic Review is now being prepared to be published to be made available for PIFON's members viewing. The document is a result of the review that was undertaken by Dr Thompson with PIFON's members and its stakeholders and is a key document that documents the lessons learnt and the way forward for PIFON.

To download a copy of PIFON's Strategic Review Summary visit <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/PIFON-Strategic-Review-18.10.16.pdf>



L-R: Kyle, Afamasaga, Serenia, Minoru and Clement outside the Growers Federation of Tonga Inc. office.