

# Newsletter

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## 'Lessons Learnt' Publication Released

In 2017 PIFON released a video capturing the lessons learnt from its farmer oriented value chain trainings in Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu, now under the same project, it is even more excited to release a CTA publication documenting key lessons learnt from various PIFON supported value chain (VC) trainings. These VC trainings include:

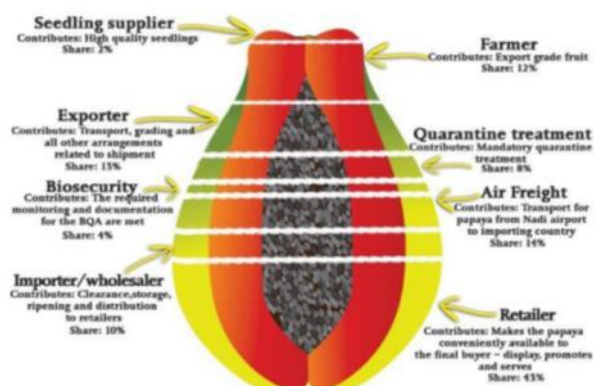
- Value chain training for Ginger in Fiji (through Fiji Crop and Livestock Council)
- Value chain training for Papaya in Tonga (through Growers Federation of Tonga)
- Value chain training for Vanilla in Tonga (through MORDI trust)
- Value chain training for Taro in Fiji (through Tei Tei Taveuni and Tutu Rural Training Center)
- Value chain training for Papaya in Fiji (through Nature's Way Cooperative)
- Value chain training on Spices in Vanuatu (through Farm Support Association and Venui Vanilla)

PIFON has been working with its farmer organization members since its inception in 2014, to pilot new approaches to value chain training for farmers and other stakeholders that lead to real impacts. PIFON believes that farmer organisations have an important role to play in disseminating key information to farmers and in helping to extend the reach of government and aid agencies.

The publication is a deliverable under the project "Leveraging the Development of Local Food Crops and Fisheries Value Chains for Improved Nutrition and Sustainable Food Systems in the Pacific Islands". It explores a range of impacts from the initial piloting of value chain trainings; summarizes a range of key lessons learnt and also presents a set of recommendations for the way forward.

### KEY TRAINING MESSAGE # 5:

All links in the value chain have a critical role and must have a sufficient margin to stay in business



The project is co-funded between the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The publication is available on the web at: <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/publications-2/>

## *United Nations General Assembly adopts Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028*

PIFON is proud to be partnering with the World Rural Forum in driving the Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 initiative that has been officially adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. This Decade aims to serve as a framework to promote better public policies on Family Farming, and contributing to the achievement of food security and improved nutrition as well as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through a partnership agreement with World Rural Forum, PIFON is promoting family farming to its members in the Pacific and as an organisation supported under the MTCP II project, it will use this platform to leverage the message from its farmer organisations on family farming to be spread across the Pacific.

The adoption of the IYFF+10/Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 is a result of the campaign for the Declaration of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF-2014) that was coordinated by the World Rural Forum and a result of the collective work of a group of 14 countries led by Costa Rica and co-sponsored by 104 states but driven mainly by Family Farming organizations since 2008. This drive has achieved significant milestones towards family farming especially in terms of public policy.

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. It is widely practiced in the Pacific but is more commonly known as subsistence farming, traditional farming, organic farming, and indigenous farming or smallholder farming.

## *Capitalizing Experiences for greater impact in rural development*

PIFON is being represented at the first regional workshop of the “Capitalization of Experiences for Greater Impact in Rural Development” project held at the Novotel Hotel in Suva from 05 – 09 February, 2018. Other participants include representatives of organizations from Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

The project is being implemented in various parts of the world by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), in collaboration with the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) with funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The overall project aim is to facilitate the adoption of an experience capitalization process in rural development initiatives, to help improve the analysis, documentation, sharing and the adoption and use of lessons and good practices – as an approach for continuous learning, improvement and scaling up.

The five-day workshop will involve discussions and interactions among participants to help develop the necessary skills to start and complete a capitalization process and drawing lessons from it. It is expected that participants will complete the description and analysis of a set of cases from which lessons will be drawn to share amongst themselves and with other interested organizations. A set of documented experiences and lessons to be added to the CTA website to kick-start discussions within the community of practice and the electronic platform is also another expected output of the workshop. This workshop will then be followed through with a series of activities at the local level to be completed with a follow-up workshop in April 2018.




## PIFON visits Rabi for Virgin Coconut Oil Value Chain Case Study

The PIFON consultancy team for the Coconut Industry Development Project (CIDP) has just recently returned from Rabi, Fiji after undertaking a Virgin Coconut Oil Value Chain Case Study. CIDP is an EU supported project implemented by the Pacific Community through the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States Intra ACP programme. Virgin Coconut Oil is an important product for many Pacific Islands and increasingly the domestic market has become very attractive to smaller enterprises. The Value Chain case study of Rabi VCO for the domestic market is aimed to identify opportunities to strengthen the chain and also to draw lessons applicable for other Pacific island VCO producers targeting the domestic markets. PIFON facilitated the meeting of the CIDP Value Chain Working Group held at the Tanoa Hotel conference room from 11 – 12 December 2017. A purpose of the workshop was to commence analyzing priority coconut value chains and design road maps for their development.

One of the five outcomes that were concluded at the workshop was the endorsement of the products, countries and associated enterprises upon which value chain road maps are to be developed. They are as follows:

- VCO for domestic markets – With the Banaban Co., Rabi case study
- High quality copra oil – With the Chottu & Co., Solomon Islands case study
- Coconut veneer – With the Valebasoga, Fiji case study

The purpose of CIDP is to improve the competitiveness of smallholder farmers, that they be more competitive and be able to access and benefit from the market.

Actor (participant in the value chain)  main actor (MA) support actor (SA)	What the actor contributes to the final product	The cost of the actors contribution	The reward the actor receives (share of the final selling price to the consumer)	Actor risk
<b>Exporter (MA)</b> 	Transports, grades, washes, arranges and pays for quarantine treatment, finds markets, arranges air freight, etc.	Cost of operating packing facility and operating trucks. Cost of cartons and packaging, paying for quarantine treatment, pack house labour, etc.	The price of papaya loaded on the aircraft (fob price) minus the farm gate price of the papaya  <b>Estimated exporter share of consumer purchase price: 12.6%</b>	High: Post-harvest losses; importer claims, delay in payments from importer; product offloaded due to lack of airline space; market access problems;
<b>Quarantine treatment (SA)</b> 	Provides quarantine treatment required to conform to bilateral quarantine agreement (BQA) with importing country. Provides grading and packing services	Cost of energy, cost of labour and management, repair and maintenance, "rainy day" reserves, BAF charges, etc.	The cost incurred for quarantine treatment  <b>Estimated quarantine treatment share of consumer purchase price: 8.0%</b>	Low to moderate: Natural disasters
<b>Biosecurity (SA)</b> 	To ensure the requirements of the BQA are met	Contribution to BAF overheads, time of BAF officers	The cost incurred to obtain the quarantine certification required by the importing country  <b>Estimated BAF share of consumer purchase price: 0.04%</b>	None

An excerpt from the 'Agricultural Value Chain guide for the Pacific Islands' that is being used by PIFON in all its Value Chain work



## ***PIFON facilitates 27th session of Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS 27)***

PIFON begins 2018 on a high note following the signing of a contract with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) agreeing to provide selected services towards the organisation of the 27th Session of Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS 27) that will be held in Nadi, Fiji. FAO's role in this forum, is to build the capacity of institutions both at a national and regional level in planning and implementing data collection, analysis, application and dissemination with the ultimate goal of helping raise not only the living standards but also nutritional status of especially the rural poor.

The Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics is a statutory body of FAO which hold its biennial sessions in member countries to review the developments in their agricultural statistical systems and allows for the exchange of ideas with experts from FAO and other organizations on the state of food and agricultural statistics in the region. APCAS 27 will be held at the Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa from 09 – 13 April at the invitation of the Government of Fiji and to which about 80 participants are expected to attend.



## Coconut VC Market Study released

A market study report entitled “An overview of the market for Pacific Island coconut products and the ability of industries to respond” was launched on 25 January 2018 in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The market study reports on non-traditional coconut products such as virgin coconut oil (VCO), coconut water, coconut cream products and coconut timber/veneer and their potential for coconut producers in the region.

As per the findings via the market study, there are essentially four broad markets for coconut products, based on four core coconut value chain strands namely:

- Coconut food
- Coconut oleo chemical
- Coconut water and
- Bi-products

Coconut oil still remains the main coconut product entering international trade where it is being used as either food or as a chemical product. Findings also indicate an explosion of products within the mentioned coconut value chains in the last 20 yrs.

The report is now available via <http://www.pacificfarmers.com/publications-2/>.

This market study was supported by the CIDP project which is a part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) commodities programme funded by the EU through the ACP Secretariat in Brussels and implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC).

The CIDP's main focus is strengthening the competitiveness of small producers engaged in coconut value chains throughout the Pacific region, through strengthened national and regional integration of related markets and intensification of production, diversification of coconut processing and marketing.





## ***PIFON represented at the GFAR workshop to design Collective Plan for Action for Family Farming***

Representatives of regional and national farmer organizations, civil societies and research institutions from Africa, Asia, Europe, South America and the Pacific met for two days in Derio, Bilbao, Spain on 20 and 21 February to design a Collective Plan of Action for the 2019-2028 Decade of Family Farming, recently adopted by the UN General Assembly. PIFON was a part of the delegation being represented by PIFON Chairman, Mr. Afamasaga Toleafoa. The two day workshop entitled “Enhancing participatory processes between Family Farmers, Civil Society/Rural Communities, Research Institutes” was organized by the World Rural Forum (WRF) with support from the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR).

The workshop agreed that the official adoption of the Decade of Family Farming creates an opportunity to promote the current role of family farming in, among other things producing 80% of the world’s food in value terms, in sustaining the environment and landscapes, and in safeguarding the legacy of nature based foods and diet systems developed by the peoples of the world over countless generations. The adoption of the Decade of Family Farming also recognizes the close links between family farming methods and the ability of rural communities to effectively address Sustainable Development Goals numbers 1,2,5,6,7,8,12,13,14,15,17. In other words, promoting and enhancing the capacity of family farming will contribute significantly to help achieve a significant number of SDG objectives.

At the conclusion of the workshop, the participants from Asia (AFA), Africa, South America, the Pacific (PIFON) and Europe (WRF) met and agreed to the need for coordination of the plan of Action and for a body to help drive its implementation, with the WRF providing secretariat support. Everyone agreed on the need to avoid formation of another body and left it to WRF to document for further discussion some practical ideas on achieving the wishes of the group.



## ***PIFON visits the Solomons for High Grade Copra Oil Value Chain Case Study***

The PIFON consultancy team for the Coconut Industry Development Project (CIDP) has just recently returned from Honiara, Solomon Islands after undertaking a Value Chain Case Study on High Grade Copra Oil. CIDP is an EU supported project implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC-CIDP) through the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States Intra ACP programme.

For most uses other than food, high quality copra oil is a suitable substitute for Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO). Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu use small scale copra mills to produce high quality copra oil. With high quality copra, meeting quality standards for oil will be much easier than with that for a VCO mill of the same size. Thus investigating small scale high quality copra oil value chains, both for domestic and export markets, has been chosen as a priority for the CIDP.

According to findings from a recent Coconut market study, also a component of the CIDP, copra oil and copra have been, and continue to be, the core export market for most Pacific Island coconut industries. Recent years have seen a more favourable market situation for the traditional Pacific Island Countries (PIC) coconut export products of copra and coconut oil, with prices reaching record levels. When it comes to copra exports, the PICs remain a major player – making up over 50% of world exports (with PNG being the world's largest copra exporter). They are unfortunately also ranked as the most unstable of all agricultural commodities which PIC copra farmers and millers are already aware of.

A value chain (VC) roadmap for producing high grade copra oil produced with small scale "Tinytech" (or similar) mills under the SPC-CIDP Project is currently being prepared using the tool "Agricultural Value Chain Guide for the Pacific Islands: Making value chain analysis a useful tool in the hands of farmers, traders and policy makers". This will focus specifically on the case study of the Chottu and Co. value chain, with an emphasis on the domestic market. The VC guide can be obtained here <<http://www.pacificfarmers.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/agricultural-value-chain-guide-for-the-pacific-islands.pdf>>

The purpose of CIDP is to improve the competitiveness of smallholder farmers, that they be more competitive and be able to access and benefit from the market.



A Tinytech copra cutting machine



## ***PIFON represented at the workshop on Coconut Production and Seed Systems***

A train the trainers workshop on coconut production and seed systems is currently underway at the Tanoa International Hotel in Nadi, Fiji till the 20th of April 2018. Participants to the workshop are from the SPC member countries and include extension officers, researchers and decision makers involved in coconut programmes or supporting coconut farmers. PIFON is being represented at this technical workshop by Program Manager, Mrs Lavinia Kaumaitotoya and also by a serious coconut farmer and representative of Tei Tei Taveuni, Mr Peter Kjaer.

Expected outcomes of the workshop include:

- Training in main coconut agricultural techniques and being able to communicate these techniques to coconut farmers.
- A method of assessing the efficiency of replanting programmes set up
- Discussions and recommendations on the incentives for boosting coconut production

The Pacific Community's Land Resources Division (SPC-LRD) is facilitating the workshop as part of the European funded "Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific Programme" (CIDP) contributing towards improving coconut production systems and sustainability. CIDP is a joint initiative of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the European Union (EU) and the African,

Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The aim of CIDP is to bolster the coconut sector in the region through improving the competitiveness of small producers engaged in the coconut value chains and strengthening regional integration of related markets and the intensification of production. The project runs from 2016 – 2018 with a value of EUR 4 million.





## *PIFON successfully fulfills 3 FAO LOA's consecutively*

March – April 2018 has got to be the busiest period PIFON has encountered in its 5 years of operations. As part of its Event Management for sustainability of its PIFON Secretariat team they signed three Letters Of Agreements (LOAs) back to back with the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

First LOA with FAO was for the provision of services towards the organization of the 27th Session of Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS27) at the Sheraton Denarau in Nadi, Fiji from 19 – 23 March. FAO's role in this forum is to build the capacity of institutions both at a national and regional level in planning and implementing data collection, analysis, application and dissemination with the ultimate goal of helping raise not only the living standards but also nutritional status of especially the rural poor. The Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics is a statutory body of FAO and holds its biennial sessions in member countries. 2018 session was hosted in Fiji at the invitation of the Government of Fiji and attended by approximately 100 delegates from FAO member countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Following APCAS27, the Planning Workshop for Census of Agriculture in selected Pacific Island Countries (Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea and Samoa) was held at the Tanoa International hotel Nadi, Fiji from 26 – 30 March. This workshop was the result of the selected countries mentioned having expressed the need for technical assistance from FAO in the designing and implementation of agriculture census in 2019. The nine participants to this meeting were representatives from national statistics offices, ministries of agriculture and fishery departments of Fiji, Samoa and Papua New Guinea who are likely to play the key role in the planning and execution of the next agricultural census in their countries. There were also contributions from two USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service experts sharing best practices. The overall objective of the Workshop was to organize in-depth round table discussions on a standardized agricultural census for Pacific countries.

The third LOA involved the hosting and organizing a four day workshop on Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Consultation Workshop in preparation for the 34th FAO Asia Pacific Regional Conference. The workshop was held at the Tokatoka Resort in Nadi, Fiji from 05 – 08 April where 28 participants from Asia Pacific region attended. 05 April was consultation for Pacific CSOs only and 06-07 for the Asia-Pacific Region, with a field trip on the 08th April to PIFON members – Nature's Way Cooperative and South Sea Orchids.

The Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Consultation is a self-organized meeting held before the 34th FAO Asia-Pacific Regional Conference (APRC). It gathered CSO actor representatives from different constituencies around the Asia Pacific area to discuss key topics, evaluate FAO's work since the previous biennium, discuss and file specific agenda items to the 34th FAO APRC. The CSOs took stock of what has been done collectively in the region in view of the call to actions they made at the 33rd FAO APRC And filed interventions towards the agenda items presented during the 34th FAO APRC. Additionally, a Pacific representative, Mrs Maria Linibi of PNGWiA represented the CSO's and read the CSO Statement at the 34th FAO APRC.

PIFON managed to successfully fulfil all three FAO LOA's consecutively. Event Management is one of PIFON's services it offers to its development partners for its sustainability model as a CSO.

## ***PIFON a conduit for a robotics project trial in Samoa***

Can a robot replace a farmer and make farming a lot easier? Engineers from the Australian Centre for Field Robotics of the University of Sydney, Digital Farmhand project, are developing robots in a bid to find smarter ways of farming and are requesting the assistance and guidance of PIFON to conduct its farm trials in Fiji and Samoa.

PIFON has signed a contract with the University of Sydney to support some robotics farm field trials and with the assistance of the Samoa Farmers Association, a member of PIFON, to support this work in Samoa. Two visits will be made to Samoa and will involve preliminary site visits for potential vegetable farms and conducting field trials and holding small meetings. Meetings and interviews are intended to gain insight into the agriculture landscape in the Pacific from an economic and ICT perspective in order to determine what factors need to be in place for robotics technologies to work in the Pacific in a sustainable manner. Field trials are planned to be carried out on 2 – 3 working commercial vegetable farms where at least 10 growers are expected to participate in each.

The Digital Farmhand is a low cost digital system including a mobile platform which provides crop intelligence, connects small-scale farmers to a global growing community, and increases farmers' capacity to produce nutritious foods through data analytics and robotics. The project's goal is to increase the production of horticultural crops in communities with inadequate access to good nutrition.



## ***PIFON's network growing sweeter***

With Fiji Beekeepers Association (FBA) joining the network, PIFON is sure to be in for a sweet deal. PIFON members will now have access to beekeeping trainings through this union that resulted from PIFON's National Implementing Agency (NIA), Tei Tei Taveuni's holding national consultations with them. FBA's interaction with PIFON was further strengthened through the Fiji Farmers Forum that was organized by the Fiji Crops & Livestock Council (FCLC) in partnership with PIFON in August 2017.

The Farmers Forum brought together about 50 participants consisting of Farmer organisation representatives across Fiji's agricultural sector, representatives from the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture and representatives from relevant NGOs and development partners. The forum provided a platform for various farmer organisations to highlight the opportunities and constraints facing their members and to provide solutions for the consideration of policy makers. This event was held in Pacific Harbour.

The Fiji Beekeepers Association is an organization formed in 1998 representing all beekeepers in the country with one of its goals being to promote the production and marketing of honey and the related by-products of the beekeeping industry amongst many other objectives. FBA is a commodity association (Honey) of FCLC. The Fiji Beekeepers Association has roughly 1000 beekeepers in Fiji. It has survived by trying to meet the needs of the beekeepers in cooperation with Government.

FBA is an affiliate of FCLC being one of its commodity associations (Honey). The Fiji Crop and Livestock Council was created to represent the needs of an estimated 60,000 farmers in the non-sugar agricultural sectors in the country.



## ***PIFON Week of Action***

In early June PIFON brought its members from across the region together for a series of meetings, workshops, learning and sharing experiences.

On Wednesday our Learning and Planning Meeting was followed by a Farmer Organisation Policy Toolkit Workshop. The Learning and Planning Meeting covered breadfruit markets, coconut value chains, nutrition sensitive value chains, opportunities available for farmer organisations under the PARDI 2 project, PIFONs evolving business model, and how we can go about scaling up some of our regional programs.

The Policy Toolkit Workshop identified five steps to influencing policy, some of the key tools that can be used to influence policy, and went through some case studies to reinforce the learning experience.

Thursday saw the National Implementing Agencies for the MTCP2 project gather for a sub-regional steering committee meeting, which was followed by the PIFON Annual General Meeting. Both of these meetings are key milestones for farmer organisation cooperation in the Pacific.

Friday was the opportunity for some farmer-to-farmer learning, with visits to Vuda Piggery, Kumar's Honey, The Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development (FRIEND), and Prakash Nursery. As well as getting the chance to explore and learn about the practical aspects of these operations, there was also discussion on the role that farmer organisations and associations play in supporting the various industries.

## ***PIFON provides voice for Farmer Organisations at Pacific Seed Forum***

PIFON attended the Pacific Seed Forum in Nadi from 18-22 June. Along with other Farmer Organisations from around the region we were able to provide a strong voice for our members and the role that Farmer Organisations should play in seed systems in the region.

Many of our members already have valuable experience in developing seed systems and it is critical that they are involved in future programs.



PIFON representatives Kyle and Lavinia sharing a laugh with Dr Mary Taylor at the Pacific Seed Forum

## Banaban Virgin Coconut Oil lands new contract

Banaban Virgin Coconut Oil on Rabi Island, Fiji, recently received a contract to supply Essence of Fiji with 80 litres of virgin coconut oil per month. This brings with it an exciting gender aspect of women communities working together from farm to market.

The order comes after representatives from Banaban Virgin Coconut Oil attended Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific coconut oil value chain training in the Solomon Islands. Dr Richard Beyer then went to Rabi Island to provide further training with the women on their processors, to refine their virgin coconut oil product to edible cooking oil standards which will allow it to enter the domestic retail markets. PIFON consultants were instrumental in conducting value chain analysis for Banaban Virgin Coconut Oil at the start of the year.

Banaban Virgin Coconut Oil was also selected to participate in the Fiji National Women's Expo which was held at the end of June in Suva. The Expo sees the top women artisans from around Fiji come together for three days to promote and sell their products and is organized by the Ministry of Women.



## MTCP2 Meeting in Beijing

Representatives of farmer organizations, national implementing agencies of MTCP2, and development partners will convene at the Agricultural Management Institute in Beijing, China on 26-29 June 2018 for the 4th MTCP2 Regional Steering Committee Meeting. PIFON and GroFed were there to represent the Pacific.

The Medium Term Cooperation Programme with Farmer Organisations in Asia and the Pacific Phase 2 (MTCP2) aims to support poverty reduction through strengthening the capacity of farmers and their organisations to influence policies that impact their livelihoods. The main participants are 150 farmer organisations representing 20 million small-scale farming families across 25 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The programme runs for five years from 2014-2018.





## Upcoming Events

3 September 2018	MTCP2 Impacts Workshop	TBC
4-5 September 2018	Samoa Farmers' Forum	TBC

**We acknowledge the projects and our partners:**



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