



COUNTRY OVERVIEW

FIJI

MAY 2022



PIRAS is a collaboration between the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Australian Government that supports economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in the Pacific.

Our target is to benefit 20,000 households across the Pacific countries of Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Read about the regional overview [here](#).

Duration: 2021-2024

WHAT WE DO

The Pacific Islands Rural and Agriculture Stimulus Facility (PIRAS) supports COVID-19 food system and economic recovery by prioritizing food self-reliance, improving local nutrition and developing sustainable, equitable, agricultural sector growth opportunities.

In Fiji, PIRAS works across three provinces in Fiji's Western Division of Viti Levu- Ra, Ba and Nadroga-Navosa. PIRAS supports food production, post-harvest handling and market access by:

- Providing farmers with seedlings, planting materials, tools, agricultural inputs and post-harvest processing equipment
- Providing technical training in growing vegetables, seed and seedling production, pest and diseases control, soil conservation, post-harvest handling, and business and financial management
- Establishing nurseries and demonstration plots
- Strengthening existing linkages for processing and domestic and export markets, including the promotion of e-commerce

UPCOMING PRIORITIES

- Complete the building and repair of 12 additional nurseries
- Farmer trainings on field management, value chain, post-harvest handling, value adding, food processing/preservation
- Ongoing distribution of vegetable seeds and seedlings, land preparation and provision of fencing and agricultural supplies
- Development of e-commerce platform / registration

PARTNERS

- Fiji Ministry of Agriculture
- Pacific Islands Farmers Organisation Network
- Asian Farmers Association
- Rise Beyond the Reef
- Partners in Community Development Fiji



KEY SUCCESSES IN FIJI

- Activities established across 50 villages and settlements in 3 target provinces, Ra, Ba and Nadroga-Navosa
- Implementation of context-specific strategies reflecting the range of land tenure arrangements and farming practices including: preparation of communal land in upland areas for 585 farmers to cultivate vegetable and root crops, preparation of 15 new one-acre commercial root crop plots in the Ba Province to support farmer-market linkage activities, the development of 45 farmer clusters across target areas of Viti Levu to promote farmer collaboration and cooperation among independent farmers
- Over 3,000 vegetable seed packs and seedlings for breadfruit, fruit trees, turmeric and vanilla distributed in 21 villages to 2,000 farmers
- 7 nurseries established in Navosa highlands and Sigatoka providing high quality fruit and vegetable seedlings to 400 farmers
- Distribution of fertilizer and tools for weeding, soil cultivation and improvement to 400 farming households in 3 provinces
- Training on agricultural methods, market value chains, food processing and preservation provided to 2,335 people, exceeding originally planned targets for women and youth participation
- New exporting partnership for cassava farmers, and 2.5 tons of cassava supplied so far
- Installation of 4 biogas units that convert organic waste to liquid fertilizer benefitting 1,025 farmers in 4 farmer clusters

CASE STUDY: Community-wide value chain participation

Through Rise Beyond the Reef (RBTR), PIRAS is working in isolated and remote villages to promote alternative, inclusive and profitable agriculture value chains. PIRAS is piloting a community-driven approach to support rural farmers' access to markets, by facilitating market linkages and ensuring consistency of supply.

RBTR has negotiated a partnership on behalf of PIRAS with a frozen cassava exporter who has offered farmers a three-year contract at guaranteed market price for their product. PIRAS is complementing this by training farmers and assisting with land preparation and planting materials to establish a reliable cassava production base to fulfill their agreement. This community-driven development approach mobilizes farmers from village clusters who work in the spirit of *solesolevaki*—coming together for the greater good—to plant, harvest, aggregate and transport their cassava.

Farmers are learning about supply chain logistics on the job as they fulfill ad hoc orders from exporters with supply shortfalls. Farmers are learning how to prevent bruising during harvesting and proper sorting techniques.



Members of the Marinitawa women's farmer cluster practicing solesolevaki to weed cassava plantation, Ba, Fiji.

As the commercial ties between farmers and private sector exporters strengthen, farmers are learning to adapt their practices to meet market criteria and reduce rejection rates. In the meantime, rejected cassava is not wasted, but reclaimed by community members, added to cassava salvaged from cyclone damaged crops and processed into gluten-free flour, for which market opportunities are being explored. This community-based farm-to-market approach supports whole villages to participate in the value chain and is facilitating a shift from subsistence farming to semi-commercial farming.

The Pacific Islands Rural and Agriculture Stimulus Facility (PIRAS) is supported by the Australian Government and IFAD