



COUNTRY OVERVIEW SOLOMON ISLANDS

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 Solomon Islands, PIRAS works across the Western, Choiseul, Central provinces to support sustainable food production, to improve nutrition, and to strengthen inclusive local value chains by:

- Involving women and youth producer groups in the multiplication and distribution of local seed supply
- Training farmers and vulnerable households in seed production, soil improvement, food processing, value adding and marketing
- Supporting vulnerable mothers through nutrition awareness, and promotion of home gardens
- Facilitating partnerships between vulnerable farmers and small and medium enterprises

UPCOMING PRIORITIES

- Trainings on agriculture and nutrition
- Improving local Small and Medium Enterprises food processing facilities to create and improve local markets for farmers
- Contracting Information and Communication Technology experts to create e-marketing and e-clinics for farmers on marketing and pests and disease management
- Livestock distribution across 3 provinces
- Promoting good agricultural practices through publication of reports, clinical cards, video and radio broadcasting

PARTNERS

- Kastom Gaden Association
- Solomon Islands Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
- Pacific Islands Farmers Organisation Network
- Solomon Islands Ministry of Health and Medical Services

KEY SUCCESSSES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

In response to newly imposed COVID-related lockdowns and movement restrictions, PIRAS has pivoted to using locally-sourced training expertise and planting materials to enable project roll out. Activities are ongoing in three provinces, across 10 sites.

- 8 of 10 germplasm centres established, multiplying varieties of more than 10 different root crops, 20 different vegetables, 5 different fruit trees
- 10 pig and poultry livestock bulking centres established involving 75 female and 36 male farmers
- 248 women and youth project participants in seed and vegetative planting material bulking activities
- Over 8,000 vegetable seed packets distributed to 2,750 farmers
- Three small enterprise partners selected to work with more than 2,340 (majority women) farmers who will supply produce to Small and Medium Enterprises. The small enterprise partners will provide farmers with training in food processing, preservation and food safety

CASE STUDY: Community-managed germplasm centres

Over the last decades, Solomon Island's rich agricultural biodiversity has been declining with crop varieties disappearing and soil fertility decreasing, creating challenges for sustainable farming. This, combined with increased consumption of low-nutrition, imported, processed foods, is weakening the local food system in Solomon Islands. PIRAS is supporting community managed germplasm centres that locally source, bulk, multiply and distribute superior varieties of vegetative planting materials. Cultivation and consumption of these varieties will strengthen the local food system and improve nutrition.

PIRAS is partnering with Kastom Gaden Association (KGA) to form local committees that use farmer-centered criteria to choose the best locally grown varieties for cultivation. The committees form work groups to develop and manage the germplasm centres. KGA's experience in promoting the adoption of improved varieties created an opportunity for PIRAS to leverage local networks and initiate community-based vegetative propagation of high-quality planting materials.

The centres promote hands-on education and distribution of planting materials through diversity fairs where farmers can observe and jointly harvest mature crops and learn about the crops' advantages. This bottom-up, on-farm conservation



Establishing planting rows at LKB germplasm centre, Western province, Solomon Islands.

approach reinforces farmers' capacity to maintain and produce their own crop genetic resources within local farming systems and facilitates access to more resilient crop varieties, leading to improved food security, self-reliance and resilience to disaster.

PIRAS collaborates with local maternal health clinics to target vulnerable mothers and children. Mothers attend clinics where they learn about foods that can improve nutrition and child health, receive seeds, seedlings and saplings and learn how to cultivate them.

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