



## COUNTRY UPDATE **VANUATU**

JUNE 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 Vanuatu, PIRAS works in the Tafea province with rural producers from Tanna Island to increase food production, improve nutrition and strengthen market links for rural communities by:

- Distributing labour-saving agricultural tools, technologies and seeds to the most vulnerable households
- Training farmers in seedling raising, soil preservation, safe post-harvest handling, agribusiness and agri-technologies
- Rehabilitating community markets to increase women's and youth participation in agricultural value chains
- Facilitating market access through partnerships and transportation support

### UPCOMING PRIORITIES

- On-going distribution of tools, seeds and agricultural technologies to 15 communities on Tanna Island
- Rehabilitate three roadside market houses, including WASH and rainwater storage facilities
- Upgrade the Lenekal market to improve accessibility, sanitation and compliance with COVID-19 measures
- Continue shipments of PIRAS farmers' fresh produce to Vanuatu's largest urban centre, Port Vila

### PARTNERS

- Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Tafea Province
- Lenekal Municipality
- Ministry of Health
- National Bank of Vanuatu
- Nasuaman Farmers Association
- Napil Agriculture Training Centre
- Vodafone

## KEY SUCCESSES IN VANUATU

- Surveyed more than 100 targeted producers, to identify the most needed labour-saving tools and equipment
- Distributed 381 agricultural toolkits including wheelbarrows, axes, rakes, hoes and a range of seeds, benefitting 1,760 rural producers (33% of whom are women, and 2.5% people living with disabilities)
- Procured 16 rotavators and 14 augers to improve farmers' agricultural productivity
- Designed farmers' training modules - on increased production, nutrition, agribusiness skills and digital payment platforms. These will be delivered through agri-business mobile training hubs
- Identified market infrastructure that requires rehabilitation and completed designs for four roadside market upgrades and one new building
- Brokered agreement with the Nasuaman Farmers Association and shipped 10 tons of PIRAS farmers' produce from Tanna Island to Port Vila

### CASE STUDY: Improved incomes and nutrition through market linkages initiative

Tanna Island farmers, on one of Vanuatu's outer islands, face numerous obstacles accessing local markets, such as high transport costs, low farm gate prices, poor road conditions and limited communications networks. COVID-19 restrictions increased the barriers to inter-island shipping with sky-rocketing fuel prices. This has resulted in decreased availability of fresh food, increased prices in Vanuatu's urban centres, and limited market opportunities for rural farmers.

In Vanuatu, PIRAS is connecting rural farmers and urban consumers-- increasing farmers' market access and income stability, expanding local food availability and contributing to improved nutrition. PIRAS' implementing partner, World Vision New Zealand, is leveraging its long-time partnership with a local producer group, Nasuaman Farmers Association (NFA), to create new markets for Tanna's PIRAS farmers. Farmers sell their produce at a guaranteed price, and NFA acts as a market intermediary facilitating transportation to Vanuatu's capital city, Port Vila, on the island of Efate, and retaining a profit.

In May 2022, the first 10 tons of fresh produce, predominantly water taro, were shipped to Port Vila. As harvest season approaches, farmers will



*PIRAS farmers with their produce awaiting shipment to Port Vila.*

offer a wider variety of fruits and vegetables including potato, kumara, yam, carrots, broccoli and cucumber.

PIRAS, implemented through the IFAD-funded Melanesia Rural Market & Innovation Development Driven Programme (MERMAID), is accelerating the profitability and sustainability of this new farm-to-market model. Leveraging MERMAID's extensive market and value chain research, PIRAS is extending mentoring and business support to farmers, to ensure their engagement in marketable and profitable agriculture value chains.

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