



# BEST PRACTICES FOR FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

## Factsheet

This Fact sheet accompanies the Food Security Best Practices guide that has been produced to inform and assist those working on food security in the Pacific as well as communities on interventions that lead to improved health and livelihood and enhance adaptation and mitigation.

Food security is defined as having physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meet dietary needs and food preferences for active and healthy life of all at all times.

Food security is necessary at household level, community, national and regional levels because there are pressures that will lead to more problems where by Pacific islanders may face starvation, poverty and hunger; become ill and unproductive; high price of food and declining state of the environment. These pressures are exacerbated by increasing demand for food as result of increasing population; increasing risks of NCDs resulting from consumption of imported food and degradation of the environment.



The report provides guidance and best practices that can improve people's livelihoods.

## Framework

The Pacific regional framework on food security (Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific 2011) is a framework developed to help guide future actions on

policy directions and funding decisions on leadership and cooperation; legal framework; public-private sector collaboration; trading safe food; protecting vulnerable groups and developing information systems. The framework highlights seven important themes:

- building national and regional partnerships to address challenges of food security;
- developing effective legal instruments that ensure food control systems are in place;
- having access, availability, stability and uses of locally produced food;
- the consideration of infants and vulnerable groups by all actors;
- provision of good information for making informed decisions;
- provision of good food indicators for effective monitoring and evaluation; and
- addressing several cross-cutting areas in appropriate and practical ways.

## Disaster Risk Reduction measures

The report promotes some best practices on Disaster risk reduction measures for food security. These include: agroforestry; agro-silvo-pastoral systems; conservation agriculture; integrated soil fertility management; aqua-silviculture; precision agriculture; organic agriculture; sustainable water management; strengthening seed systems; drip irrigation; crop protection; improve tolerant crops; and integrated fire management.

## Assessment tools and methods

There are also many different sets of tools and methods for assessment and monitoring purposes:

These include vulnerability guidelines; emergency food security analysis; indicators of food security; crop models; participatory models and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

## Case Studies

There are case studies of interventions that lead to improvement of health and livelihood such as the Safe Food Awareness Campaign; tracking progress in maternal and child survival; improving child nutrition; the 'Towards A Food Secured Pacific Strategy'; a mixed gardening project in Kiribati; restoring sustainable livelihoods and seaweed farming in Fiji; traditional crops and sponge culture in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM); revival of 'sup sup' gardens and aquaculture in the Solomon Islands; community-based fisheries management in Tonga; and pearl oyster farming in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI).



*Example of a home garden in South Tarawa  
(Source: East and Dawes, 2009)*

There are also case studies on interventions that enhance adaptation and mitigation such as the use of traditional knowledge, improving drainage and farming of climate resilient crops, 'ridge to reef', and seed banks in Fiji; adaptation to drought; best performing crops - sweet potato and taro in FSM; developing a nursery of drought-tolerant crop seeds in PNG; testing taro for salt tolerance and piloting aquaculture for mangrove crabs in Palau; introducing drought resilient varieties of cassava and sweet potato and fish pond farming in Vanuatu; agro-forestry in Vanuatu, Tonga and Solomon Islands; and 'keyhole' gardening in Timor-Leste. Examples of mitigation measures include: REDD+ in Fiji; agro-forestry in the Pacific; trees for protection and shelter in Kiribati; sustainable fishing schemes; climate proofing fisheries assets; demersal fish management,

pond aquaculture, and post-harvest processing; protecting fish stocks, habitats and breeding grounds; promoting ecosystem based management; and improving soil health and minimising polluted runoff.

## Conclusion

There are several examples presented in this report that show the marriage of traditional techniques and knowledge and 'modern science' tools and information improves food production, distribution, diversification, health and stability at the community level. So despite the challenges and gaps, we have success stories to guide our Pacific Food Security Journey.

We need an approach that encourages the merging of traditional and modern practices to ensure sustainable food security using a 'whole system' or holistic approach. We need to anticipate emerging issues and challenges due to current and future climatic and non-climatic stressors such as disasters, global economics and food and fuel prices, gender, population and land tenure dynamics. And we need to develop and implement best practices and solutions to make sure our list of issues reduces and our success stories increase. Sustainable partnerships and resource sharing to develop capacity at all levels, and allocating resources to support and empower our people to achieve "zero hunger", will enable our communities to find and implement solutions for a food secure Pacific today and tomorrow.

## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of The University of the South Pacific, the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development.

## Reference

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