



COUNTRY UPDATE

FIJI

November 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, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.**

Duration 2021-2024

Learn more about PIRAS in the Pacific [here](#).

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 livelihood opportunities for rural communities.

In Fiji, PIRAS works in 70 villages across three provinces in Fiji's Western Division of Viti Levu: Ba, Naitasiri 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
- ✓ Facilitating partnerships between vulnerable farmers and small and medium enterprises

Upcoming priorities

The National team is currently reflecting on and internalizing the lessons from the first year of implementation to fine-tune detailed upcoming activities. The project aims to leverage synergies with other Pacific organizations like The Pacific Community (SPC) and establish linkages with ongoing initiatives like DFAT's Market Development Facility. Year two will likely include more technical support for farmers in the form of training and increased coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture on extension services.

Partners

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



Key successes in Fiji

- ✓ Trained 1,350 farmers on topics including safety and hygiene requirements, tools and resources for food processing, processes for drying and storing, value added products, quality assurance process for food processing and product costing
- ✓ Trained more than 1,200 farmers in post-harvest handling, food preservation, and value chains
- ✓ Trained 1,495 farmers, 33% of whom are women, in nursery management, livestock management, field and land use management, seed extraction and production
- ✓ Land preparation completed for 3,095 farmers across 30 communities, covering 189 acres
- ✓ Distributed planting materials to 3,600 farmers
- ✓ Distributed tools for weeding, soil cultivation and improvement to 2,800 rural farmers in 3 provinces
- ✓ 48 community facilitators appointed and trained to help deliver programme activities
- ✓ 12 nurseries established in Navosa and Naitasiri highlands providing high quality fruit and vegetable seedlings to 400 farmers

Spotlight: New shed transforms small-scale poultry business

In 2018, Amrita Chand started her own poultry business to help supplement her family's income. Without a proper shed to protect her animals from heat and storms, Amrita often kept the birds in her own bathroom. With space limitations, Amrita could only raise two dozen chickens and ducks. She made enough to contribute to household earnings, selling her chickens and ducks for FJ\$25/3kg, and earning about FJ\$125 to 150 per week.

When the pandemic began, things changed considerably for Amrita and her family. Her husband was laid off from his job as a joiner, and her poultry business wasn't making any profit. With fewer customers, Amrita often had to reduce her prices just to make a sale.

To recover from the economic impacts of COVID, farmers like Amrita needed urgent support to reestablish and build their businesses. Through the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON), one of three PIRAS Fiji implementing partners, Amrita received building materials to construct a new poultry shed.

The new shed has dramatically increased her production capacity from 2 dozen chickens



Amrita Chand's new poultry shed.

and ducks to 14 dozen. Amrita also took part in value-added trainings through PIRAS.

As post-pandemic life resumes in Fiji, her customers are returning. Amrita is now selling her poultry for FJ\$30/3kg. Thanks to the value-added training, she also developed new products, including prepared food and bagged chicken manure for fertilizer, that expand her sales. Amrita's poultry business is now surpassing its pre-COVID profits.

She is planning additional renovations and hoping to add an egg hatchery in the future. She credits PIRAS for helping her build back her business and enabling her to provide financial support to her family once again.

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