



COUNTRY UPDATE  
**VANUATU**  
December 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 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

- ✓ Provide follow up monitoring and market facilitation support to communities with access to the recently constructed roadside markets
- ✓ Formalize partnerships with key training providers through contractual agreements
- ✓ Rollout agricultural training series covering tool and soil management, nursery techniques, pest and disease control, seed banking and post-harvest handling

## Partners

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



## Key successes in Vanuatu

- ✓ More than 4,900 beneficiaries reached (53% women) in 7 communities, surpassing the original target of 3,600
- ✓ Over 1,000 labour-saving tools and equipment distributed including, wheelbarrows, axes, rakes, hoes, spades, hammers, bush knives, and seeds
- ✓ 63 large agricultural machines, including 28 rotovators and 35 augers, purchased and shared between 7 area councils
- ✓ Strategic market rehabilitation of the Central Lenakel Market and construction of 2 roadside markets increased market opportunities for smallholders and created safer, healthier markets for vendors
- ✓ Inter-island food supply chains strengthened through partnership with Nasuaman Farmers Association.
  - 50 tons of fresh produce shipped from Tanna Island to Port Vila central market increasing vegetable variety and access for more than 4,000 urban buyers
  - 134 rural producers paid US\$23,700 at farm gate for their produce

## Spotlight: Roadside markets increase farmer profits, consumer access

Generations of Tanna Island's farmers have faced a persistent obstacle: limited transportation and market infrastructure to sell their produce. Road conditions are very poor and often inaccessible because of weather. Most farmers don't have their own vehicles, so getting their produce to Lenakel, the only central market on the island, requires hiring transportation that can cost up to US\$85 for the round trip. Since transport is shared and space is limited, each farmer can only take a limited volume of goods. For many farmers, the high transportation costs significantly diminish their profits, making it difficult to afford food, school fees, and household necessities.

Jenny Isso, a farmer in Lamkail, used to make the trip to Lenakel market to sell her produce. To give all farmers a chance, there are restrictions on how often any one farmer can sell there. This meant Jenny could only sell at Lenakel market twice a month. To mitigate costs to smallholder farmers, expand their market opportunities and increase consumer access to fresh, local produce, PIRAS designed, constructed and piloted the use of new roadside market houses in Lamkail and Lousganu. The new market houses are closer to communities, but still on accessible roads, reducing transport costs significantly.



Jenny Isso selling her produce at the new PIRAS roadside market in Lamkail, Vanuatu.

Without any schedule or volume restrictions, Jenny is now selling her produce about eight times per month. For Jenny, and other farmers like her, the increased frequency and volume of sales minus the transport costs are generating more income. They are also creating new opportunities for farmers who couldn't travel to the central market because of family responsibilities or other constraints.

The success of these markets has attracted interest from the Provincial government who want to replicate this effort in other parts of the Vanuatu islands.

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