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The Pacific Islands Extension Strategy

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AND RURAL ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE
PACIFIC (2017-2027)

SUMMARY & STRATEGY

Promoting Extension Excellence for Prosperous and Resilient Communities in the Pacific



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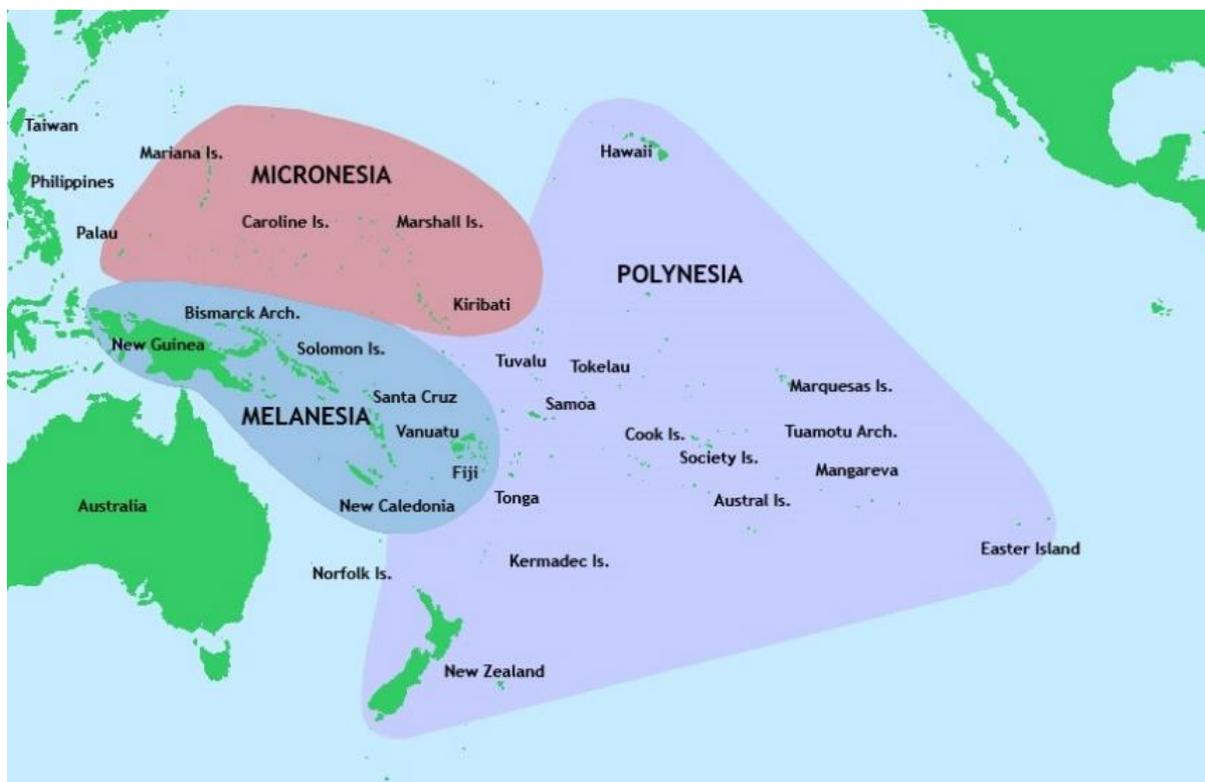
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MAP OF PACIFIC ISLANDS



FOREWORD

The Land Resources Division (LRD) of the Pacific Community (SPC) is partnering with its member countries and strategic development partners in the development of the Pacific Islands Extension Strategy (PIES).

The PIES development is recognised by the Heads of Extension Services from the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) as essential to ensure that resources, services and systems are all able to meet the current and future needs of the Pacific Islands agriculture sector, a sector that is key to economic development and to food security. In the Pacific, this means working out how agricultural services can best meet the needs of food security, climate change, and new demands for commercially viable and export driven food systems. It means understanding the unique needs of the Pacific, with all its diversity in culture, climatic conditions and geography. It also means finding a balance between ways in which traditional agriculture has been practised, its links to social obligations, ensuring food security and developing farm systems with capacity to meet export requirements and support resilient development. Evidence based models for rural advisory services (RAS) are needed that are appropriate for service delivery now and in the future to ensure effective use of resources and funding.

The Pacific Islands Extension Strategy 2015-2020 provides a vision and direction for RAS across the Pacific through regional collaboration. The strategy has multiple purposes including: (i) Prioritising areas that need strengthening (within the context of policy, funding, resources and capacity); (ii) Strategies to support priority interventions; and (iii) Funding initiatives around which resources should be mobilised.

A broad range of actions will be required to bring the vision to reality. “Extension Excellence” will require a multilateral focus on issues such as quality improvement, safety, education, research, staff development and training, and institutional support, to embed best practice and extension excellence in advisory service practice. “Prosperous and Resilient Communities” will be achieved by placing farmers at the heart of service delivery, where stakeholders engage with farmers using a range of extension models, facilitated by Rural Extension and Advisory Service agents that understand ‘best fit’ models for different types of problems (simple and complex), contexts, and cultures.

A focus on equity will be at the forefront of service design and practice, including (but not limited to) people living in poverty, agriculture land tenants, aging farmers, women and youth. A fundamental focus will be on building the capacity of communities to identify their own needs, and engage other stakeholders to address these needs. Institutional support and conducive policy frameworks will be required to ensure that extension staff are equipped to facilitate these multi-stakeholder partnership models. Centres of excellence will facilitate best practice service delivery, and embed research and education into extension practice through technical support from LRD and its partners.

Jan Helsen (Mr)
Director, Land Resource Division
The Pacific Community (SPC)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The PIES development was based on a series of regional consultations and prioritisation process. Initial consultation began in 2005 where SPC convened the first ever-Pacific Extension Summit in the

Kingdom of Tonga and agreed to a set of priorities to strengthen RAS in the region. The Summit also agreed to the establishment of Pacific Islands Extension Network (PIEN), now Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS). The Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) and Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF) of the 22 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) endorsed and supported the establishment of PIRAS to collaboratively build the capacity of extension services in the region.

A second Extension Summit held in Fiji in 2009 identified a set of priority areas for regional collaboration to address the many challenges facing extension services to meet the increasing demands from farmers and clients. In 2015, with the support from the SPC Pacific Agriculture Project (PAPP) funded by the EU, a regional research and extension summit was held in Samoa and agreed to reviving PIRAS and established a PIRAS Advisory Board to drive strengthening of PIRAS. The forum also agreed to a set of priorities for PIRAS which was then incorporated into PIES.

The PIES ensures that the principles identified by stakeholders are built into all future systems and that by 2027, the Pacific Islands is achieving a vision of 'Extension Excellence, Prosperous and Resilient Communities'. The purpose of this strategy is to bring the vision to reality, ensuring that the Pacific Islands is a leader in the complex processes required of rural advisory service to address the ongoing challenges to agriculture production, agribusiness development, food security, food safety, poverty alleviation and climate change. This strategy also provides recommendations to formalize the coordinating role of PIRAS with linkages to the Global Forum for Research and Advisory Services (GFRAS) and other regional networks are also provided.

A range of stakeholders has contributed to the development of the Pacific Islands Extension Strategy (PIES). PICTs, particularly the extension and rural advisory services and a number of stakeholders, have contributed greatly to the finalisation of PIES. The SPC/EU PAPP project has been the main thrust behind the development of PIES, providing both funding and technical support. We also thank GFRAS for contributing funding and technical inputs on the PIES contents. A special acknowledgement goes to the University of the Sunshine Coast Australia (USC) for the support provided by Dr Christine King and Dr Christine Jacobson to facilitate PIES development.

Ensuring ownership has been a key to the success of developing this strategy, and will continue to be a key in its implementation. Teamwork and partnerships and understanding farmers' (and other stakeholders') needs and values, with a shared aim of providing seamless continuity to contribute to agricultural innovation in countries. Commitment from PIRAS Board, SPC and strategic partnership with many stakeholders and development partners is needed to ensure sufficient resource and funding is mobilised for successful implementation of PIES. PIRAS Board and SPC as the Secretariat will play a leading role in this process. Individual PICT Ministries will support this culture through resource mobilisation alignment of priorities at national levels.

Malcolm Hazelman (PhD)
Chairman, Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS)

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1. Overview

The Pacific Islands Extension Strategy (PIES) 2017 - 2027 provides a vision and direction for regional collaboration in strengthening agricultural extension and rural advisory services(RAS) across the Pacific. PIES has multiple purposes, including:

- a. providing a coherent regional framework for RAS to ensure alignment with common opportunities and concerns;
- b. acknowledging participatory research and extension principles, and clarifying roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in RAS;
- c. advocating for and streamlining investment in RAS across the Pacific;
- d. Institutionalising support for RAS at local, national and regional levels; and;
- e. to enhance the effectiveness of networking, knowledge sharing and capacity building for extension to empower smallholder farmers in the Pacific.

1.1. What is extension?

‘Extension’ is the process of reaching out to farmers or groups of farmers to help them do their work of growing food. It involves listening to them and bringing new science, practices and business skills to share with them.

In the Pacific it often means working cooperatively with traditional community structures and building on the legacy of traditional agricultural knowledge to assist farmers to access different markets.

‘Extension’ has usually referred to government agricultural officers and others going out to farms and ‘extending’ research by applying it to the practical problems of farms. ‘Rural Advisory Services’ includes extension but also includes the many non-government organisations, consultants and industry –led initiatives that focus on improving the quality and quantity of the raw materials that industries need from farms. This strategy then continues to use the word ‘extension’ but this is meant in the fullest context of ‘rural advisory services’.

1.2. Rationale and Background

The extension landscape has changed over the years with the increasing participation of the private sector, non-government organisations (NGOs), information and communication technologies (ICTs), input providers and producer organisations calling for effective coordination amongst the RAS actors so they can better serve farmers’ demands and contribute to the process of innovation. This strategy articulates regional priorities to strengthen the capacities of RAS to serve farming communities effectively.

The bulk of the Pacific Island populations (more than 80%) depend directly or indirectly on the agricultural sector for food and livelihood security. The majority of this population are smallholder farmers mostly located in *isolated rural areas* operating on *scarce resources with limited access to services*, new agricultural information and technologies, *poor access to credit and markets*, *low capacity for product diversification*, and challenges in meeting quality standards for commercialization and export. These challenges are compounded by a number of production constraints such as: Pests and diseases; Declining productivity; Seasonal changes and cyclones.

1.3 PIRAS

PIRAS, formerly known as the Pacific Islands Extension Network (PIEN), was formed in response to a demand by PICTs to establish a network of extension and rural advisory services (RAS) in the Pacific to

strengthen capacity of RAS to support food security and sustainable livelihoods needs of the Pacific Communities.

The mission of PIRAS is to provide advocacy and leadership on research and extension to meet sustainable livelihoods needs for PICTs.

PIRAS was established at the first Pacific Extension Summit convened by SPC in the Kingdom of Tonga (2005) and was later endorsed by the Pacific Heads of Agriculture Services (HOAFS) and the Pacific Ministers of Agriculture (MOAF) meeting in 2009, Nadi, Fiji. In August 2015, with funding support from the EU funded Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP), USAID, IFPRI and Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), PIRAS was revived and established a new PIRAS Board and recommended development of PIES to articulate regional priorities to support strengthen RAS.

2. Extension Challenges in the Pacific

Numerous studies on RAS in the Pacific have documented a number of challenges that influence the ability to deliver effective services to the Pacific communities. These challenges relate to:

- Limited capacity of extension services
- Institutional and budgetary constraints,
- Poor enabling policies,
- Limited coordination between actors in RAS
- Poor linkages between research and extension and
- Lack of information systems.

2.1. Limited capacity of extension services

Several Pacific-wide capacity needs assessments on RAS identified diverse capacity building needs at various levels. At the individual level, over fifty different areas of capacity building needs were identified. The key needs are:

(1) Technical Skills (pest and disease management, soil health, implications of climate change, disaster risk reduction, crop and livestock production) and Agribusiness (business planning, access to finance, value chain analysis);

(2) Functional Skills, which consist of process skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to deliver effective and efficient extension, and nurture partnerships with research and development services, government agencies, NGOs and other institutions.

2.2. Institutional and budgetary constraints

There is still weak coordination among both public and private service providers to meet these diverse demands. In addition, funding is needed to strengthen RAS but due to fiscal constraints of most PICTs, most extension services have suffered from limited budgets with declining numbers of staff and infrastructure to support service delivery.

2.3. Lack of favourable policies for RAS

Although extension services are recognised as a priority for most PICTs, a lack of clear and favourable policy for RAS is contributing to poor investment resulting in poor infrastructure, limited incentives, limited training opportunities for RAS and ultimately poor performance of RAS.

2.4. Poor availability of evidence on RAS

Information and evidence is needed to support RAS providers in their work and to strengthen the position of RAS in the development context. However, there is currently lack of capacity in extension research resulting in a lack of understanding on what approaches work in what context, and how investments in RAS have contributed to poverty reduction. There is a need to ensure that relevant evidence is synthesised, as well as debated with and presented to key decision-makers (farmer organisations, policymakers, donors) in formats accessible to them.

2.5. Lack of clarity on roles of RAS actors

The number of rural and agricultural service providers is constantly increasing, but their activities are not necessarily coordinated and they do not necessarily work towards a common agenda. There is a lack of common understanding and focused analysis of the roles of different RAS stakeholders and actors, of how they should relate, and of who can reach different target groups.

2.6. Limited communication and coordination between actors and stakeholders

Although there are pockets of effective communication, improvement is needed between three primary sets of relationships: universities and government, public and private extension providers, and researchers-RAS-farmers. There is a need for a policy environment that enables private-sector development.

2.7. Poor linkages Link between Research-Extension-Farmer

Research in the PICTS involves multiple players to support both local and regional development needs. A lack of effective co-ordination and priority setting can lead to duplication of expertise and efforts, increase competition and reduce information sharing. RAS can play a central role identifying research needs, building and facilitating networks and supporting research.

2.8. Limited access to information and sharing amongst RAS

Access to information in the Pacific is recognised as an ongoing challenge for RAS due to lack of centralised information systems. Strengthening information access can enable adoption and scaling of new innovation. This would harness existing and new scientific skills and better match research with the needs of both farming communities and consumers, increasing the overall efficiency of both RAS and national agricultural research services.

2.9. Support for Vulnerable Groups

Attracting youth to agriculture, and exposing them to the skills needed to strengthen their role in agricultural development is important. Youth engagement in agriculture also strengthens knowledge sharing across generations, and therefore plays an important role in the continued cultural resilience of PICT peoples. Likewise, the role of women in agricultural development is changing. In some countries, women are taking a stronger leadership role in improving community health through growing and using traditional foods and improving nutrition standards, and in developing and running agribusinesses. Addressing the educational needs of women and the roles they can play is a priority for this strategy.

3. Stakeholders

Table 1 identifies the main services and organisations who will work collaboratively to implement the strategy, and their areas of expertise.

Table 1. Stakeholders and their roles

Stakeholder group	Role
1 Regional organisations and intergovernmental bodies e.g. SPC	Facilitate resource mobilisation to support implementation of PIES. SPC has taken a lead role in the development of this strategy and their ongoing support will be critical to its successful implementation
2 Regional and national groups and networks, e.g. PIRAS	Drive networking, learning, communication and co-ordination at regional scale
3 National Governments (PICTs)	Coordinate and connect actors to support implementation at the national level through provision of resources and alignment of PIES priorities and providing feedback and lessons learned
4 Research organisations	University, private and government based research providers to address common regional challenges identified by farmers and others, avoid duplication of efforts, and engage with RAS to ensure best practice and technological developments are shared across contexts
5 Extension and advisory services	Contribute to networking and feedback on implementation progress and challenges
6 Educational providers (e.g. universities, schools)	Provide education and vocational training that ensures clear career pathways, extension skill development and passion for agricultural development
7 Farmer organisations	Identify and communicate farmer needs and support best practice agricultural development through lesson sharing
8 Private sector enterprises	Work with regional extension advisory services to provide skills and mentoring that enables farmers to bridge the gap between subsistence agriculture and market based agricultural economies. Private sector enterprises are crucial drivers of change, pulling quality products through the supply chain as they seek to comply market expectations.
9 Regional and International development partners and donors (e.g. ACIAR, FAO, IFAD)	Provide scientific and technical knowledge that addresses regional priorities of mutual interest and benefit and mobilisation of funding to support PIES implementation
10 Non-Governmental Organisations	Work with a range of stakeholders to ensure the needs of all, including the most vulnerable, are incorporated

4. The PIES Framework

The PIES is grounded in the vision and guiding principles (Box 2), which are the basis to guide implementation of strategic priorities outlined in the document. The PIES is a ‘living document’ and its implementation shall be reviewed annually where priorities will be updated and emerging needs and priorities incorporated.

4.1 Vision and Principles

Vision: ***Promoting extension excellence for prosperous and resilient communities in the Pacific***

Two fundamental goals underpin this Vision:

1. **Extension Excellence** is demonstrated by critical thinking around best fit models to diverse scenarios; academic alliances in education and research; creating accessible centres of excellence that function as multi-stakeholder extension platforms; workforce development and training; public-private partnerships that leverage resources for RAS; placing farmers and communities at the centre of extension models; a systems focus addressing social and cultural contexts across the spectrum of sectors; adopting best practice and an evidence-based approach to extension; and translating research into practice.
2. **Prosperous and Resilient Communities** where individuals, families and communities can work with RAS, building on existing knowledge and capacities and using evidence based programs, to: (i) build the capacity of individuals and communities to improve their health through food security and food nutrition; (ii) fully engage in extension processes; (iii) create farming systems that are adaptive, including being adaptive to the effects of climate change and climate related disasters; and (iv) social and physical environments that enable healthy communities.

BOX 3. PRINCIPLES

1. **Systemic partnership:** Service delivery will be based on excellence and shared responsibility through effective partnerships
2. **Evidence-based approaches:** Service delivery will focus on evidence-based measures and best-fit practices
3. **Demand-driven and accountability:** Service delivery will focus on demands and accountability to members including farmers and clients. Provides guidance to be adapted to context rather than prescriptions
4. **Transparency and inclusiveness:** Service delivery will be inclusive processes from priority setting to service delivery, respecting the opinions and knowledge of farmers and stakeholders.
5. **Alignment:** Priorities are aligned to the demands and national development goals and accountable to investment in extension service delivery and alliances.
6. **Networking:** shares information at and between local, national, regional and global scales. All created information is shared and managed in public domain.
7. **Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL):** Promotes accountability and learning within all activities related to support services to demonstrate impacts and scaling of successful approaches.

‘Extension Excellence for Prosperous and Resilient Communities’ aligns with the goals of PIRAS and assumes that there will be collaboration through teamwork and partnerships within and between countries that involves individuals, communities, the private sector and government agencies, and is grounded in an understanding of community needs and values, and supports seamless continuity service delivery. This requires integrated planning of service and program delivery. It also assumes that there will be innovation demonstrated by:

- a culture of inquiry and exploration of new modes of service delivery;
- horizon scanning of drivers and opportunities for change;
- evaluating approaches and fostering extension research;
- investing in redesign and change management;
- trialling and developing solutions tailored to local needs; and
- building the evidence base for broader use.

Underpinning these goals is equity in service delivery: tailoring services and initiatives to reach vulnerable groups; creating integrated networks to facilitate access; information and communication to enable farmers to self-manage and take greater control of their farming systems and farm families; building the capacity of communities to address food security issues; and understanding community values.

5. Regional Priorities

The following Regional Governance Framework for agricultural extension and advisory services (RAS) is comprised of four focus areas namely capacity development, institutional and policy support, systemic partnerships and knowledge management and networking.

Table 2. Regional Priorities, Dimensions and Focus Areas

Regional Priorities	Dimensions	Focus Areas (Outcomes)
1. Capacity development	Individual capacities, Education; Training; Competency; Skills; Incentives	Develop capacity of human resources in RAS to respond effectively to the growing demands on agricultural extension and advisory services
2. Policy and advocacy support	Policy driven; Demand driven; Results oriented; Extension research; Monitoring and evaluation; Advocacy; Investment in RAS	Strengthen institutional capacities for policy development, advocacy and resource mobilization
3. Systemic partnerships	Functional Systemic; Sectoral partnership; Community participation; Culture; Traditional knowledge; Best practices;	Strengthen systemic partnership in RAS to respond effectively to the differentiated and emerging needs in agricultural production, agribusiness, value chains, climate change and food security
4. Knowledge management and networking	ICTs; Databases, Facilities; Information sharing; Community of practice; Networking	Enhance regional coordination, information and knowledge management and networking

6. Outcomes, Outputs and Strategic Actions

6.1 Develop capacity of human resources in RAS

Presented in Annex 2 are the outcomes and key activities envisaged by the strategy. A lead agency and timeframe have also been included.

7. Implementation Arrangements

This strategy is focused specifically on regional scale priorities to support and strengthen RAS across the PICTs. It also recognises the need for guidance in developing country-specific priorities for extension linked to the regional extension strategy. An implementation matrix with key activities, timeframe and responsible stakeholders is presented in Annex 1. The PIRAS Board with support from SPC as the Secretariat will assume the responsibility to facilitate the implementation process by joint mobilisation of required resources and funding. The process will involve coordinating and engaging key stakeholders for joint discussions at the PIRAS annual forums where prioritisation for each year will be compiled and translated into a full proposal. Implementation of priorities will focus on providing the right services, by the right team, in the right places, in the right way and at the right time.

Providing the right services

- The principle is that RAS approaches are evidence based, aiming to display best practice. It implies a review and evaluation framework where extension models are monitored and outcomes are benchmarked. Models are adapted as evidence changes; where the evidence is unavailable or equivocal, participation is within the ethical framework of scientific enquiry – monitored, measured

and evaluated. Where there is evidence of no change or little benefit, models are refined and changed to more effective ones. Through this process a focus on consistency and efficiency of extension practice remains forefront.

By the right team

- The principle is that RAS delivery increasingly reflects multi-stakeholder practice, with formal and informal links between extension professionals, across countries, sectors and functions, within the framework of farmer-centred extension. This principle extends to approaches that focus on action within communities. Training and education enhance the competencies of the team in providing services, including that of the farming community in terms of capacity building. Clear delineation of team roles is needed.

In the right place

- The principle is that extension providers, wherever possible, ensure that services are delivered in the most cost-effective setting that optimises farmer access. The systems, infrastructure and support that facilitate linked up action also enable more flexibility in providing extension outside traditional high-density, high- cost, highly-congested and complex flow environments. Technological advances in connectivity ensure that the diagnostic information to support extension provision can be made available outside of traditional sites, no longer constrained by requirements of critical mass.

In the right way

- The principle is that models of extension need to be adapted to the cultural and geographical context of countries. The principles behind the method chosen will stay the same and guide the adaptation and application of the model. This also applies to contextualising processes from policy through to practice. This is also a key to insuring alignment between regional and country specific policy.

At the right time

- The principle is that extension providers, wherever possible, ensure that services are delivered in the most cost-effective setting that optimises farmer access. The systems, infrastructure and support that facilitate linked up action also enable more flexibility in providing extension outside traditional high-density, high- cost, highly-congested and complex flow environments. Technological advances in connectivity ensure that the diagnostic information to support extension provision can be made available outside of traditional sites, no longer constrained by requirements of critical mass.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

Monitoring and evaluation is a critical mechanism to ensure effective policy implementation. The priorities identified in this strategy are intended to be implemented over a 10-year timeframe. Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation rests with PIRAS Board with support from SPC and key partners (e.g. member governments). An annual monitoring and evaluation process is envisioned. M&E results will be collated and shared with member countries through annual meetings and PIRAS online platforms. Annex 1 of the Background Paper outlines core indicators, measures and targets related to each priority which will be monitored and evaluated each year.

Annex 1. Monitoring and evaluation framework

Regional Priorities	Success indicators	Baseline	Short-Term Target (Year 1-2)	Med-Term Target (Year 3 – 5)	Long-Term Target (Year 5+)
1. Capacity building – Develop capacity of human resources in RAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved skills and performance of RAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited technical and functional skills of RAS Poor performance and coverage of RAS Lack of scholarship and training opportunities for RAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource and capacity gaps are identified in all national RAS Training modules for RAS developed and delivered in countries Harmonize education and training in RAS in partnership with learning institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAS modules mainstreamed in school curricula Scholarships available for extension studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence on RAS approaches in contributing to development outcome at national levels Improved training, education, standards, and opportunities for RAS actors with incentives, certification, and career development mechanisms in place
2. Institution and policy support – Strengthen institutional capacities for policy development, advocacy and resource mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recognition by policy-makers, donors, investors, and programme managers of the need to increase investment in RAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of favorable RAS policies and Unclear priorities for RAS Low funding for RAS Lack of voice and advocacy on RAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding opportunities for regional priorities identified and mobilised Guidelines for policy development, extension research and RAS M&E developed and implemented Policy dialogue occurs to support consistent framing and scope in National RAS policy development Extension needs are identified and integrated in policy and advocated to Pacific leaders and donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms are in place for extension research and RAS M&E processes and integrated into service delivery for both public and private groups (farmer, supplier, producer and market groups) A coordinated approach to RAS policy development across the pacific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient funding and political support for regional extension initiatives is secured independently of individual countries Strengthened institutionalisation, governance, coordination, and financing structures for national RAS
3. Systemic partnerships – Enhance systemic partnership in RAS to respond effectively to the differentiated and emerging needs in agricultural production, agribusiness, value chains, climate change and food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public-private partnerships are in place to support coordinated RAS delivery Agricultural, forestry and extension research is clearly aligned to the needs of farmers, and supports resilient livelihood development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited coordination and partnership amongst RAS providers Limited sharing of best practices and lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for supporting PPP identified as part of extension policy RAS models inclusive of vulnerable groups (youth, women, others) and cross cutting issues (gender, climate change, nutrition and food security) developed and promoted across countries through PIRAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership platforms established at national levels linked to PIRAS Best practices shared amongst RAS providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPP contribute to RAS provision in key areas identified within National extension policy Extension service delivery is evidence based Improvement in extension:farmer ratio
4. Knowledge management and networking – Enhance regional coordination, information and knowledge management and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralized information and knowledge management platforms developed and utilized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmented information and knowledge systems PIRAS established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding secured for PIRAS annual meetings Organizations capacitated in Information and knowledge management Information and knowledge management systems in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons on best practice are shared and adapted Databases are updated regularly and appropriate quality control processes exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access, share, and use information, knowledge, experience in RAS

Annex 2. Implementation Matrix

Outcomes/Strategies/Key Actions	Responsibilities	Timeline	Costs??
6.1. Enhance capacity and performance of RAS to respond effectively to the growing demands on agricultural extension and advisory services			
1.1. Harmonise education and training in RAS in partnership with learning institutions			
1.1.1. Commission analyses of approaches, concepts, and themes for capacity development and education to identify mechanisms to raise the professional status of extension as a discipline, including the quality of qualifications and opportunities for continuing education 1.1.2. Establish a consortium of education in extension under PIRAS involving key tertiary institutions across the Pacific and beyond to coordinate a holistic approach to supporting RAS capacity development and education, inform stakeholders on capacity developing opportunities, and serve as a knowledge broker. strengthen extension education 1.1.3. Support curriculum development for RAS at the local, vocational and tertiary levels to support the full range of knowledge and skills required for RAS. 1.1.4. Mobilise scholarship, incentives and opportunities for engaging in research and extension activities at the community scale, through postgraduate and other further education programs to support RAS education and training 1.1.5. Work in partnerships to leverage resources for RAS training and capacity building and to support field activities, professional development activities	USP – Lead Co-Lead – PIRAS, Universities and Ag. Colleges Partners – SPC, development partners	2017-2018	
1.2. Development of capacity building programme for RAS (formal and informal)			
1.2.1. Develop training and communication modules for extension agents that address the following issues as part of curricula 1.2.2. Work with learning institutions (schools and universities) to mainstream training modules into school curricula 1.2.3. Secure funding to deliver training programmes in countries and with schools	USP – Lead Co-Lead – PIRAS, Universities and Ag. Colleges Partners – SPC, development partners	2017 - 2018	
1.3. Develop best 'fit' models of RAS to effectively address differentiated needs farmers			
1.3.1. Conduct capacity needs analysis for RAS in PICTs and the different roles of extension agents in relation to pluralistic extension provision, country context, technical application areas and different sectors and markets, and institutional structural and functional issues, and determine whether or not extension agents need both technical (e.g. soils, horticulture) and process (extension methodology and methods) knowledge and skills 1.3.2. Promoting and mainstreaming extension approaches and models that addresses cross-cutting issues of environment, nutrition and foods security, value chains, agripreneurship, sustainable development, engagement of women and youth and climate change impacts:	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	2018 - 2025	
2. Strengthen institutional capacities for policy development, advocacy and resource mobilization			
2.1. Identify and develop potential partnership-based institutional support mechanism to ensure effective RAS			
2.1.1. Review and identify organisational/institutional change or reform in relation to structure and function required to strengthen capacity of RAS 2.1.2. Strengthen organisational/institutional systems (eg. administrative management systems, networking and coordination, operating procedures) through functional reviews, system development, capacity development programs and process improvement 2.1.3. Build capacity of organisations/institutions (e.g. SPC) to partner with stakeholders (e.g. USP, private service providers, PIRAS) to strengthen institutional support mechanisms (e.g. funds, resources, staff, training) that will ensure RAS project and program success 2.1.4. Utilise partnerships to increase government/ministry role as a policy making and regulatory entity, including through evidence based and bottom-up and participatory policy development and planning 2.1.5. Document case studies of effective institutional support mechanisms that can be shared through the PIRAS network and be used	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS Partners – GFRAS, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	

as best practice/best fit case studies			
2.2. Develop coherent and conducive regional and national policies			
2.2.1. Conduct or commission analysis or systematic reviews of the effects of existing rural and agricultural policies on RAS	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
2.2.2. Provide support in developing regional and national extension policies tailored to specific contexts that addresses national socio-economic and political concerns			
2.2.3. Link extension policy to agricultural sector development policy and government structures			
2.2.4. Mobilise funding and convene meetings and dialogues to discuss issues, policies, and approaches in RAS			
2.2.5. Participate in events and regional (PIRAS Forums) and global forums (such as GFRAS Forums) to dialogue on priority policy issues across the region			
2.3. Promote extension research as part M&E and extension policy reform			
1.3.1. Conduct a review of existing extension research across the range of existing service providers (public and private) to identify evidence based practices, impacts and returns on investment in RAS	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & Universities Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
1.3.2. Promote the importance of extension research to research organisations and funding bodies so that research on the extension itself is carried out as part of the research (as with the importance of research on the research process itself)			
1.3.3. Develop a training manual on planning/designing, conducting and evaluating extension research that can be used by extension educators			
1.3.4. Conduct extension research that is needs based and evidence based, and that addresses specific knowledge gaps or requirements.			
2.4. Strengthen the voice and RAS capacity for advocacy			
2.5.1. Commission studies on returns to investment in RAS in contributing to regional and national goals	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & Universities Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
2.5.2. Secure funding to convene forums and coordinate RAS actors, their approaches, and their policies with the intention to facilitate their engagement in policy dialogue and advocacy			
2.5.3. Raise awareness on the importance and evidence on returns to RAS investment among stakeholder groups (extending beyond academic discussions)			
2.5.4. Support advocacy for an enabling environment for capacity development in RAS			
2.5.5. Collaborate closely with research institutions and advocate for consideration of RAS issues in research interventions			
2.5. Mobilise resources and funding to support RAS			
2.6.1. Mobilise funding through SPC to create a regional funding pool for extension research initiatives	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & PICTs Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
2.6.2. Engage tertiary institutions as a critical stakeholders with regard to extension research and to mobilise funding, as well as lifting the status of extension research to attract donors			
2.6.3. Ensure that the regional funding pool is accessible to extension agents, extension educators and providers, and other stakeholders interested in conducting and promoting extension research, and includes an equitable application process			
3. Enhance systemic partnership in RAS to respond effectively to the differentiated and emerging needs in agricultural production, agribusiness, value chains, climate change and food security			
3.1. Evaluate existing PPPs and opportunities for new models of PPPs			
1.1.1. Develop initial research project that evaluates existing PPPs in the Pacific, assessing these models in terms of how effective and efficient they are, and how they could be improved and opportunities for new models of PPPs, where they can be implemented (e.g. types of commodities, required stakeholders) and how they need to be adapted to ensure successful implementation to the Pacific context	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & PICTs Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	2019	
1.1.2. Coordination of private and public service providers to meet the needs of extension, and sharing success stories and failures of public and private partnership models in the Pacific, and explore opportunities for private agencies to fund extension needs (e.g. participatory on-farm research, plant health clinics, farmer field schools).			
3.2. Build systemic partnership platforms at national and facilitate their linkages to regional and global partnerships			
1.2.1. Develop partnerships across supply chains (e.g. importers, food processors) and with other stakeholders required (e.g. health ministries) to address food security & food safety standards, biosecurity issues, marketing and auditing processes, climate	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & PICTs	Ongoing	

1.2.2	change, agribusiness and increase awareness and understanding of the contributions each of these stakeholders make to effective system function	Partners – GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners		
1.2.3	Developing partnerships that focus on entrepreneurship processes and coordinating these partnerships to develop training and development in entrepreneurship skills for a range of stakeholders			
1.2.4	Developing partnerships with environmental agencies to embrace sustainability and climate change through creating links with existing networks involved in sustainability and climate change at the national level, identifying champions within ministries, and developing and promoting approaches to 'climate smart' farming			
1.2.4	Establish national partnership platforms to facilitate information sharing and networking amongst actors			
3.3. Support and develop linkages between research and extension				
3.3.1	Developing partnership between extension and research so that both are considered at the design stage of projects and programs, and support forums that incorporate both research and extension agendas and enable lessons to be shared about the research-extension relationship.	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
3.3.2	Strengthen linkages at all levels (national and regional) between research and extension through participatory research and extension and information sharing platforms			
3.3.3	Explore opportunities for partnerships with farmer and producer organisations so that projects and service delivery are farmer driven or farmer/community focused in terms of needs and objectives, and that projects and service delivery benefit farmers/communities directly			
3.4. Strengthen support and linkages to farmer organisations and private sector RAS providers				
3.4.1	Organise farmers into groups and or associations by commodity or locality	SPC – Lead	Ongoing	
3.4.2	Coordination and conceptualisation of experiences with different approaches to collaborating with or strengthening farmer organisations and the private sector	Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners		
3.4.3	Elaboration of evidence regarding advantages and disadvantages of each sector's RAS as well as good practices for collaboration			
3.4.4	Creation of links and facilitation of collaboration between farmer organisations, input suppliers, RAS, and research			
3.4.5	Facilitating and supporting effective community based organisations			
3.5. Provide targeted extension service delivery for women vulnerable groups				
3.5.1	Commission analyses to show impact of effective differentiation of approaches by target groups	SPC – Lead	2018-2019	
3.5.2	Advocacy for socio-economic differentiation, inclusion of disadvantaged social groups into RAS, and consideration of context as a key aspect in RAS training and in policies	Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners		
3.5.3	Fostering of exchange of experiences regarding socio-economic equity in RAS			
3.5.4	Create conducive environment for women to engage in agriculture and RAS			
3.5.5	Provide training to extension agents as well as managers on engaging and empowering women			
3.5.6	Increase gender ratios in scholarship and employment for women in RAS			
3.5.7	Develop extension products tailored to the education level and new roles of women			
3.5.8	Encouraging local communities to participate in research and teaching programs (e.g. through cultural events, field days, social media, participatory processes)			
3.6. Enhance youth participation in RAS				
3.6.1	Build on/utilise young people's current identity with social media/technology to market careers in agriculture, particularly RAS	SPC – Lead	2018-2019	
3.6.2	Develop extension products tailored to young people, promoting their engagement in agriculture in different ways	Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners		
3.6.3	Create a strong research and teaching culture in local communities to attract high quality academics, particularly academics associated with extension research, but also academics in agriculture and other related fields (e.g. health, environmental management, climate change)			
3.6.4	Ensure that Universities and other education curriculums address local needs and local service delivery, and engage in face to face interactions with local communities			
3.6.5	Develop both field and office based activities (in each country) to demonstrate the full range of roles and opportunities for extension agents			

3.6.6	Develop agricultural and extension curricula for primary and secondary school children, e.g. school gardens			
3.6.7	Identify role models in agriculture, particularly RAS, and develop profiles about these role models that can be used to market different career opportunities (e.g. agricultural superheroes).			
4. Enhance regional coordination, information and knowledge management and networking				
4.1. Strengthen organisational capacities in knowledge management				
6.1.1.	Conduct needs analysis to understand knowledge gaps and explore ways to strengthen organisational capacities in knowledge management	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	2018 -2027	
6.1.2.	Explore and document regional coordination mechanisms and how these mechanisms can be improved at the regional and national scales			
6.1.3.	Document and build on best practice/best fit and innovative case studies and associated context and share these case studies through PIRAS and existing knowledge management sites and networking forums			
6.1.4.	Develop training materials and conduct training on understanding different methods for knowledge management and evidence based practice			
4.2. Strengthen the use of ICTs (including multi-media) to support RAS delivery				
1.2.1	Assess and establish ICTs and social media platforms for sharing/exchanging stories, appropriateness, usability, accessibility and scaling up opportunities (including trialling at national levels)	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	2018 -2027	
1.2.2	Develop a regional database that is updated regularly. This database should include: (i) extension/development needs of different sectors based on extension agent analyses of farmer needs; (ii) a research repository; (iii) extension materials that can be shared between countries; and (iv) lessons on evidence based practice. Database categories could include: income generation, crops, livestock, forestry, markets, climate change, nutrition, food security, aquaculture, climate change and resilience.			
1.2.3	Assist in the development of a range of databases for knowledge management and link these to other existing databases and update them regularly			
1.2.4	Capacity building provided on the use of ICT platforms and communications through social media.			
4.3. Improve knowledge management to support monitoring and evaluation in RAS				
1.3.1	Create a mechanism in local communities for the collection and storage of local evidence-based research findings, and link this to national and regional databases and knowledge management systems	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
1.3.2	Explore ways in which different forms of ICTs and social media can be used to strengthen evidence based impacts of RAS			
1.3.3	Establish ICT based M&E systems at national levels and link to regional platforms			
1.3.4	Support capacity development on ICKM across organisations and countries.			
4.4. Strengthen regional coordination, information sharing and networking				
6.1.1	Strengthen PIRAS and its linkages to stakeholders at national, regional and global levels	SPC – Lead Co-lead – PIRAS & NARS Partners – PICTs, GFRAS, ACIAR, APIRAS and development partners	Ongoing	
6.1.2	Mobilise funding to convene PIRAS annual forums and board meetings to review ongoing progress and provide recommendations for steps forward			
6.1.3	Hold regular extension exchanges and engage PIRAS to take a lead role in enabling the sharing of best practice/best fit case studies at regional extension summits			
6.1.4	Develop extension materials and knowledge products for sharing with PIRAS members through PIRAS platforms			
6.1.5	Revitalise local extension training facilities to support training in extension skills, teamwork and communication, and translate extension research into practice in a supported environment and sharing outcomes and lessons and as well as management in databases.			

