



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES SOLUTIONS FORUM

WORKING TOGETHER TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

2022 REPORT



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Abbreviations and acronyms

5F	food, feed, fuel, fertilizer and finance
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Islands States
COP27	United Nations Climate Change Conference (of the Parties)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GNI	gross national income
GPD	gross domestic product
ICT	information and communications technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	international financing institution
LDC	least developed countries
LLDC	landlocked developing countries
MVI	multidimensional vulnerability index
NCD	non-communicable disease
NGO	non-governmental organization
NWFP	non-wood forestry products
PIFON	Pacific Island Farmers Organization Network
SAMOA Pathway	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway
SCATAP	Samoa-China Agriculture Technical Aid Project
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPC	Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SROS	Scientific Research Organization of Samoa
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WFP	World Food Programme



Executive summary



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Samoa co-hosted Ministry-level leaders from fourteen Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as heads of technical and resource partner organizations and countries, communities, farmers, innovators, the private sector and academia for the 2022 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum. Organized as a hybrid – virtual and physical – event, the Forum took place from 28 to 30 November in Samoa’s capital, Apia. The Forum was graced by the participation of more than 2 000 viewers and participants including over a hundred speakers. Notable among them were the Prime Minister of Samoa, FAO Director-General, Dr. Qu Dongyu, 11 cabinet ministers, FAO’s Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific and Assistant Director-General, development partners, and producer groups.

Under the theme “Working together to leave no one behind,” the 2022 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum was organized as a follow up to the 2021 global SIDS Solutions Forum through identifying country-specific and regional successes, challenges and next steps within the context of advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway with specific attention to the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the five F (food, fuel, feed, fertilizer, and financing) crisis.



Throughout the Forum, participants were provided with context-centred analysis, tools and concrete examples of success to develop country-specific follow-up actions on:

- COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts and strategies to address impacts of the war in Ukraine;
- Progress and lessons learned from the work linked to national agrifood systems transformation;
- Identification and expansion of innovative digitalization in agrifood systems;
- South-South and Triangular Cooperation success stories in the Pacific;
- Creative approaches to addressing non-communicable diseases (NDCs) in the Pacific;
- Building resilient agrifood systems by accessing climate funding mechanisms;
- The multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI).

Moreover, the Forum ignited excitement among leaders as they discovered practices of success within Pacific SIDS that are not promoted, celebrated and shared; not only between countries, but also within the countries where they exist. The key takeaways and recommendations are therefore as follows:

- More intra Pacific learning, collaboration on innovation and collective knowledge sharing.
- Multisectoral collaboration between policy sectors, supported by donor funding schemes that are designed to facilitate cooperation between government agencies.
- Increased investment to facilitate the upscaling of climate-resilient solutions.
- Examining existing policy and obligations for improvement and enforcement, as many solutions are not “new”.
- Increased South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
- The resounding call for increased local production and import substitution.
- The importance of harnessing technology and mechanization.
- Improved data collection and regional standardization related to diet and other socioeconomic indicators.
- Continued advocacy for the use of MVI and climate finance.
- Need for urgent action.

Introduction and background



The 2022 volcanic eruption and subsequent ash fall and tsunami in Tonga, which nearly destroyed the country's entire economy, is but one example of the devastating context of natural disasters that Pacific SIDS confront. Like other SIDS, Pacific SIDS are challenged by their remoteness, high vulnerability to natural and climate change-induced disasters, dependence on imported foods, and a high incidence of diet-related diseases.

The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic are uniquely significant for Pacific SIDS, largely because of their economic (import, tourism and remittance dependence), agricultural (short value chains) and health (diet-related diseases) contexts. Governments' preventive measures such as international and domestic border closures, restricted government and business hours, unintentionally triggered near total economic paralysis in the region. The tourism sector collapsed with far-reaching ramifications for agriculture and food security. These impacts are reversing critical successes and progress in achieving the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway in the Pacific SIDS.

COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts by Pacific SIDS are being undermined by the disruption of global supply chains linked to the war in Ukraine. For example, in Samoa, petroleum prices from May to August 2022 increased by 31 percent and 42 percent for unleaded and diesel respectively.



Anticipating the evolution of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SIDS, the FAO Director-General, Dr Qu Dongyu, in 2021 created the SIDS Solutions Platform with the objective of using the power of knowledge sharing to accelerate progress for the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway in SIDS. In launching the Platform at the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum, Dr Qu Dongyu, emphasized that FAO would work with SIDS governments and partners to ensure that the SIDS Solutions Platform is practical and provides tangible results for the SIDS. Since then, FAO committed significant resources and invested in partnership building at community, national, regional and global levels to facilitate the implementation of the 2021 Forum's recommendations.

In addition to the FAO Director General-initiated SIDS Solutions Platform, in 2021 the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres convened the UN Food Systems Summit as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs. The Summit promoted new actions to ensure healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems. FAO is supportive of this agenda globally, for example, in the Pacific the Organization works with countries to develop and implement national Food Systems Pathways. The results so far are uneven with some countries progressing while others are left behind. There is therefore a critical need to promote information sharing and partnerships that can close the gaps between various Pacific SIDS in pursuing the agrifood systems transformation agenda.

The 2022 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum was therefore organized to collaboratively report on the partnerships developed to advance the recommendations of the 2021 global SIDS Solutions Forum, and also for partners to share national experiences and formulate concrete follow up actions that can accelerate collective progress in achieving the SDGs in Pacific SIDS.

Opening ceremony



Qu Dongyu
Director-General of the Food
and Agriculture Organization of
the United Nations (FAO)

The 2022 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum was officially opened with welcoming remarks from FAO Director-General Dr Qu Dongyu. In his remarks, Dr Dongyu reassured Member States of FAO's commitment to the region to work with Pacific SIDS to meet the SDGs. He also noted that it is often during times of crisis and the sense of urgency to act that spur innovation, which was evident throughout the forum with many inspiring stories of innovation from across the region.

The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 will guide our work over the next decade. Together with all FAO members, partners and stakeholders, to achieve our common goal of the 4 Betters: Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life for all.



H.E. Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa
Prime Minister of Samoa

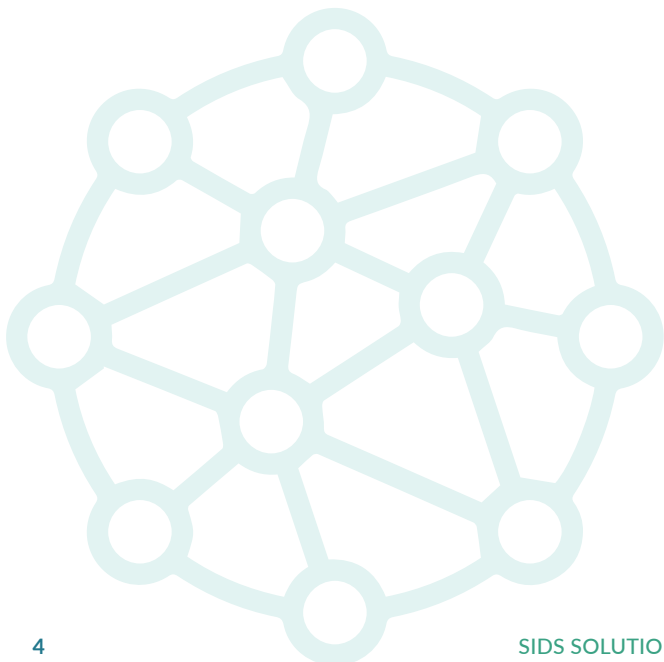
Honorable Prime Minister Fiamē Naomi Mataaafa provided the keynote address, detailing some of the challenges that Pacific SIDS face under the COVID-19 pandemic and now the five F crisis. The Prime Minister issued a call to accelerate actions to address persistent challenges in the region, noting.

There is urgency for small island states to move forward with transformative food system approaches including government support towards building sustainable, resilient, and inclusive agrifood systems that fit our respective contexts.



H.E. Dr Walton Webson
Chair of AOSIS, HE Ambassador of
Antigua and Barbuda

The Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, (AOSIS), H.E. Ambassador Webson sent an encouraging message to promote sustainable food systems and combat all forms of malnutrition and for agencies like FAO to help ensure SIDS keep up with the pace of innovation based on the needs and experiences of their people, with lessons learned from the region and within SIDS around the world.



Impact of COVID-19 pandemic and five F (food, feed, fuel, fertilizer and finance) crisis on agrifood systems in the Pacific



Agrifood systems in the Pacific have been negatively impacted over the last few years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, climate change impacts, and the five F crisis. As a result of the latter, most countries have experienced large increases in the price of food, fuel, and agricultural inputs and equipment. Countries have responded by accelerating the implementation of their agrifood system pathway transformations and national development plans. Local production and import substitution have been high on the agenda for most countries as well as enhancing market access and building local production capacity. The agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors are all vital to agrifood systems transformation agendas. Consumption of healthy foods continues to be a high priority for most countries. Multi-sectoral planning, coordination, and programming are essential to ensure that there is a holistic approach to agrifood system transformation.

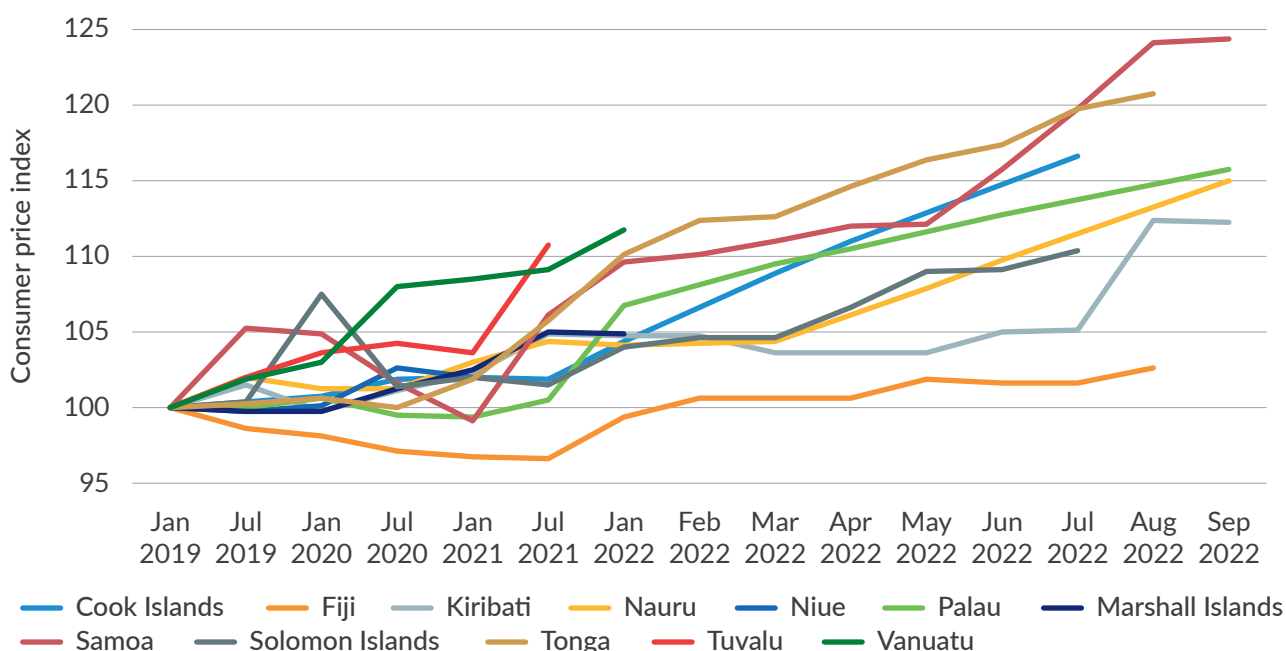
Data analysis



Xiangjun Yao
Subregional Coordinator for
the Pacific Islands, FAO

Ms. Xiangjun Yao, FAO Subregional Coordinator for the Pacific, put the evolving situation into perspective by presenting the regional impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the five F crisis on agrifood systems in the Pacific using data collected from around the region by FAO and WFP under the UN Joint Programme Fund to support countries to address the five F crisis. She noted that in many cases the region experienced significant price rises under COVID-19 pandemic, then rising to unprecedented heights since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, as evidenced by the Consumer Price Index chart below. High prices negatively affect economic stability, livelihoods, and blue and green food production. The FAO Subregional Coordinator pointed out that this has the potential to reduce food availability and access, while increasing food and nutrition insecurity. It can often drive the most vulnerable families to shift to cheaper and less healthy food. Ms. Yao urged that country specific actions are critically needed to strengthen agrifood systems transformation pathways, encouraging country-led production to enable import substitution. In the medium term, recommendations include bolstering innovation, ensuring agro-ecosystem diversity, addressing gender disparities in agriculture and developing anticipatory action programmes to alert countries of pending food shocks or crises.

FIGURE 1: Consumer price index 2019–2022 (base period adjusted)



Source: Author's elaboration.

Ministerial statements

The FAO Subregional Coordinator's presentation was followed by interventions by Ministers from across the Pacific.



Hon. Vainetutai Rose Toki-Brown
*Minister of Health, Justice,
Parliamentary Services and
Agriculture of the Cook Islands*

The Cook Islands has seen a sharp rise in the price of food, with essentials such as chicken almost doubling in price within one year. Petrol, fertilizer and animal feed prices have increased dramatically in the islands. The Minister of Health for the Cook Islands, **Honorable Vainetutai Rose Toki Brown**, shared the Cook Islands' plan to ensure food security and manage supply chain challenges with the Smart Agritech scheme to promote innovations to increase agriculture production. Minister Brown also noted that it is essential to accelerate Agrifood Systems Transformation and that partnerships and stable funding are necessary.



Hon. Elina P. Akinaga
*Secretary - Department of
Resources and Development of
the Federated States of Micronesia*

The Federated States of Micronesia Secretary for Department of Resources and Development, **Honorable Elina Akinaga**, stressed how climate hazards are projected to severely affect the agriculture sector and agrifood systems, and highlighted the limited capacity to withstand external shocks. Hon. Akinaga shared that COVID-19 pandemic had impacted her country's economy, compounded by a reduction in GDP, rapid rise in unemployment, and that the overall agrifood system was affected. She called for technical assistance and financial support that are critical to address all the five transformative change enablers under the country's agrifood systems transformation pathway; namely a research and innovation centre (such as SROS in Samoa), education and access to knowledge, as well as community-based natural resources management and enabling policies are priorities to implement her country's agrifood system transformation pathway.



Hon. Mahendra Reddy
*Minister of Agriculture, Waterways
and Environment of Fiji*

Honorable Mahendra Reddy, the Minister of Agriculture of Fiji, noted the measures taken by Fiji's Government to tackle COVID-19 pandemic and the current five F crisis including economic recovery support, job projection and unemployment assistance, and overall macroeconomic stability to ensure food security and livelihoods throughout the dual crises. He concluded on the need for more organized agriculture, strengthened extension support services, improved planning, policy formulation and enhanced capability in investment and international cooperation, whilst recognising the role of women and youth in the transformation of agrifood systems.



Hon. Ruateki Tekaiara
*Minister of Environment, Lands and
Agriculture Development of Kiribati*

Honorable Ruateki Tekaiara, Minister for Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development of Kiribati stated that COVID-19 pandemic and the five F crisis have had a significant impact on Kiribati's economy. The Honorable Minister called for scaling up commitment in agriculture and fisheries and ensuring healthy and safe food as a key focus for the government. He also pointed that assistance with data collection and policy development from donors is critical.



Hon. Crossley Tatui
*Minister for Finance and Minister
for Infrastructure of Niue*

Honorable Crossley Tatui, Minister for Finance and Infrastructure of Niue, emphasized the importance of sharing experience and solutions. He highlighted his country's significant dependency on imported foods and goods and the subsequent vulnerabilities to economic shocks. The Government of Niue implemented several measures to tackle the impact of the dual rise such as subsidising fuel prices, government benefits, COVID-19 pandemic support funds from donors and providing a wage subsidy throughout the crises. The Honorable Minister noted data and information management must be improved to allow better evidence-based policy making.



Hon. Steven Victor
*Minister of Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries, and the Environment
of Palau*

Hon. Steven Victor, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment, Palau stressed that the vulnerability of his country to climate change has been compounded by the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic and five F Crisis on the economy, the ecosystem, and natural resources. He noted that as a coping strategy the population is taking on more fishing activities, which in turn are increasing stresses on reef fish populations within a context of increased input costs. The Minister encouraged innovations in financing agriculture growth.



Hon. Laulialemalietoa Leuatea Polataivao Fosi Schmidt
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Samoa

Samoa's Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, **Honorable Laulialemalietoa Schmidt**, delivered a strong statement about the need for Pacific countries to continue sharing experiences and initiate action. Samoa's agrifood system transformation pathway identifies fourteen priority actions that will guide the country's work towards agrifood transformation, namely reduced reliance on food imports, nature-positive production, strengthened extension services and stakeholder engagement.



Hon. Augustine Maeue Auga
Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Solomon Islands

Honorable Augustine Maeue Auga, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock of the Solomon Islands noted that in the earlier COVID-19 pandemic period with borders closed, local production intensified significantly, but it could not be sustained. Minister Maeue highlighted the need to incentivise farmers to invest in their farms and younger generations to join the agrifood sector.



Hon. Lord Fohe
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forests (MAFF) of the Kingdom of Tonga

On behalf of the **Honorable Lord Fohe**, Deputy CEO of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests of the Kingdom of Tonga **Leody Vainikolo** noted that their country has had numerous setbacks in its agrifood system development due to COVID-19 pandemic, the five F Crisis and the volcanic eruption that induced a devastating tsunami in January 2022. In response, his country focused on enhancing local production of livestock, crops and fruit trees. Food aid from national and international entities was received in response to the volcano eruption. Ms. Vainikolo pointed to expanding food production, home gardens and raising education and awareness on nutrition as keys to Tonga's Agrifood Systems Transformation.



Hon. Nakou Ianatom Natuman
Minister of Agriculture, Livestock,
Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity,
Vanuatu

The Minister for Agriculture, **Honorable Nakou Natuman**, revealed three priority areas to strengthen Vanuatu's food system: leadership and governance, improved production of healthy food and awareness on healthy diets, and increased resiliency of and decreased vulnerability to natural disasters and global shocks. He encouraged participants to share their knowledge to ensure updated best practices are made available for better implementation of agrifood systems transformations.

We believe our pathway will enable us to transform our food system in ways that will build a more stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu that leaves no one behind.



Lajkit Rufus
Chief of Forestry - Ministry of
Natural Resources and Commerce
of the Republic of the
Marshall Islands

Lajkit Rufus, Chief of Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce, Republic of the Marshall Islands, encouraged dialogue on greater climate ambition as sea level rise is an imminent threat to the Marshall Islands. Rufus also noted that domestic production and import substitution is high on his country's agenda to address food security issues.



Mikaele Fatia Perez
Director - Department of Economic
Development, Natural Resources
and Environment, Tokelau

Director of EDNRE, **Mika Perez** highlighted that Tokelau is still COVID-19 pandemic free, thanks to its isolated location. However, like many Pacific countries, the Territory is not immune to the impact of the pandemic and the disruption of global supply chains linked to the war in Ukraine. He stressed that management of marine and land resources has been at the forefront of Tokelau's thinking since COVID-19 pandemic hit and the country closed its borders.



Hon. Saaga Talu Teafa
Minister for Local Government and
Agriculture of Tuvalu

The Tuvalu Minister of Agriculture, **Honorable Saaga Talu Teafa** noted Tuvalu's heavy reliance on imported food with little arable land, which only exacerbated impact of the five F crisis, with significant increases in the price of fuel, food and building materials in the country. The Ministry of Agriculture had a multipronged response to COVID-19 and the five F crisis, with the distribution of planting materials, increased awareness and training on farming innovations using wicking-based systems, food cubes and compost making, as well as a longer-term "half acre" scheme involving donating portions of land to communities for agriculture. The Honorable Minister also noted Tuvalu is currently facing severe drought, particularly in 3 northern islands, and are seeking support and assistance from FAO and donor partners where possible to provide planting materials, strengthen agrifood systems pathways, and to implement measures for the control of yellow crazy ants.

Collaboration to implement National Agrifood Systems Transformation Pathways



The session moderator, Tilafono David Hunter, CEO for the Samoa Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Samoa, set the scene by reflecting on various challenges and opportunities and the recent agrifood systems symposium. Tilafono noted that the ongoing crisis is an opportunity for transformative change in agrifood systems, namely for them to be fit-for-purpose – that is, produce sufficient and nutritious food; use natural resources optimally and in a nature-friendly way so that they are renewed; and provide sustainable livelihoods for smallholders and family farmers. This is where the UN Food Systems Summit and the process it is fostering have played a significant role. It has placed food security back at the centre of the global development agenda; and making agrifood systems more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable is at the core of FAO's new Strategic Framework.



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Sridhar Dharmapuri, FAO Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer for the Asia-Pacific Region, shared a regional perspective on advancing the agenda of the United Nations Food Systems Summit and the Asia Pacific Symposium on Agrifood Systems Transformation that took place in October 2022. The main conclusion from the symposium is that goal setting, strategic vision, and prioritization of agrifood systems transformation for many countries have been accomplished. What is now needed is technical and financial support to operationalize actions discussed at the symposium. FAO's role is to assist countries to address these elements, make their transformation pathways more actionable and focus on the "how".

FAO Nutrition and Food Systems Officer, Joseph Nyemah noted that currently, 10 of 14 countries have produced pathway documents with many still in draft form. He stressed that FAO stands ready to assist in drafting, improving and adapting pathway documents as well as turning them into action. Jaap van Hierden, the Resident Coordinator of the UN Multicountry Office in Micronesia, stressed the importance of considering non-traditional farming (hydroponics, aquaponics and aeroponics) particularly for atoll nations.

Panellists from Vanuatu, Samoa and Fiji shared the ways their national agrifood systems pathways are implemented, with respect to governance, inclusion, diversity, and equity with a focus on food policies respectively, all noting that their agrifood systems transformation challenges are immense and require partnerships and dialogue between development partners and fellow SIDS. In summation, the majority of countries know what they want to do, but they need the financial and technical support to achieve agrifood systems transformation.

Innovations and South-South and Triangular Cooperation for accelerating agrifood transformation in the Pacific



South-South Cooperation is the mutual sharing and exchange of key development solutions – knowledge, experience and good practices, policies, technology, and resources – between and among countries in the Global South. Triangular Cooperation refers to partnerships between two or more developing countries in collaboration with a third partner, typically a developed country/traditional donor, emerging economy and/or multilateral organization, to share key development solutions – knowledge, capacity, expertise, experiences and good practices, policies, technology and resources.

Progress since the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum

Angélica Jacome, Director of the Office of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) at FAO, shared information on the three SIDS Solutions dialogues that have been organized to date with high-level FAO representatives globally:

1. a presentation of the outcomes of the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum
2. an event on building agriculture resilience in SIDS
3. an event on fisheries and agriculture in SIDS

Jacome called for suggestions for 2023 dialogues. In response to the call for resource mobilization at the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum, the office of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs together with FAO commissioned six studies to support SIDS to fill the data gaps and to support SIDS to better inform their climate rationale, design adaptation measures and proposals for climate financing. FAO presented preliminary findings on four of the six studies at COP27 side events focused on trends and gaps in social protection of SIDS fisheries, cost-benefit analysis of nature-based solutions in SIDS, coastal fisheries resources under climate scenarios, and coastal adaptation challenges for SIDS. Study results will be available in 2023.

Xiangjun Yao, FAO Subregional Coordinator, Pacific Islands, highlighted FAO commitment and engagement with the Pacific Countries, such as the innovations showcased on day one of the Forum. Yao emphasised institutional partnerships with governments, academia, civil society, private sector, producer groups, innovators, and other stakeholders to work together to ensure that the SIDS Solutions Platform continues to be results-driven. Among others, together with government and the private sector, FAO promoted digitalisation in the region through the digital agrifood systems accelerator camp for innovators from across Pacific SIDS that delivered training, partnership building and start-up financial kits. Through those partnerships, FAO also provided support to value chains, innovative food production technologies and natural resource management.

Since last year's SIDS Solutions Forum, many of the interventions in the Pacific focusing on innovative technology enhancing entrepreneurship have been successfully implemented with several of the innovators expanding regionally, demonstrating clearly the cross-national applicability of many Pacific Island innovations, and calling for more intra Pacific learning and collaboration on innovation.



The innovation landscape in the Pacific SIDS

Tarek Rashed, of the Chicago-based consulting firm Civilizology, took the audience on a tour of the agribusiness landscape in the Pacific. Some key lessons learned from that research was to invest in stakeholder relationships, embrace digital readiness, create forward-thinking business plans and fully assess supply chains in the research phase of one's business. Panellists noted the importance of mitigating the various risks faced by entrepreneurs and to link research and private sector (Fiona Lynn from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) as well as the need to promote and support farmers' organisation (Afamasaga Toleafoa from PIFON). Developing adequate infrastructure and technologies to better access markets is important (Alain Simeon, Manager Information Communications Technology, – Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Forestry Fisheries and Biosecurity of Vanuatu), whereas Lefaoalii Unutoa Auelua

Fonoti (Chief Executive Officer, Samoa Ministry of Information Communications Technology) and Tom Misikea (Niue Public Service Commission) highlighted the necessity of permanent and continuous capacity building and focus on community-centred development approaches.



Reflection on successes

This session provided delegations with the opportunity to reflect and share thoughts on the innovations and field trips taken on day one of the Forum. Delegates complemented the initiatives presented and noted the similarities in issues and challenges between countries. The Permanent Secretary of Agriculture for Fiji, Dr Vinesh Kumar, noted the common challenges of an ageing population and a lack of interest of youth in farming. He was pleased to see the Tanumapua farm remedy this by using innovation and mechanisation, seeing modernizing agriculture as the way forward for Pacific SIDS. Delegates also reiterated the importance of partnerships in bringing plans and innovations to fruition, with some expressing interest in professional exchange programmes with SROS and development partner demonstration farms like SCATAP.



Pacific Innovators accelerator camp



Nine start-up enterprises, having benefited from support provided under the Pacific Innovation accelerator camp – an FAO programme for local businesses to scale up their innovative agrifood solutions, showcased their entrepreneurial achievements to date. Besides often being youth and women-led, these enterprises showed a strong social component and strong embeddedness in their communities. These innovative initiatives promote healthy foods, adding value to local products (cocoa, coffee, cosmetics), and developing farm-to-consumers direct domestic or export marketing linkages using digital technologies.

The 2022 accelerator camp graduates are as follows:

- Matareva/Tautu Farm (Martishar Jeona Mani – the Cook Islands)
- Faleasiu Ki Moana Vanilla (Elema Uhatahi – Tonga)
- Kokonagti Farms (Brigitta Fa’afiti-Lo Tam – Samoa)
- JEDOM Organic Foods (Donisiano Kelly – Solomon Islands)
- Rock Island Coffee (Kenneth Edward Green – Niue)
- Herbsfarm (Linda Keremoi-Elton – Vanuatu)
- Cyber Food (Majid Shahzad – Fiji)
- Loving Islands (Litia Marie Taukave – Fiji)
- Maua App (Ana Maria Saili – Samoa)
- My Kana App (Alvina Karan – Fiji)
- Coconut Flour by Teuabwebwe Youth Club (Tuvina Beero – Kiribati)
- Samoa Women’s Association of Growers (Mele Mauala – Samoa).



A case study of South-South and Triangular Cooperation



This session provided a case study of the FAO Capacity Development Programme intended for civil servants in Pacific SIDS. The programme consisted of e-learning and face-to-face training on the agriculture value chain including production, post-harvest, marketing and processing of agricultural produce. A total of 26 government officials from 11 Pacific SIDS countries took part in this programme administered by Kyungpook National University in the Republic of Korea. Feedback from the Pacific trainees was overwhelmingly positive, with recommendations for the programme to incorporate more facets of the value chain, including international trade, soil science and agri-technology going forward.

Sang-hoon Kim, Deputy Director-General of the Asian Pacific Affairs Bureau of the Republic of Korea in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed the country's commitment to the Pacific region, noting the upcoming inaugural Republic of Korea-Pacific Islands summit to take place in 2023.



Knowledge sharing by showcasing concrete success

Day one of the Forum started with presentations by innovators, all of whom reported successful growth and expansion of their respective agribusinesses as clear evidence of FAO's successful coordination of the implementation of the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum recommendations that were developed by Pacific leaders. The solutions of innovation expanded in many ways, for example, by reaching more people within the same countries and between countries, clearly demonstrating replicability and the need for more intra-Pacific learning and collaboration.

The afternoon comprised of site visits that exposed the visiting participants from other Pacific countries to Samoa based successes in agriculture and technology. As a result of the site visits participants identified suitable and replicable innovations for their respective countries' contexts and the relevant partnerships to bring such innovations to fruition.

Innovation I: My Kana App (Fiji/Tonga)

The first success story showcased the My Kana App innovation, a nutrition education tool developed by the Fiji Ministry of Health and the University of the South Pacific (USP). The app allows you to store personal information about diet and meals so you can visualize and track your food intake. It also provides an electronic booklet and advice on how to grow your own vegetables and make organic homemade pesticides. At the 2022 Pacific Forum, the proponents disclosed that following the 2021 global SIDS Solutions Forum, during which the App was showcased, the Government of Tonga requested FAO to facilitate a partnership that would allow the App to be replicated in Tonga as part of the Forum's recommendations. FAO responded by investing financial resources and building the relevant partnership that successfully expanded the App to Tonga.



Innovation II: Maua app e-Commerce Platform (Samoa/Vanuatu)

The second celebration of success showcased the Maua App, an e-commerce, payment and delivery platform created by SkyEye Pacific to solve SIDS ICT and development challenges with regards to access to markets and digital payments. The App was showcased at the 2021 global SIDS Solutions Forum and consequently attracted investment from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The proponents informed participants that since the 2021 Forum the app has been successfully expanded to Vanuatu, with sights set on more Pacific Island countries in the future.



Innovation III: Vanilla farming and e-Marketing (Samoa)

The success of the expansion of the Vaoala Vanilla Organic Farm innovation between the 2021 and 2022 forums was also showcased. The innovation is an offshoot of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic-related border closure in Samoa as the farm coped with the loss of its tourist clientele by going online in search for markets and revenue. Using Facebook, and creating an online shop, Vaoala Vanilla started promoting online and, importantly, partnered with Shopify to become their main agent in Samoa. This opened up significant markets and increased sales with clients and orders from Canada, Ireland, Japan, United States of America, Australia and New Zealand. Since the 2021 Forum, and drawing on the partnership building functions of the SIDS Solutions Platform, the proponent of the solution has successfully attracted several engagements. For example, FAO built and invested in a partnership between her and USP that resulted to training more than 20 farmers and equipping them with the relevant implements for vanilla farming in Samoa. IFAD also reached out to her for collaboration.



Innovation IV: JEDOM Organic Fruits/University of the South Pacific Hot Air Dryer (Solomon Islands/Samoa)

The Forum also showcased an improved model of the JEDOM Organic Fruits Limited low-cost, low maintenance hot air dryer that is fuelled by energy from the coconut shell to air dry and produce fruit and tuber chips for human consumption. Since the 2021 SIDS Solutions Forum FAO has invested financial resources that enabled University of the South Pacific (USP) to use its agroengineers to work with the Solomon Islands based innovation to improve the device from the perspective of productivity, occupational health and safety, and food safety. Several copies of the modified device were produced in Solomon Islands and are being distributed to other food producers and handlers.



Innovation V: Scientific Research Organization of Samoa (field trip 1)

Site visits began with SROS, which works to implement and support the Samoan Government's development strategy by providing the research, training, and analysis required for the country's business competitiveness and optimization of market opportunities in agrifood systems and scientific research. FAO supported SROS to obtain its International Organization for Standardization (ISO) accreditation and is currently investing in SROS to support the laboratory over a tissue culture project for Samoa's agriculture industry. The Forum's participants toured the laboratory units for food testing, production of breadfruit flour, hand sanitizer from taro, etc.

Hon Elina P. Akinaga, Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development, Federated States of Micronesia thanked the Government of Samoa for allowing the visiting Forum's participants to tour the laboratory. She noted that her government would also be happy to equally provide access to local innovation and success in her country for other Pacific governments, producer groups and entrepreneurs to decide if they want to copy them. Hon Nakou Ianatom Natuman, Vanuatu Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity specifically requested FAO to facilitate a process that will allow his Government send their civil servants to SROS for attachment learning.



Innovation VI: Samoa-China Agricultural Technical Aid Project (Field Trip 2)

The second field visit allowed participants to tour SCATAP, which was set up since 2010 and benefits from the services of 40 Chinese agricultural experts. The project has a successful demonstration farm, facilitated nine agricultural stations and developed 100 model farmers. It promotes nine agricultural technology packages, including new crop varieties, tunnel house vegetable cultivation, free range broiler production, crop-livestock-biogas recycling technology, high yield citrus production and agricultural machineries. SCATAP has provided 200 tunnel houses, 100 machineries and agricultural training for more than 10 000 farmers and officials in Samoa. SCATAP represents the ideal example of how the South-South Cooperation modality could work by spreading knowledge. Speaking on behalf of the visiting delegation, Hon Augustine Maeue Auga, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Solomon Islands thanked the governments of China and Samoa for granting them access to the facility. He noted that China should consider spreading this partnership experience to benefit other Pacific countries. Hon Elina P. Akinaga, Secretary – Department of Resources and Development, Federated States of Micronesia immediately expressed her Government’s desire to benefit from a similar partnership with China, and pointed out that a facilitation support from FAO would be appreciated.



Innovation VII: Tanumapua Farm (field trip 3)

The field visits concluded at Tanumapua Farm, a 1.1 km² commercial farm of the Ah Liki investment group, specializing in pineapples, bananas, chicken eggs and taro, with the main aim of import substitution and enhancing local production for local markets in Samoa. The farm's operation is part of a vertically integrated value chain, with on-site processing, built to international food safety standards, and retailing through its own supermarket network. Tanumapua is Samoa's largest egg producer, with the market now being fully sourced from local suppliers. Farm owner Taimalie Charlie Westerlund stated, "The three keys to success on my farm are innovation, technologies, and mechanization." Participants toured the farm's plots for banana, papaya, cocoa and pineapple production. On behalf of the visiting delegation, Hon Nakou Natuman, Vanuatu Agriculture Minister thanked the management of the Tanumapua Farm and the Government of Samoa for sharing the wonderful experience.



Addressing challenges with new tools



In addition to the unprecedented five F data collection presented on day two of the Forum, the Pacific now has two new data-driven tools at their disposal to help access financing, achieve SDGs and monitor progress over time. These are the, first of its kind, *Overview of the Situation of Nutrition and Food Security 2022* report and the multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI), both of which are described in detail below.

Pacific overview of the situation of nutrition and food security



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Joseph Nyemah, Food and Nutrition Officer for FAO in the Pacific, presented the preliminary results of the *Overview on Food Security and Nutrition in the Pacific*, produced in partnership with several UN agencies and SPC. The report highlights the key drivers and influences on food security and nutrition, such as changes in agrifood systems, climate change, natural disasters and other shocks.

Preliminary results show a high prevalence of undernourishment, whilst adult obesity rates reached worrisome levels in many countries, women being more affected than men. A high consumption rate of sugar-sweetened beverages among the population in the Pacific was also found. Some challenges remain regarding data collection and availability related to dietary intake and nutritional status of children (6 to 14), adolescent boys and girls, and women (15 to 49). Other current data gaps include actual dietary consumption (for all age groups), actual rates of micronutrient deficiency, and the cost of healthy diets, among others.

UN partners highlighted the need for prevention, comprehensive approaches given the multidimensional aspects of nutrition and underlined that the cost of inaction is far higher than the cost of action.

Alpha Bah, World Food Programme Country Director for the Pacific, stressed that the primary challenge in the Pacific Region is not access to food, but access to healthy food. Bah reiterated the need to enhance partnerships among development partners, noting it is time to move forward and look at long-term solutions such as setting an early warning system and anticipatory action in the region. Bah also noted there is the need to support recipient governments to expand social protection measures allowing for shock-responsive protection.

For the Pacific Community (SPC), Director of the Land Resource Division, Karen Mapusua reinforced that agrifood system transformation is the way forward with a systems approach, as fragmented work is not providing the solutions we need. Science should be used as a tool to better understand nutritional values and traditional knowledge cannot be ignored. It will be critical to boost production while protecting natural resources.

Dr Tomo Kanda, the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Team Coordinator for Pacific NCDs and Health, stressed that issues related to nutrition and prevention are key in addressing NCDs, however, it requires a holistic approach and response. There is a need to carefully develop and strengthen policy frameworks, including taxation on unhealthy food.

Session panellists from the Cook Islands, Kiribati and Solomon Islands shared their vision on tackling nutrition issues, by enhancing education and behaviour changes, setting up relevant guidelines and dedicated units, boosting production of nutritious food, and targeting the youth as a way forward.

Dr Sarah Burkhart of the University of the Sunshine Coast spoke further on the limitations of the overview on Food Security and Nutrition in the Pacific, particularly in terms of data collection. There is a need to contextualise relevant methods for data collection and achieve consensus on indicators, especially from an agrifood system perspective, noting the need for more data on actual consumption, and the need for standardised methods to collect data at the individual level.

As researchers and partners, we need to ensure that we work collaboratively to ensure data collected are meaningful. Unfortunately, due to the varied methods used, there is little comparability and opportunities to pool data.

Dr Burkhart stressed the need to set up mechanisms to identify, and share work on progress and planning, not waiting on publication of findings, to better use our resources and develop data sets that are representative and that add real value to our understanding of the situation regarding Food Security and Nutrition, and agrifood systems.



Creative approaches to addressing non-communicable diseases



Dr Sarah Burkhart shared with the Forum a handful of success stories from around the world in creative approaches to addressing NCDs. These included policy action, such as new food labelling requirements in Brazil for contents such as added salt, sugar, and high saturated fat, as well as restricting marketing of unhealthy food to children, as is done in Chile. Secondly, effective communications plans are those that embrace both traditional and social media for nutrition education. Apps and games are a relatively new way of getting out such messages. Thirdly, school feeding programmes can support local economies and provide a crucial social safety net, ensuring school children receive at least one healthy meal per day. And finally, new technologies can be used to improve access to food and reduce food waste, citing the Canada-based FlashFood app, which enables users to purchase nearly expired food at discounted prices, which in the aggregate saves millions of dollars and prevents tons of food from going to waste.

Session panelists from Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu then had a chance to comment on the applicability of such approaches in their respective countries and progress on similar initiatives to date. Panelists noted the importance of ensuring communications reach parents, as they are the food providers within the household, as well as the critical role that technology plays in disseminating messages, especially in countries with numerous outlying islands.

Tonga Health Chief Executive Officer, Siale Akauola also shared with the Forum that many of these concepts, such as food labelling and school food policies are not new and already part of the Pacific Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action, a Pacific Community initiative, thus reminding the Forum that reinforcement and improvement of existing policy is just as important as “new” solutions. Many echoed the sentiment of Dr Burkhart that creative solutions have all been, and must be, developed from multisectoral collaboration.

There is a need to provide easier guidelines to follow, not just for us in the health department but also whom will be implementing the programmes in schools to assist in addressing non-communicable diseases.

says Nemias Bainvalu from the Ministry of Health and Human Services of Solomon Islands.

Role of the multi-dimensional vulnerability index as an innovative solution to SIDS development challenges



The 2022 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum successfully promoted broad understanding and application of the multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI). UN Resident Coordinator for Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau Dr Simona Marinescu provided an update to the Forum on the MVI and access to financing for SIDS. Developed specifically for SIDS, the MVI uses numerous economic, environmental and structural indicators to measure a country's vulnerability and is a vital tool to help SIDS gain access to the concessional financing that they need to survive the effects of climate change and other global shocks. The MVI is meant to track how vulnerability is affecting countries' development trajectories and to provide an objective rather than a political assessment of vulnerability.

In 2021, MVI officially advanced through a resolution at the 76th UN General Assembly with a mandate to create an index by 2022 that will be added to gross national income (GNI) per capita to better allow SIDS to access resources based on their needs, which they previously had difficulty accessing due to stringent GNI criteria. A second UNGA 76 Resolution universalized the MVI concept beyond SIDS. Work on the MVI began here in the Pacific, utilizing the SAMOA Pathway framework as a foundation.

Pilot MVI data showed that SIDS represent the biggest share of most vulnerable countries across the world in all dimensions. In the economic dimension, 80 percent of the top 30 most vulnerable countries are SIDS, 83 percent in the structural development dimension, and 77 percent in the environmental dimension. Data also showed there is a clear correlation between higher MVI and lower progress towards the SDGs.

The MVI is being finalized with clear indicators, methodology and purpose and the aim is for it to be ready for Member States by 2023. Dr Marinescu finished by sharing how the MVI can be linked to loss and damage funds arising from COP27. Sai Navoti, Chief of the SIDS Unit for UNDESA added his perspective on MVI progress from the MVI High-Level Panel in New York, noting the final MVI product will have a vulnerability and resilience component.

Panelists, Honorable Crossley Tatui, Minister of Finance for Niue and Peseta Noumea Simi, Chief Executive Officer of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for Samoa, were strong supporters of the MVI noting that until this intervention, development support eligibility criteria, based on GNI, did not reflect SIDS' unique challenges and vulnerabilities. Minister Tatui noted the MVI should be simple to use and understand while Peseta also noted the Pacific must play a key role in driving advocacy of MVI and its adoption for use as a tool to not only gain further access to finance, but to also monitor vulnerabilities over time.

I am pleased to say that Samoa has walked the talk, especially this year. We have been able to promote and advocate the work of the MVI through many regional meetings.

says Peseta Noumea Simi, Chief Executive Officer, Samoa Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), Samoa.

Environment/climate finance to support agrifood systems transformation in the context of the climate change, COVID-19 pandemic and five F's (food, feed, fuel, fertilizer and finance)



As the title suggests, this session aimed at promoting the need for climate finance planning to demonstrate more sensitivity to agrifood systems. The session therefore began with a video from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) describing the impact COVID-19 pandemic and the five F crisis has had on the achievement of SDGs. The video ended with a call to:

1. end armed conflicts and embark on a path of diplomacy and peace
2. adopt low-carbon, resilient and inclusive development pathways
3. transform the international financial and debt architecture and
4. invest in data.

Next, Angélica María Jácome Daza, Office of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), delivered the keynote address for the session on behalf of FAO Deputy Director-General Maria Helena Semedo. The address focused on key takeaways from the recent COP27, including that transformation of agrifood systems is at the core of climate solutions and the need to transform agrifood systems to become more sustainable, resilient,

efficient and low-emission. Semedo congratulated the Pacific SIDS for leading the Loss and Damage funding arrangements at COP27, emphasizing that it is key that countries strengthen loss and damage information and continue advocacy for climate finance, including advocating for delivery on the commitments to double Adaptation Finance and to live up to the USD 100 billion per year pledge to help developing countries implement the Paris Agreement.

The speaker also shared that the eighth cycle of GEF (GEF-8) has just been launched and, for the first time in GEF's history, there is a programme dedicated to SIDS – the Blue and Green Islands Integrated Program. She reminded UN representatives and Member States that there is need for synergy across GEF, GCF and other climate finance windows and that FAO stands ready to support.

Dr Dori Patay of the George Institute for Global Health shared preliminary results of the study “Sustainable agrifood system transformation in Pacific Island countries in the nexus of agriculture, climate change and healthy diets,” which discussed a number of trade-offs for transformation in different agrifood system functions. She called on decision makers to ensure climate financing is supporting agrifood systems more broadly and not only environmental impacts. Dr Patay urged the transformation of agrifood systems needs to be comprehensive and simultaneous in all its functions. This requires tight multisectoral collaboration between policy sectors, supported by donor funding schemes that are designed to facilitate cooperation between government agencies.

Vaeno Vigulu, Permanent Secretary for Forestry and Research, Solomon Islands, Ministry of Forests and Research intervened by arguing despite the contribution of forests to food security, nutrition, community health, energy, employment and in tackling climate change being recognized at international, national and local levels, namely in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, there is a tendency to underestimate their role. Vigulu called for non-wood forest products to be recognized, and their status be elevated, to ensure their role is properly accounted for in agrifood systems transformation.

Raushan Kumar, FAO Forestry Officer for the Pacific, and Lianchawii Chhakchhuak, FAO Technical Advisor – GEF, presented on “Opportunities for unlocking environmental and climate finance in the Pacific SIDS.” In the eighth cycle of Global Environment Facility (GEF-8), USD 5.33 billion was pledged by donor nations, the highest replenishment so far. Countries can access GEF resources through the focal areas of biodiversity, land degradation, climate change mitigation, international waters, chemicals and waste, and climate change adaptation, or integrated programmes that combine several focal areas, such as the Blue and Green Islands programme. In GEF-8, there is an increase in Systems of Transparent Allocation of Resources and Least Developed Countries Fund allocation for Pacific SIDS. FAO has prepared a number of technical concept notes to support countries to access GEF8 and is prepared to assist with developing full proposals.

Session panelists from Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu emphasized the need for addressing silos and adopting integrated approaches. Accessing development financing requires collaboration across government ministries and partner organizations, which necessitates strong coordination mechanisms.



Partnerships for agrifood systems transformation



The second part of the session focused on developing partnerships for agrifood systems transformation and how governments can create enabling environments.

Temarama Anguna, Secretary of Agriculture, for the Cook Islands, shared that governments' role is the provision of infrastructure, security, water, and health services. Governments should also provide an enabling environment for access to markets, finance and capacity building opportunities, and most importantly, establishing and enabling partnerships between the private sector, civil society organizations and farming cooperatives. What is most needed is equipment, resources, technical assistance, funding, and access to innovation. As SIDS we need to learn from each other and stand as one.

Dr Vinesh Kumar, the Permanent Secretary of Agriculture in Fiji added that SIDS have unique challenges, and stressed the need to work together, noting the need for agreements among SIDS to have collective voice and to set common standards. For Fiji, country-level needs would also include mechanization, organic alternatives to chemical farming, retention of experts, and building capacity of human capital.

Leroy Tatui from the Niue Ministry of Health noted that health has a direct link to all other sectors, and a society-wide approach is needed, thus necessitating policy coherence and engagement across the Pacific.

For a donor partner perspective, Chinese Ambassador to Samoa, H.E. Chao Xiaoliang, noted South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is a key delivery modality to catalyze agricultural development, food security, rural development, poverty reduction and nutrition.

The session continued with WFP's Country Director for the Pacific, Alpha Bah, offering insights on the importance of SDG 17 – Partnering for the Goals. Tackling food security and malnutrition requires strong public-private partnerships. For example, WFP has tools to do remote monitoring to identify needs of the poor, but this needs very close partnerships with governments, private sector, other UN agencies, and civil society. One key area that is critical in such partnerships is creating an environment that allows private business to flourish, otherwise businesses will be dependent on seed money and continued funding in perpetuity.

Chair for the session Hon Laualiemalietoa Schmidt, Minister of Agriculture for Samoa, wrapped up the session with the following points to enable all actors to play their role in transforming agrifood systems while bringing about social and environmental impacts:

- Collaboration of all stakeholders, from private sector, to governments, banks, researchers, academia and civil society;
- Women's economic empowerment – integrating gender-sensitive and transformative approaches into all multi-stakeholder programming;
- Strengthen family farmers, the food providers to the world (80 percent of food supply);
- Inclusive digitalization – make technology accessible and provide training;
- Strengthen public policies to enable and entice the private sector to transform agrifood systems in an inclusive way, while protecting consumers;
- Investment in agrifood system transformation, and de-risking of such investments.



Closing and way forward



The Forum ended with session chairs from the previous three days summarizing key statements and recommendations for the way forward. Overall, the field trips which exposed participants to concrete successes, for example, research, technology, agribusiness, etc. for agrifood systems transformation was a major discovery that excited participants and spurred immediate actions requesting FAO and partners to invest in the facilitation of knowledge sharing.

Key recommendations included:

- More intra Pacific learning, collaboration on innovation and collective knowledge sharing;
- Multisectoral collaboration between policy sectors, supported by donor funding schemes that are designed to facilitate cooperation between government agencies;
- Increased investment to facilitate the upscaling of solutions;
- Examining existing policy and obligations for improvement and enforcement, as many solutions are not “new”;
- Increased South-South and Triangular Cooperation;
- The resounding call for increased local production and import substitution;
- The importance of harnessing technology and mechanization;
- Improved data collection and regional standardization related to diet and other socioeconomic indicators;
- Continued advocacy for the use of MVI and climate finance;
- Urgent need for action.



The three-day Forum officially closed with parting remarks from the co-hosts of the forum. Hon. La'aulialemalietoa Schmidt, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, noted that.

Agrifood Systems are awakening our Pacific Island countries to the fact that we must work together to transform the way we produce, consume and really think about food. Since food systems can unite us as communities and people, it can also bring us together around finding workable solutions.



Jong-Jin Kim, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific officially closed the Forum by noting that.

Although we are experiencing crisis, this is an opportunity for long-term, transformative change. During the three days of the forum we have heard many inspiring stories of how innovations can provide solutions to difficult problems and help transform people's lives for the better and build resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.





Further information about the Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum, including its speakers, recordings and useful links, can be found at www.fao.org/sids/resources/events/pacific-sids-solutions

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