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PAPP
Pacific Agriculture Policy Project



Agricultural Policy, Research and Extension – Awareness Workshop (Tonga)

Concept Note

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Pacific Agriculture Policy Project

1. Context

In contrast to the lack of visibility accorded to Tonga's Agriculture sector in mainstream media, the Tongan economy attributes approximately 23% of its annual GDP¹ to the sector with over 60% of its population involved to some extent in farming or agriculture based activities.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in its promotion of country-level policy engagement, identifies several factors as contributing to stagnant growth of Tonga's Agriculture sector (between 2005 and 2012) which included outmigration of rural populations and an ageing farmer population.

The Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan (TASP), presents the vision and priorities of the sector to contribute to Tonga's economic growth and sustained food security in light of changing world economic factors, and climate change. The TASP informs policy dialogue amongst a range of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. The TASP will also be the focus of donor discussions during a roundtable coordinated by Tonga's Ministry of Finance in July, 2016.

Media as a significant stakeholder group in policy engagement amongst key public and private stakeholders, is undervalued. In consultation with the Pacific Islands News Association, it was determined that there has been no previous capacity building of media in either Tonga or the Pacific region, to either access information available on agriculture policy or to effectively report on the sector.

In Communications for Development, Media has the potential to promote (as well as attract) development aid and the impacts of development assistance, to empower citizens at the community level such as farmers to effectively contribute to policy dialogue, to coordinate and support information dissemination by communications professionals and development partners, and to support implementation of development assistance by making information on this more accessible through to the grassroots level.

The establishment of the first online repository for agriculture policy in the Pacific, the Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs) for each of the 15 Pacific ACP countries by the Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP) is a key mechanism warranting more effective exchange of information and national outreach on agricultural policy.

¹ UN Food and Agriculture Organisation



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Workshop Rationale

With information on regional and national agriculture policy (and other regulatory documents and information on the sector) now available in a central repository, it is important to ensure there are sufficient outreach activities in place to support the dissemination of information through this mechanism, and to ensure there is sufficient awareness of its existence.

The primary target audience of the awareness workshop in Tonga is Media (both traditional and new media stakeholders). The workshop, in order to address gaps in linkages between the Agriculture sector and other sectors such as Health, Tourism, Environment, Finance, Trade and the Private sector, will also involve representation by communications staff from relevant Government Ministries, the Private Sector, NGOs and Civil Society.

Presentations throughout the two day workshop will include representation from regional media (in partnership with the Pacific Islands News Association), EU (to establish the setting for broader policy engagement beyond the national level, in line with priorities under the intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme and the funding support for PAPP), the donor community and success stories promoting new media (such as social media) to disseminate agricultural policy information to a broader audience including Tongan and Pacific island nationals in the diaspora². Engaging with Tongans in the diaspora is particularly relevant given that the economy's structural composition is still highly dependent on remittances.

The workshop will establish Media's role in both dissemination and access to policy information, as well as to support agricultural extension.

Through interactive discussion, there is potential to foster a more informed and proactive Media as well as Government communications personnel, to promote the effective sharing of information across public-private lines of communication.

2. Objectives

- Foster a more effective understanding of Agricultural policy and its interrelationship with other related sectors including Health, Environment, Finance, Tourism and Information/Communications arms of Government.
- Build broader awareness of the intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme and links between the Pacific and the Caribbean.
- Develop understanding and access to regional Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs).
- Develop understanding of the Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan (TASP) and funding priorities to be discussed during the Agriculture Sector donor roundtable.

3. Targeted participation

² PACMAS State of Media and Communication Report 2013 identifies strong transnational relationships across the region, as well as with Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the US.



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- Media
- Youth
- Communications personnel from Government – Fisheries, Health, Environment, Finance, Information/Communications
- Private Sector and Civil Society groups in Tonga.

4. Outputs

- At least two regional media products (editorial or feature) based on the APBs to be coordinated by PINA
- At least four national media products based on the APB's (or capacity building on access to Agriculture policy information)
- Press Conference on donor roundtable sessions relevant to Agriculture/Fisheries to be hosted by MAFFF/Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MoFNP)
- At least two national features on donor roundtable and TASP
- At least one national feature targeted at farmers
- At least two online based media products (blog entries based on awareness workshop and/or APBs, donor roundtable)
- Needs analysis by media as to initiatives that might further strength agriculture information products and outreach

5. Expected Outcomes (measures of success)

Post-workshop

- Ongoing collaborative reporting by media on agricultural policy in liaison with Government arms
- Effective internal collaboration across Government Ministries to support reporting relevant to Agriculture policy (particularly relating to food security/climate change)
- Proactive media reporting on APBs, TASP and roundtable events following capacity building
- Recognition by national media of significance of digital media/online platforms to furthering reach particularly to diaspora communities
- Over 50% attendance of all media invited
- An initial plan – that draws in existing and future resources - that will push the Expected Outcomes post launch

Post-Tonga Agriculture Policy Bank launch

- Strong link between Tonga's APB and MAFF website
- Increase in traffic to Tonga's APB and website
- Identification of resources for management of the APB, website and outreach



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6. Venue/Dates

18-19 July, 2016: Davina House, Nuku'alofa Tonga.

7. Resourcing

All expenses relating to the Awareness Workshop are to be covered under the existing Financing Agreement between SPC-PAPP and the Ministry of Agriculture & Food, Forestry and Fisheries, Tonga

8. Post-workshop evaluation

PAPP post-event tools for monitoring and evaluation, with the addition of the following (if not included):

- * Number of media outputs (to be correlated and significant quotes noted and filed)
- * Survey of diaspora communities (three months after training)
- * Review of impact of media products on farmers/farming communities (to determine effectiveness of extension training)