
AGRICULTURAL POLICY, RESEARCH &
EXTENSION AWARENESS WORKSHOP

**REINFORCING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS IN
TONGA'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR**

18 - 19 • JULY • 2016
NUKU'ALOFA • TONGA



GOVERNMENT OF TONGA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD,
FORESTS AND FISHERIES



EUROPEAN UNION



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique



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Coordinated by:

European Union [EU] supported Intra-ACP Pacific Agriculture Policy Project [PAPP], implemented by the Pacific Community [SPC] in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fisheries [Tonga] and the Pacific Islands News Association [PINA].



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Agricultural Policy Programme

PAPP

Pacific Agriculture Policy Project



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INTRODUCTION

With more than 60%¹ of Tonga's population involved to some extent in farming or agriculture based activities and Tonga's economy attributing approximately 23% of its annual GDP to the sector, there is a contrasting lack of visibility accorded to agriculture in mainstream media.

The Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan [TASP] informs policy dialogue amongst a range of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. Media as a significant stakeholder group in policy engagement 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.

With information on regional and national agriculture policy (and other regulatory documents and information on the sector) now available in a central repository [the Pacific Agricultural Policy Banks], 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 Agricultural Policy, Research and Extension Awareness workshop for Tonga was a two day event, held at Davina House in Nuku'alofa, Tonga from 18-19 July, 2016.

The primary target audience of the awareness workshop was Media, both traditional and new media stakeholders. In order to address gaps in links between the Agriculture sector and other sectors such as Health, Tourism, Environment, Finance, Trade and the Private sector, it also involved representation by communications focal points from relevant ministries, the private sector, Non State Actors [NSAs] and civil society.

Presentations throughout the two day workshop included those by regional media (in partnership with the Pacific Islands News Association), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation [CTA] to establish the setting for broader policy engagement beyond the national level, in line with priorities under the intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme, the donor community and success stories promoting new media to disseminate agricultural policy information to a broader audience including Tongan and Pacific Island nationals in the diaspora.

Engaging with Tongans in the diaspora is particularly relevant given that the economy's structural composition is still highly dependent on remittances.

The 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. It is in this regard, and the backdrop of a remittance dependent economy, that Tongans in diaspora were chosen as a significant target audience for media and communications on agriculture, and with the development of ICTs, capitalising on new media to ensure that these communities in diaspora remain informed on development opportunities and challenges in Tonga.

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

Interactive discussions during the two day event had 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.

¹ UN Food and Agriculture Organisation

The workshop was also the precursor to several other significant events held in Tonga during the week of 18-22 July, 2016. These included:

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	DETAILS
18-19 July 2016	Agricultural Policy, Research and Extension Awareness Workshop	Davina House, Nuku'alofa	Coordinated by PAPP in partnership with Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), MAFFF.
20 July 2016	Agriculture and Fisheries Roundtable	Fa'onelua House, Nuku'alofa	Sector specific donor discussions focused on Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan (TASP) and Tonga Fisheries Sector Plan (TFSP). Event support and advice by SPC Intra-ACP PAPP in partnership with World Bank
21 July 2016	Government of Tonga Development Partners' Forum	Fa'onelua House, Nuku'alofa	Bi-annual event hosted by Ministry of Finance and National Planning. SPC-Intra-ACP PAPP technical support provided in facilitating inclusion of Agriculture in agenda
22 July 2016	Handover of Climate Resilient Crop varieties	Waterfront Hotel, Tonga	SPC-Intra ACP PAPP supported work under CePaCT in the development of climate resilient crop varieties to be handed over to the Government of Tonga
22 July 2016	Tonga Agriculture Policy Bank launch	Davina House, Nuku'alofa	High level event to be attended by members of the Tongan Royal family, Prime Minister and Government Ministers, development partners



MEET THE WORKSHOP PRESENTERS



**MS SALOME TUKUAFU
(WORKSHOP FACILITATOR)**

Information and Communications Management Officer, SPC.

Salome is an Information and Communications Management Officer with the Pacific Community (SPC)'s Land Resources Division (LRD). SPC LRD provides essential core services to SPC member countries and territories. The division's expertise is evident in the delivery of technical support, training and knowledge sharing and advice in areas such as conservation and use of plant genetic resources; agriculture and forestry statistics; animal health and production; plant protection and production; research and extension; land management and soil sciences; biosecurity and trade; and forestry.



MS CHERYL THOMAS

Policy Research Officer, Pacific Agriculture Policy Project, SPC.

Cheryl is the Policy Research Officer for the European Union-supported Intra-ACP Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP), being implemented by the Land Resources Division of the Pacific Community (SPC). PAPP focusses on strengthening policy capacity, knowledge management, and farmer-market linkages, with the overall aim of addressing the development needs of smallholder agriculture and eradicating poverty in the region.



MR GIBSON SUSUMU

Participatory Extension Specialist, SPC.

Gibson is the SPC Participatory Extension Specialist. Gibson oversees the Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS) which was established at the first Pacific Extension summit convened by SPC in 2005 in the Kingdom of Tonga. Supported by the EU Intra-ACP Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP), USAID, IFPRI and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), PIRAS provides advocacy and leadership on research and extension to meet sustainable livelihoods needs for PICTs.





MR SAMSON VILVIL FARE

Project Coordinator, Intra-ACP Agricultural Policy Programme Lead, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation [CTA].

Samson is an Associate Programme Coordinator and leader of the Global component of the Intra - ACP Agricultural Policy Programme [Intra - ACP APP] based with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation [ACP - EU Cotonou Agreement] based in the Netherlands. Samson, together with the Intra -ACP APP team ensures the exchanges in various areas of the programme between the Caribbean and the Pacific and to some extent the ACP African regions. The global component of the Intra-ACP APP works closely with both regions in providing administrative and technical support in the areas of Policy, Agribusiness and Markets, Science and Technology and Knowledge Management and Communication. Overall, the Intra-ACP APP ensures that both regions are exposed to a wide range of recent international best practices in agriculture in the ACP and elsewhere.



MS MAKERETA KOMAI

PACNews Editor, Pacific Island News Association [PINA].

Makereta is the editor for Pacnews, a regional news service provided by the Pacific Islands News Association [PINA]. PINA is the premier regional organisation representing the interests of media professionals in the Pacific region. It links radio, television, newspapers, magazines, online services, national associations and journalism schools in 23 Pacific Islands.



MS ELIZABETH LAVULO

Creative Producer and Owner, TheWhatitDo.Com [TWID].

Elizabeth is the Creative Producer and Owner of **TheWhatitDo.com** [TWID] Media platform. TWID has successfully embraced new media including social media and blogging, to create an online community connecting the Pacific with Hollywood. TWID, operating out of Los Angeles, California has substantial reach across Pacific Island communities in diaspora.



RATIONALE

The workshop concept was developed to foster a more effective understanding of agricultural policy and its interrelationship with other sectors including Health, Environment, Finance, Tourism and Information/ Communications arms of Government. Broader awareness of the intra-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme (APP) and links between the Pacific and the Caribbean was fostered. Participants were assisted to develop an understanding of and access to regional Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs) and the Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan (TASP), with some focus on funding priorities to be discussed during the Agriculture Sector donor roundtable.

National media recognition of the significance of digital media/online platforms is to further the information reach, particularly to diaspora communities. An initial plan was discussed that draws in existing and future resources to push the expected post launch outcomes.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the workshop included ongoing collaborative reporting by media on the Agriculture sector, with acknowledgment of its links to other sectors in light of food security and climate change. The workshop agenda also looked towards fostering a broader recognition by national media as well as public-private stakeholders, of the significance of digital media/online platforms not only in knowledge sharing but in supporting outreach and advocacy to ensure accessibility at the grassroots level, as well as throughout Tongan communities in diaspora. Key immediate outcomes anticipated included the formation of informal communities of practice to drive more effective partnerships and linkages across all sectors in the public-private dichotomy.



WORKSHOP OPENING

The first day of the workshop began with registration of participants. Following the arrival of Chief Guests, the media, project partners and regional participants, the formal agenda was preceded by an official opening by the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga, Siaosi Sovaleni.

The workshop was attended by high level representation from the Government of Tonga as well as a member of the Tongan Royal family, the Honourable Fatafehi 'o Lapaha Tuita Filipe who was also a participant at the workshop, representing the Prime Minister's Office.



WELCOME BY MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, FORESTRY & FISHERIES

Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Agriculture, Dr Viliami Kami acknowledged the strong partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries (MAFFF) and SPC through its Land Resources Division in the Welcoming Address. He gave an overview of activities in the week ahead and recognized that Tonga was to launch its new Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan (TASP) 2016-2020.





KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF TONGA, HONOURABLE SIAOSI SOVALENI

Tonga's Deputy Prime Minister, the Honourable Siaosi Sovaleni highlighted the significance of ICT and technology impacts on information and communications in the Keynote Address. He also noted the important linkages between the Agriculture sector and other significant sectors such as Environment (particularly in relation to climate change and disaster preparedness and resilience) and Health in light of the recent Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) summit hosted by SPC in Tonga, as well as the launch of SPC's publication titled 'Vulnerability of Pacific Agriculture and Forestry to Climate Change'.

The Deputy Prime Minister acknowledge the support of SPC and particularly the Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP) in the collaborative approach taken in developing the workshop agenda to include representation from both public and private sector and most importantly, with a focus on media.



VOTE OF THANKS ON BEHALF OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

The workshop facilitator reiterated the Deputy Prime Minister's appreciation of the significance of the linkages between the Agriculture sector and other key sectors such as Environment, Health and Tourism. She acknowledged the significant support of the Government of Tonga through MAFFF, the presence of Government communications stakeholders from across various interrelated sectors, private sector and non-state actors (NSAs) and especially Samoan media, who were the primary stakeholder group for the awareness training.

The workshop was also acknowledged as setting the tone for a series of significant events taking place that week including the handover of resilient crop varieties by SPC's Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT), a sector specific donor roundtable facilitated by SPC PAPP and the launch of both the Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan and Tonga's own Agriculture Policy Bank.



CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT & WORKSHOP FACILITATION

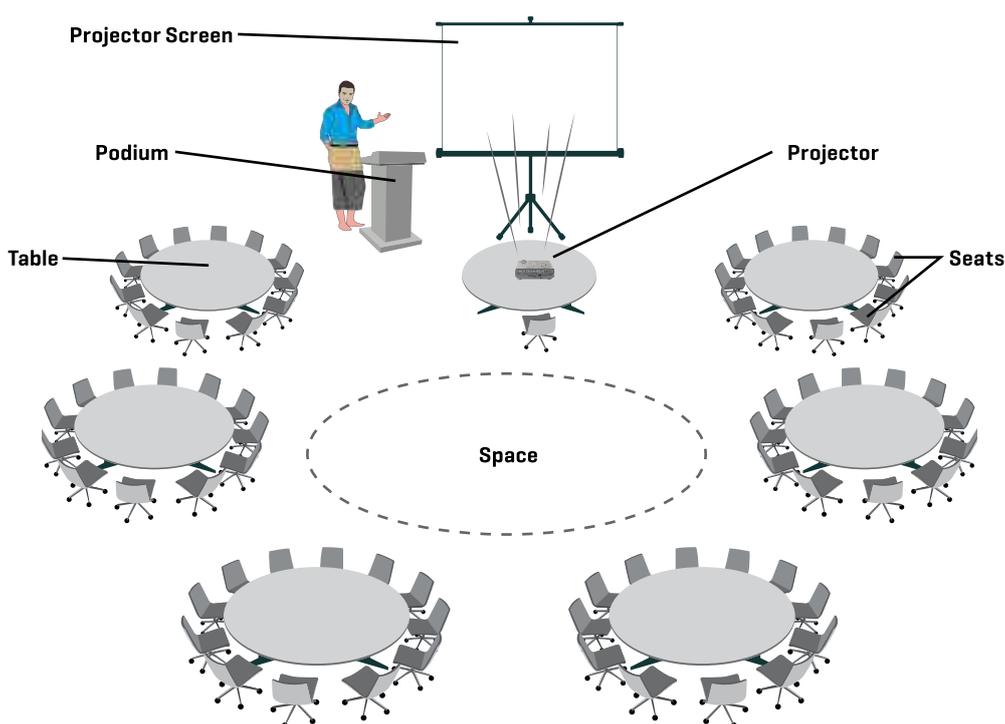
The workshop was facilitated through a blended agenda combining presentations, structured breakout sessions, brainstorming activities, group presentations and a field visit.

In determining the agenda and developing the concept for the workshop, the facilitator consulted a range of key stakeholders following initial consultations which were conducted with Pacific media personnel at the fourth Pacific Media Summit (PMS) held in Palau in March 2016. A presentation to media in Palau and feedback from regional media identified the main gaps in media support for the Agriculture sector.

There was little understanding of 'agricultural policy' despite widespread interest by media when they gained an awareness of the contribution the sector makes to the overall Pacific development agenda and GDP. Two major outcomes of SPC PAPP presence at the fourth PMS were the establishment of an informal working relationship with the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) as the leading regional media body, and the establishment of a working relationship between SPC PAPP and national media associations (NMAs) across the Pacific ACP countries in which PAPP operates.

No previous training had been conducted for national media in partnership with PINA on awareness of agricultural policy. This was evident in the relatively low number of media products and limited visibility on the impacts of PAPP work in the region prior to 2016, and these findings informed the planning process towards stronger advocacy and outreach for the Pacific Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs).

The following illustration is a clear depiction of the open space setup, with round tables structured around a central space and frontal presentation, to encourage interaction and discussion.



DETERMINING PARTICIPANT LIST

The workshop primary audience was Tongan media, but also targeted youth, communications personnel from government, private sector and civil society groups.

To effectively engage participants, the facilitator involved then CEO Agriculture, Mrs Losaline Maasi in identifying relevant stakeholder groups for the workshop. Through a series of phone, email and face-to-face meetings, it was determined that the following Government stakeholder groups (particularly those with existing linkages to MAFFF, SPC-PAPP or its partners), non-state actors and private sector organisations would need to be invited: Health, Environment, Information/Communications, Tourism, Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Office, Internal Affairs (Gender), Tonga National Youth Council, MORDI Trust, Nishi Trading and Growers' Federation (GroFED).

A meeting with PINA following PMS in Palau was essential in establishing agreement on the objectives of the media training and, from capacity gaps identified by PINA, to address weak linkages between public-private stakeholders (particularly public) and media, as well as to encourage media reporting at the national level to align more effectively with regional/global perspectives on development.

PINA was also consulted to confirm that all significant national media stakeholder groups were included in the invitations being sent out.

Media kits contained key visibility and awareness material, shared knowledge on navigating the policy banks as well as key networks such as PIRAS and the quarterly Pacific Agriculture Policy Digest

DEVELOPING THE AGENDA

Varying communications capacity levels as well as the diversity of the group and existing perceptions of the Agriculture sector were taken into account when developing the agenda. A blended agenda was planned to provide for frontal sessions and breakout groups.

FACILITATION METHODS

Workshop tools prepared included media kits, presentation slides and multi-media, and other visibility materials.

Methods used to conduct the workshop effectively included organising appropriate spaces, using open space technology to allow presentation and discussion of the central issue with access to information, and collaborative meeting spaces set up for team discussion. There were also breakout sessions, brainstorming and deciding on priorities, group presentations and open forum discussions involving Q&A. A field visit was scheduled as a case study.

Breakout groups participated in each of the four scheduled breakout sessions. The meeting room was set up as an interactive platform so each specific issue could be broken down and presented (using host and scribe) to facilitate brainstorming from each group to be shared across all groups and to facilitate discussion and agreement on issues and solutions, which are shared in the summary of discussions in this report.

Within the brainstorming sessions, all ideas were treated equally and the top three prioritized by ranking them through group voting. The facilitator's role in these sessions was in keeping the discussion directed towards the objective.



KNOWLEDGE CAPTURE AND SHARING TECHNIQUES:

Knowledge was captured through the use of video recording as well as paper based notes to assist with transcription into a report on proceedings and outcomes. To enhance interest by participants and encourage innovation during discussions, the facilitator chose cardboard cutouts as puzzle pieces in the first discussion session, to illustrate to the various groups the clear linkages between their respective discussion points in line with the objectives at hand.

Social media was used as an ICT based tool for both communication and for knowledge capture.



SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

As an important ICT based tool for knowledge capture and dissemination as well as to promote visibility of the series of events in Tonga that week, the social media campaign was very effective.

All participants including media and relevant stakeholders and social media influencers in the region were prompted to participate in the campaign in the build up to the workshop.

Significantly positive results from the campaign included **over 1 million potential impressions with a reach of over 80,000 users** from across the world with demographics showing engagement from the Pacific, the United States and Europe. This meant that a significant number of social media users beyond Tonga had effectively engaged with events in Tonga hosted by PAPP throughout the week. In monitoring engagement, it was noted that there was more than double the conversion rate with at least two retweets for every organic tweet.

The following is a snapshot of the social media analytics report for **#AgTonga**:



TWEETREACH SNAPSHOT FOR #AgTonga

ESTIMATED REACH

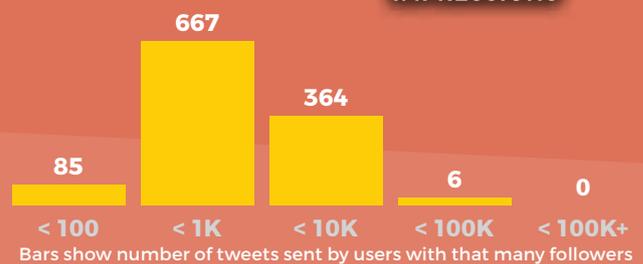
82,565

ACCOUNTS REACHED

EXPOSURE

1,191,919

IMPRESSIONS



ACTIVITY

1,122
TWEETS

97
CONTRIBUTORS

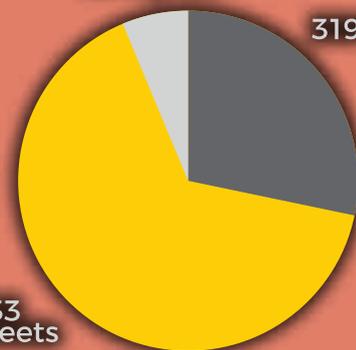
10
DAYS



70 replies

319 tweets

733 retweets



SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS - WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

All presentation slides are available on the PAFPN website: www.spc.int/pafpnet

INTRODUCTION TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND THE EU INTRA-ACP SPC PACIFIC AGRICULTURE POLICY PROJECT

Participants were given an initial introduction to the Agriculture policy landscape in the Pacific context. The role and respective functions of PAPP, TASP and the Agriculture Policy Banks were described and demonstrated to provide familiarity with the location and means for identifying information on a range of topics including new developments within the agriculture sector. The presenter established a background to PAPP as a component of the Inter-ACP Agriculture Policy Programme [APP] and some of the achievements to date under the project.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

This presentation identified the specific developmental issue of Access to Agricultural Policy Information. Participants were given an overview of the two-way process of communications for development or C4D. This two way process is important to support more effectively informed decisions on communications and outreach, ensuring that this is targeted and supports what is termed the 'participatory approach' in Agricultural Extension. Participants were also familiarized with common tools for C4D and were then led through an activity to identify clear approaches/strategies as well as C4D tools to complement the challenges in access to agricultural policy information.

WHY OUTREACH TO FARMERS IS IMPORTANT (INTRODUCTION TO PIRAS)

The Research and Extension presentation examined participatory models of Extension which are being employed by the Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services [PIRAS] network. The presenter also gave an overview of significant achievements under PIRAS and its position within the global context, under the Global Framework for Rural Advisory Services [GIFRAS]. Participants were led on the second day on a field trip to a farm in the Western district, and had the opportunity to interact with extension officers as well as local farmers, to give them a broader understanding of the role of extension in the two-way communication process with farmers.

REPORTING BEYOND A NATIONAL AUDIENCE - SUPPORTING THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE):

Reporting beyond the national context investigated possibilities for news items to appeal to a wide audience, and the technique of 'putting a face' to the sector that would give personality to information being disseminated and authority.

The presenter capitalized on the field visit to a farm, particularly in encouraging media interest in the real context of agriculture and making the important association between what is taking place on the field, and the significant role they played in bridging the gap between agricultural policy makers/government, NSA's and private sector including smallholder farmers involved in agriculture.

Participants were led through an interactive activity to develop their appreciation of the agriculture sector with a focus on the Agriculture Policy Banks as a knowledge management product. Participants were asked to promote the APBs with the objective of inspiring interest from relevant target audiences. Groups were tasked with 'putting a face' on the APBs (therefore developing a brand personality), identifying key messages associated with the APBs as a unique brand and KM tool, and identifying champions who would commit to furthering the objective of raising the profile of APBs and the Agriculture sector in general.



INTRA-ACP PROGRAMME – THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Through an interactive discussion, the presenter examined the position of the Agriculture sector at national, regional and international levels, how and why it was differentially valued.

The Intra-ACP Agricultural Policy Programme (Intra-APP) is implemented by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) in partnership with two ACP regions – the Caribbean (through the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, as the implementing agency) and the Pacific (through the SPC Pacific Agriculture Policy Project, PAPP).

Intra-APP coordinator Samson Vilvil Fare attended the workshop and facilitated an interactive discussion with participants, promoting knowledge sharing and insight into the global context of agricultural policy, particularly in line with the role of CTA and in the context of SPC and PAPP.

EMBRACING NEW MEDIA AND REPORTING FOR THE DIASPORA

This session addressed some of the challenges of disseminating information and knowledge through ICT and social media, appropriate forms of communication for specific target groups and how to fill gaps in communication. Participants were inspired by the development of TheWhatItDo.Com (TWID) platform which targeted 'urban islanders' (a term informally referring to Pacific Islanders in diaspora, in particular those in the United States of America which formed a significant target group and source of remittances to the Kingdom). TWID boasted an average of 10-30k followers on any one of its various platforms including its blog. The presenter spoke about the significance of understanding the purpose of each social media platform (using Instagram, Twitter and Facebook as primary examples), as well as ensuring that music, ideal imagery, font and colours were carefully thought out to ensure that posts were aesthetically appealing and would generate maximum interest on followers' newsfeeds. Participants were also introduced to smartphone 'apps' which would complement social media posts.



SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS (GROUP ACTIVITIES)

Four breakout groups were selected with a mix of participants representing Media, Government (communications focal points), Private Sector/Non-state actors and MAFF. The following is a summary of key discussions relating to relevant thematic areas. Selected quotes from participants, accompany discussion summaries to add context.

CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING AGRICULTURAL POLICY INFORMATION

Group 1 defined cost as a serious challenge, with farmers finding access to smartphones, wifi and internet data expensive, while Ministries had limited budgets for printing information.

Understanding policy documents required training and translation for farmers and those who should be informing them. The media needed to be able to provide this information accurately, not their own interpretation and to prioritise what was most important, while Agriculture ministries needed to work with Information ministries and develop a better awareness of public relations and the value of using the reach of the media. Agriculture ministries and others needed systems for delivering information and authoritative comment while media professionals had to engage in a way that connects with the target audience who needed information.

“
**Put a face on the story.
It's not just what you say,
but how you say it.**”



Group 2 identified challenges such as confidentiality issues and lack of human and financial resources as well as constraints on equipment and technology to disseminate information. There was also a need to provide understandable information, especially in times of crisis such as hurricanes. Weaknesses in the flow of information from authoritative sources including Government ministries and weak levels of understanding about where to obtain information were described, and a need to better communicate information to and from women and young people in the community.



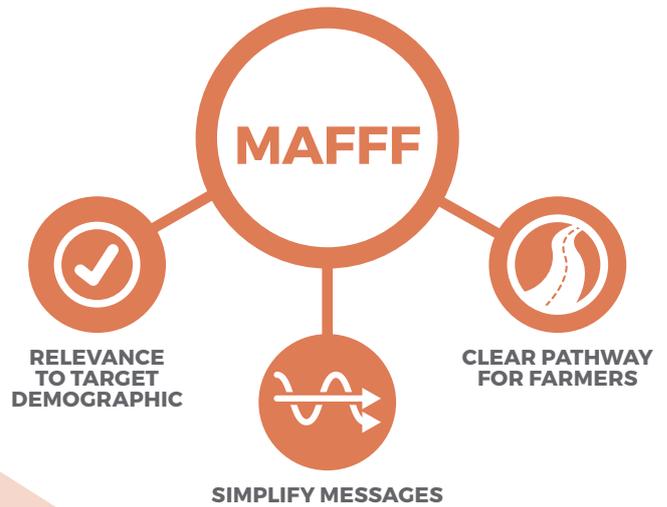
Group 3 recognised a need to make language understandable and ideas put in a form everyone could understand. What farmers had to say should be listened to because they often had doubts that were based on past experience. People needed to be involved in information dissemination, including media and growers, with use being made of radio, public consultations and other means, remembering that ICTs may not always be available. There was a weak level of awareness of the Agriculture sector and how media could be used to disseminate information that required more involvement and communication between government, NGOs, private sector and civil society.

“
Too much information confuses people, be selective and put the important info out there; people can ask for more.
 ”



Group 4 listed amongst their challenges as relevance to the target demographic, a need to simplify messages to different levels of understanding, the different challenges of differing landscapes and access to resources. They discussed the situation in which market access standards were high while levels of awareness were low. Those sending the message needed to give it a face that would allow the target audience to receive it and by finding a motivation that would encourage people to understand and follow it. For instance, financial motivation for following a new regulation on pesticides. In delivering information, traditional structures such as the village **fono** (local governance body at the village or community level).

“
The farmers won't come to the Ministry. Policy is a statement, but Ministry needs to take it out to the people.
 ”



COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT- APPROACHES TO BRIDGE GAPS IN INFORMATION ACCESS (IDENTIFYING TARGET AUDIENCES)

Participants within each of their four groups, brainstormed levels of awareness for each of the four key stakeholder groups (MAFFF, Media, Private Sector and other Non-State actors, and Government Communications Arms). Upon establishing each stakeholder group’s levels of awareness, participants then identified specific communications/information access needs, strategies to address these needs, and determined whether C4D approaches to implement these strategies would take into consideration gender and youth (two significant social groupings within each stakeholder group, in both C4D and policy engagement).

	MAFFF	Media	Private Sector & NGO's/CSO's	Government Communications
Level of Awareness of Agricultural policy	<p>Group ["Fantastic Four"] focused on Farmers adopting policies created by MAFFF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Market access standards – very high levels of awareness amongst farming communities, supported by MAFFF extension ➤ Maximizing the opportunity within MAFF: Women Division Research, Extension. Planning/HR/Corporate, Quarantine (room for improved internal communication and awareness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weak awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some have little awareness, some have more (depending on the organization); generally weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weak
Specific Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NRL (Maximum residue level-fertilizer chemical) Meet minimum standards HCLC (group identified technical needs that should be supported via extension and addressed in agricultural policy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Streamlined procedures for communication (between Public and Private sectors and media, on Agricultural policy) ➤ Creation of official channels for collaboration 	<p>Communication between government, NGOs and the Private Sector; Data , statistics, market demand information & criteria for exporters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Centralize communication within Government as it is currently confusing who the focal points are in each Ministry as well as collaborative role that MEIDECCC plays

	MAFFF	Media	Private Sector & NGO's/CSO's	Government Communications
Strategies to improve C4D in addressing stakeholder needs relating to Agricultural Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pesticide regulation, Food Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Activate media council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Different media platforms (radio, internet), involve private sectors/NGOs in media (not just public media outlets but commercial and privately owned should take part in awareness) ➤ Having village/community meetings quarterly for farmers to stay connected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Through MEIDECC – from government department i.e. MAFFF
Consideration of Youth/Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes, How? C4D (youth and women need to be empowered to engage – two way, and communicate back their interest, needs to MAFFF/ Government as well as private sector and media) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes—marginalized groups would be considered/ addressed (there is particular human interest in stories focused on women and youth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consideration of youth and Gender: Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Yes, Empower them within Government!

In the afternoon the groups continued discussions on the challenges to accessing policy information but were prompted to share effective C4D tools of engagement with relevant target audiences.

Group 1 discussed different training/information dissemination scenarios including Pacific Islands Farmer Organisations Network (PIFON) assisted farmer to farmer exchanges, grants, networking, meetings, emails, advocacy, representation on committees and regional connections through organisations such as the Pacific Islands Forum.

Group 2 considered the livestock and crop sectors, including special crops such as vanilla.

Group 3 looked at information gaps, their causes such as the cost of television slots, and ways to encourage participation and supply training. Mechanisms for disseminating information that were discussed included community outreach programs and women and youth groups.

Group 4 looked at different mechanisms for communication including websites, social media, farmer networks and SMS messaging for emergencies.

CASE STUDY: PARTICIPATORY EXTENSION – RETHINKING THE ROLE OF MEDIA

This session was a case study done through a field visit to contextualise the Agriculture sector for the media.

Semisi Paleo, Extension Officer for Hahake District outlined the role of Extension while Tuusolo, MAFFF Extension staff, described youth extension work.

Cultural implications of media reporting on the Agriculture sector included a presentation by Minoru Nishi, who explained culture has an impact on both agricultural production and business, not just at subsistence level but at the economic level as well.

Other topics included the importance of the visibility of agricultural outcomes while discussion on the economic context covered funding available for smallholders, Tonga Development Bank managed funds scheme, development loans and Agricultural Marketing Fund.

The session made it evident that Extension officers in Tonga were extremely knowledgeable and statistics showed that 89% of farming households had some education. This view is supported by findings in the Tonga Agriculture Census. Traditional knowledge was considered important, examples being mixed cropping systems and traditional forms of pest control.



BEYOND NATIONAL REPORTING – SELLING THE TONGA AGRICULTURE POLICY BANK TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA STAKEHOLDERS

Emerging from this discussion was a concern that cultural bias sometimes obscured interesting or important information; what is normal to Tongans may be unusual and significant therefore, for international media to report on. For instance the impact of harvesting the best crops for ceremonial occasions as part of a cultural obligation, something Tongans would not necessarily report on, would be considered newsworthy by international media, unfamiliar with mundane cultural obligations, and would consider the forgoing of one's income for a Chief as newsworthy.



RE-POSITIONING TONGA'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT (CTA & REGIONAL PARTNERS: THE INTRA-ACP AGRICULTURAL POLICY PROGRAMME)

A critical partner in repositioning Tonga's Agriculture sector in the global context is the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (CTA). CTA is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU) with a mission to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management in ACP countries. The Intra-ACP Agricultural Policy Programme (Intra-ACP APP) is a broad technical cooperation framework with focus on the Caribbean and Pacific islands comprising two regional components: the Agricultural Policy Project (APP) in the Caribbean and the Pacific Agricultural Policy Project (PAPP).

CTA is the biggest publisher of Agricultural material in the world in three languages – French, English and Portuguese. An example of their communications initiative is SPORE magazine. Knowledge Management and Communications (ICKM) is one of the largest spheres of activity covered by CTA that targets the Agricultural sector. Other areas of expertise include value chains, policy and agribusiness. As a knowledge broker, CTA captures knowledge from its partners and shares it. It works with regional institutions such as SPC, which is a premier partner following the signing of an MOU in 2014. At the national level, the impact of CTA work can be seen across 80 countries in addition to the impact of the activities of partners such as SPC and PIPSO.

The session on Lessons from the Caribbean are relevant to the South Pacific region. Points of particular interest drawn out by workshop participants include making youth a central focus of development work as a key demographic in an aging sector. Among best practices for the Pacific are youth led achievements, particularly ICT related, for example applications for mobile phones. ICT4Ag, ICT focused communications for Agriculture, has strong emphasis in the Caribbean. 'Datacom' has had a call for youth. Financing for Agriculture and Policy Makers have initiated incentives for farmers through grants and other means, with a strong focus on youth.



The first ever Pacific Week of Agriculture is modelled on the Caribbean Week of Agriculture, planned to be held in conjunction with the SPC and UN FAO Heads of Agriculture meeting in Vanuatu in 2017.

Other achievements under the APP include exchanges visits for scientists from the regions.

In return innovations from the Pacific can be capitalised on and the knowledge shared through Intra-APP and CTA with other regions including the Caribbean. ICT based achievements that have significance for youth include the Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs) as a knowledge management tool, and social media reporters when information from social media is used as a knowledge management tool.

The APBs are the first in the ACP region so the Caribbean and consequently through ACP, the Africa region, can also learn from this.

Importance was also placed on Pacific countries being aware of EU and donor prioritisation, particularly taking into account changes such as the United Kingdom exiting the EU (Brexit). Visibility is vital to bridge the link between the Pacific and Brussels/EU. PAPP, with support from SPC and the Intra-APP, needs to ensure that impacts on the ground are being translated into effective ICKM products to safeguard that their visibility transits through to the higher level.

There is a two tiered aspect to visibility: In the EU context, the visibility of CTA is significant at the political level, therefore the acknowledgement of donor support and technical support from CTA through Intra-APP is important; and the impact on the ground to be communicated back to the EU and CTA via regional partners such as SPC, which plays a significant role in bridging collaboration with countries at the national level, e.g.Tonga.

Other discussion points raised by participants included the need for understanding at national level, across all stakeholders represented at the workshop, the significance of perceptions of the Pacific at the political level in Brussels. To 'connecting the dots' it is important to share impacts on the ground with SPORE and other publications or communications channels of CTA to gain visibility at the international level in three languages.

Participants and the facilitator touched again on understanding priorities at both country and donor level. Two participants noted changes in development assistance towards energy, climate change and the refugee crisis at international level. Participants agreed that at the policy making level, it is important for 'small voices' (in reference to representation of the Pacific region) to combine in order to make a difference to the allocation of development assistance at the national level. The facilitator reiterated the fact that levels of development assistance and negotiation for funding, at least at the ACP/EU level, comes down to people who represent the Pacific in Brussels (the Pacific Ministers) and that even the poorest African country has a presence in Brussels.

The facilitator commended the identification of 'champions' not only for the APBs but for the Agricultural sector, with greater allocation of development assistance and national government budget allocations to the sector.

Participants agreed that policy is a mechanism to provide clearer direction for prioritising funding at the country level. To illustrate this, discussion centred on project proposals and proposal writing to be informed by needs at the country level.

Participants felt there is much potential for Agriculture but not enough incentive. This is often due to a lack of clear understanding of the processes set out by donors or development partners around proposal submission/resource mobilization. At the country level, as stakeholders, everyone should be clear on what development assistance or allocation of funds will go towards and what can realistically be implemented. To spur a change in perception in requesting an increased allocation of national budgets to the Agriculture sector participants were encouraged to think globally, think regionally, and think nationally. Media was seen to play a fundamental role in highlighting avenues and processes to access greater funding, as well as to communicate impacts from the ground level. This ties back to the two way process understood via C4D – Communications for Development.

A Tongan participant stated that often a design document works in a textbook context but not necessarily in a practical sense.

Social Media is perceived as being underestimated as a knowledge sharing tool. An example was given of the social media campaign for the workshop itself, which had already been announced on EU and CTA platforms, and social media conversations were being read instantaneously all the way in Brussels.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

The following outcomes resulted from discussions and collaboration throughout the workshop. The process in developing the concept and agenda, pre-workshop consultations, participation and facilitation methods as well as knowledge capture have contributed to the realization of these outcomes.

These outcomes are a consolidated prioritization (in no particular order) of discussions and collaboration amongst stakeholders present and directly shape the determination of next steps.

- 1. Key linkages were developed between Tonga's public and private sectors.** In developing the concept, it was evident that few linkages existed prior to the workshop. Workshop evaluation through surveying of participants involved, recognized the significance of building these links. A significant achievement under the communities of practice which emerged from the workshop, has been a move to develop more networking opportunities to involve both public and private stakeholders in the Agriculture sector, as well as stakeholder who previously had no prior involvement in the sector.
- 2. Involvement of Youth in Agriculture –** Given the balance of youth attendance from the various stakeholder groups (which also included the Tonga National Youth Congress), the immediate follow through was **a heightened interest by young professionals in Tonga, in Agriculture.** Given the availability of tax allotment land, there has been a move via the informal communities of practice as a result of this workshop, which has seen documented involvement of Youth currently in other employment, in Agriculture and farming in particular, utilizing traditional techniques.

SUPPORTING YOUTH INVOLVEMENT & INFORMATION DISSEMINATION THROUGH WEB2.0 AS A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TOOL

'Aulola Ake, a Tongan youth and Gender Mainstreaming Officer with the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been blogging since 2013. 'Aulola attended the training as a youth blogger as well as a communications focal point for the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Since the workshop, 'Aulola has revised the focus of her blog to highlight the Agriculture sector as a feasible sector to provide income opportunities as well as to address issues around sustainability and preservation of traditional knowledge relating to farming techniques.

According to 'Aulola, "the collaboration with partners and in particular the identification of the important role of media and need to engage more young people in Agriculture has inspired me to refocus my blog and to create more online conversations around this important sector".

'Aulola has recently launched the "Project Grow Green" initiative which is covered in detail on her blog at the following links, and documents the involvement of young professionals including herself in utilizing tax allotments for smallholder farming.

<https://justyouraveragetonga.wordpress.com/2016/08/19/project-go-green-ii/>

<https://justyouraveragetonga.wordpress.com/2016/07/20/the-importance-of-agriculture-to-tonga/>

Following on from the success of her blog posts in generating conversation amongst Tongan and Pacific publics online, 'Aulola was then selected as a youth blogger at the second Agribusiness Conference held in Samoa in August, 2016. Her blog posts on this experience are found at the following link:

<https://justyouraveragetongan.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/of-vice-and-virtue-decolonizing-our-culture-through-local-cuisine/>

The success of the revised focus of 'Aulola's blog is evident in the analytics provided below, which show the significant following built over the three months immediately following this workshop:

Blog hits	
Posts	Views & Visitors
Importance of Agriculture to Tonga	85 views 66 visitors
Project Go Green	99 views 72 visitors Average views per visitor: 2
Project Go Green II	153 views 111 visitors
Of Vice and Virtue	771 views 535 visitors
Total Hits since Agriculture Posts	1,580

- There was a general agreement that Media had a central role to play in the dissemination of policy related information to farmers and the general community. Through discussion with Media stakeholders, the need for 'socialisation' of information relating to the agricultural sector and particularly to policy, for accessibility by farmers and non-technical audiences was important. **Participants agreed that it was necessary for MAFFF and Communications focal points across Government to work together towards a centralized approach in information dissemination to avoid duplication.** It was also seen as important for all stakeholders communicating to media to ensure that information was packaged in a way that was appealing and of 'human interest' to be captured by media, and for buy in by the general public. This justified the need for media to be incorporated into PIRAS representation, to ensure that extension services also collaborated with media colleagues to further the reach of information relating to the sector.

4. An interactive session coordinated by the Pacific Islands News Association [PINA] in supporting the human interest around Agriculture related storytelling looked resulted in **the selection of three key champions for the Agriculture Policy Banks and the Tongan Agriculture sector**. These three champions were agreed on by workshop participants and would enable more effective reach for agriculture stories, to the following key audiences:



Honourable Fatafehi 'o Lapaha Tuita – with a strong social media presence as well as recognition as a member of the Royal family, it was determined that Honourable Fatafehi would broaden the reach and recognition of Agriculture as well as to generate interest in the sector across Tongan online publics particularly Tongan communities in diaspora, and also as a patron for the sector, with Tongan communities at the national level.

Ramanlal Vallabh – a Tongan media personality on Radio Nuku'alofa 88.6FM, runs the morning drivetime show with a significant following. Ramanlal was chosen as a champion to elevate the status of Agriculture as a response to food and nutritional security at the national level and to highlight in particular, some of the youth and private sector initiatives in relation to the sector.

Anthony (Tony) Samita of Tonga Broadcasting Cooperation [TBC] – Tony was chosen as a champion based on his appeal to Tongan speaking youth and as a familiar presence on national TV. Given Tony's involvement already in covering mainly sports related news and collaboration with youth across local schools, as well as incorporation of agriculture into discussions on employment opportunities as well as an avenue to address social challenges relating to youth.

IMPACTS & NEXT STEPS

1. COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP)

A clear communities of practice has developed which fosters public-private representation with the aim to develop these important relationships. With a youth led focus, there are plans to formalize a network and to establish opportunities such as networking events, incorporating the role of the Agriculture champions and media, and to build on discussions from the workshop. A networking event is scheduled by the end of 2016. Besides the evident focus on youth, other areas such as women in agriculture [particularly with the renewed support through TASP for the Handicrafts sub-sector] will also feature as a key area of collaboration and representation within the various CoP formed following the workshop.

2. CONTINUITY OF CAPACITY BUILDING OF YOUTH SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTERS

Social Media was incorporated into the workshop agenda as a powerful knowledge sharing tool and ICT based platform for the dissemination of information. The concept note for the workshop touches on the significance of Tongan communities in diaspora and the growing trend in access to social media. In continuing the capacity building and learning exchange between social media reporters identified at the workshop, they were included in a list of CTA funded 'social reporters' under the APP, who then provided communications and knowledge sharing support to both the 2nd Agribusiness Forum and the 14th Caribbean Week of Agriculture [CWA] in the Cayman Islands. It is expected that this model of cooperation [as well as linking youth and ICT involvement, knowledge sharing and capacity building around social media and web2.0 tools would extend to learning exchanges with other regions such as the Caribbean, and also provide support for the upcoming Pacific Week of Agriculture in 2017.

3. PACIFIC WEEK OF AGRICULTURE

The first Pacific Week of Agriculture [PWA] is to be hosted by the Government of Vanuatu, with key learnings from SPC-PAPP activities such as this workshop, contributing to the agenda as well as support for the significant event. Tonga has expressed interest in lobbying for the second Pacific Week of Agriculture and the networks formed beyond this workshop are important to drive a coordinated approach towards Tonga's contribution to the first PWA, as well as its intention to host the second Pacific Week of Agriculture.

4. MEDIA

The impact of media involvement on the ground was evident throughout the workshop as well as through support by both national and regional media towards the events which followed the workshop – the donor roundtable for the Agriculture and Fisheries sectors, media presence at the Tonga development partners' forum as well as the handover of resilient crop varieties by SPC to the Government of Tonga and the launch of the new TASP as well as Tonga's Agriculture Policy Bank. Media presence and capture of media releases and communications products is evident in the number of media products annexed to this report. There is also a move to formalize the partnership between the Agriculture Sector and Media [at the regional level via PINA], and at the national level, with the less formal arrangement of media representation and contribution through champions and workshop participants, to the communities of practice.

5. EFFECTIVE PRE-PLANNING AND CONSULTATION AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

The impact of effective pre-planning and consultation at all levels were evident in the success of all other events throughout the week, which included positive feedback from senior levels of SPC management, the Government of Tonga and quantitatively, through the number of media products captured in the week following the workshop [annexed to this report]. Planning towards the development of the agenda, incorporating feedback from the Government of Tonga, PINA, presenters and through both desktop based research as well as face-to-face consultations

was imperative in ensuring that expected outcomes were achievable and that proposed outputs (detailed in the concept note, precursor to organisation which was initiated at least two months prior to the workshop). High level representation was ensured via effective pre-planning, as well as direct consultation and coordination with their offices to confirm availability in advance. The greatest impact from the level of organisation towards this workshop as well as events throughout the rest of the week, has been the establishment of key benchmarks highlighted through the following indicators (which contribute directly to monitoring the effectiveness of the event as well as developing best practice for future coordination at the national level):

- Social media analytics over a specific timeframe (comparing the capacity and number of social media users – both project driven and in response to effective publicity, with both engagement and reach/potential impressions).
- The confirmation of high level representation from Government, national stakeholders (private and public sectors), SPC, regional and national media in their attendance and contribution to the workshop and events throughout the week.
- The level of media coverage associated with the event.
- Monitoring the level of outputs and more importantly, impacts of this event in comparison with both the financial and human resources associated with implementation.

ANNEXES

AGENDA

PARTICIPANT LISTS

PRESENTATIONS – OVERVIEW OF DAILY DISCUSSION TOPICS, PRESENTATION & COMPLETE PRESENTATIONS

SPEECHES

MEDIA COVERAGE - LINKS TO COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS RELEVANT TO THE WORKSHOP

<http://www.spc.int/en/media-releases/2569-tonga-focuses-on-agriculture-as-a-significant-sector-to-address-development-priorities.html>

<http://www.pina.com.fj/index.php?p=pacnews&m=read&o=638699888578d4a5d3922da9df954b>

<http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=106697509357919994d73fe6dc98c1>

<http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=155307434057917269e66c611e7a84>

<http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=126271740657903ca64d83b782b99e>

<http://www.looptonga.com/content/tonga-focuses-agriculture-significant-sector-address-development-priorities>

<http://www.mic.gov.to/news-today/press-releases/6085-online-agriculture-policy-banks-upheld-as-key-innovation-for-the-pacific>

<http://www.mic.gov.to/news-today/press-releases/6174-tonga-focuses-on-agriculture-as-a-significant-sector-to-address-developmental-priorities>

<http://www.looptonga.com/content/pacific-community-hands-tissue-culture-5-climate-resilient-crops-tonga%E2%80%99s-government>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZP5GMSoiejw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl7PyPgK1ac>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuehvA8c7ls>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6ZMngHfLjg>

<http://www.tonga-broadcasting.net/?p=1528>

<http://www.tonga-broadcasting.net/?p=1472>

<http://mafff.we.bs/category/news/>

http://mafff.we.bs/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Concept-Note-Tonga-Launch_FINAL.pdf

<http://www.intracp-app.org/en/article/2016-07-18/agricultural-policy-research-and-extension-awareness-workshop-tonga-18-19-july-2016.html>

<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/intra-acp-app/event/agricultural-policy-research-and-extension-awareness-workshop-tonga>

<http://www.intracp-app.org/images/workshops/tonga/concept-note-awareness-workshop.pdf>

