



# PAFPNET NEWS

THE PACIFIC AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY POLICY NETWORK NEWSLETTER



The Pacific Agricultural and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) is a regional network that connects government policy-makers, non-governmental organisations, journalists and individuals in the Pacific with an interest in agriculture and forestry policy development.

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## Turning youths into entrepreneurs

~ Adapted from an article printed in Islands Business – March 2010 ~

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## A focus on youth

Many young people struggle to find formal employment when they leave the education system. Agriculture has often been regarded as a fall-back option – something to do if you don’t find anything else. But with high levels of youth unemployment, increasing pressure on urban areas and high food import bills should we not be doing more to encourage, support and empower our young people to realise the full potential of a career in agriculture? In the process we can help to improve food security and livelihood opportunities in rural areas and to reduce pressure on urban areas.

PAFPNet, in partnership with the Human Development Programme of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is in the process of finalising a Youth in Agriculture Strategy that will be presented to the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) when they meet in September 2010 and the Ministers of Youth in October 2010 for their endorsement. The purpose of the strategy is to recommend actions and initiatives that all stakeholders can pursue to encourage active engagement on youth in agriculture across the region. A consultation process runs until 16 July 2010 and seeks views on the recommendations made to increase youth participation in agriculture in the Pacific.

To give your views on the strategy please visit [http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=313&Itemid=130](http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=313&Itemid=130).

‘Although many programmes exist to engage young people in agricultural activities, young people are often not actively involved in the design and monitoring and evaluation of these programmes.’

Support from the family and wider community, including giving young people more control over resource management and the financial benefits of their endeavours, is critical in encouraging young people to develop as agricultural entrepreneurs.

These are key messages from a survey of young people in Fiji, Tonga and Kiribati. Spiritual guidance is also important in youth development, with the church playing an important role in influencing young peoples’ behaviour and activities, and their engagement in agricultural activities.

The survey was conducted in November 2009 as part of the activities of the Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet). It aimed to discover what features of their environment encourage young people to participate in agricultural activities.

The survey found that young women and men contribute significantly to family labour and food security in their communities, in particular in rural areas. Youth are mostly responsible for planting and maintaining food gardens. A small number manage their own semi-commercial plantations. Youth groups are often formed for specific purposes, such as to build a house or fulfil a specific village or communal obligation. Despite this active contribution to their families and communities, many of the young people surveyed expressed frustration at the lack of recognition for their role. They also want relatives and community elders to support their initiatives by allowing them to share the benefits of their own endeavours and, importantly, to set aside land they can use for their own entrepreneurial activities.

Although many programmes exist to engage young people in agricultural activities, young people are often not actively involved in the design and monitoring and evaluation of these programmes, leading to the risk that they may not be responding to young people’s needs. Providing a forum within the programme for young people to discuss these needs with their families and community elders is seen as a vital step in developing greater awareness

and understanding in families and communities of how they can support young people starting up agricultural ventures.

Although the usual factors of better access to credit, more frequent visits by extension officers and access to affordable agricultural inputs were raised as key constraints facing young people, these are seen as secondary to the issue of a positive and supportive environment.

This suggests that if agricultural extension services are to better support young people in agricultural activities, they need to broaden their traditional horizons beyond the provision of technical information and to work with communities and partners to carry out participatory appraisals of youth needs and facilitate a coordinated approach to meeting them. They also need to provide training on empowerment, confidence building and financial literacy. Strategic partnerships at the national level to better coordinate the activities of the Ministries of Agriculture, Youth and Education are vital in making this happen.

For more information, please contact [lrdhelpdesk@spc.int](mailto:lrdhelpdesk@spc.int).

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## Rural youth help reverse rural-urban drift in a remote district in Fiji

First printed in the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) newsletter, November 2009

Most remote rural communities in the Pacific have been crippled by the effects of massive rural-urban drift as young people leave to seek employment and a better life in towns and cities. Manasa Levaci, 27, was among this group of people a few years ago.

After dropping out of school because his parents could not pay his education expenses, Manasa met with the daily struggle of earning a meagre income by cutting copra on the village communal farm. A few years later the global price of copra fell dramatically. This caused a collapse of the local coconut industry, pulling most farmers, including Manasa, into deeper poverty.

'At this time of my life, I was on the verge of packing my knapsack and moving to town to find a job to support my family,' he said. 'I love the life in my village with my family and friends, but without a good source of income life was turning into a struggle for survival,' he added.

Around this time, the Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations Programme in the Pacific (MORDI), funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), was just starting its operations in Fiji. The MORDI team visited the communities in Manasa's area to introduce the programme to them. Manasa heard from friends about a group coming to give a presentation on rural development and sustainable livelihoods. He decided to remain to hear them before moving to town.

'I made up my mind not to leave the village but to work with the programme to improve my and my fellow villagers' lives right here in the village,'

Manasa Levaci

The MORDI programme excited him. He saw a glimmer of hope through MORDI that opportunities could be created right there in his village. 'I made up my mind not to leave the village but to work with the programme to improve my and my fellow villagers' lives right here in the village,' he said proudly. Manasa started attending meetings and workshops organized by MORDI. Soon he became enthusiastic about MORDI's work in bringing about sustainable development in the area. He started helping Rev. Samuela Qoliqoro, the MORDI Community Facilitator for the area.

When the MORDI team visited to conduct a community planning workshop at the district centre, Manasa attended as the sole representative of his village, and at his own expense (i.e. transportation and accommodations). 'Most people in my village discouraged me, saying that it was a waste of time. They said they had seen many organisations come and "do their thing" and then leave, never to be seen again,' he said. Contrary to their advice, Manasa decided to attend the workshop.

It was in this workshop that Manasa caught the attention of the MORDI staff as someone who was quiet but intelligent and who had a genuine desire to bring development to his people and himself. The team noted him as a potential village focal point for the future.

After the workshop, Manasa returned to his village and ran many small group workshops with the Community Facilitator on village development planning processes. His knowledge and skills in explaining the processes in grassroots terms soon caught the attention of the village chiefs and elders, who started to take him more seriously. They began attending the evening workshops he organised on various topics that he had learned through MORDI's ongoing training programme. The topics included preparing community development plans, conducting and documenting village meetings, understanding village and community governance structures, keeping records of village development, financial literacy and savings, conflict management and writing proposals.

Through the workshop on writing proposals, Manasa helped his Village Development Committee write and submit a water project for the village, which, since the 1950s, had been using unsafe well water for daily needs. These wells were very unreliable and dried up easily, forcing villagers to walk for miles every day to fetch water from streams.

The proposal was accepted and MORDI engaged a water expert to help the village build its new water supply system from a safe water source. In December 2008, water started running in every home in the village, to the great joy of everyone. Manasa was hailed as their hero, and the elders showed him deep gratitude in a special church service in the village.

It was no surprise that when MORDI decided two months later to expand and engage one Community Facilitator per village, Manasa was chosen by his village. Manasa continues to serve his village as its facilitator. He attends all village and even district meetings with local leaders, chiefs and elders, where he is able to confidently articulate his village's needs and present his ideas at decision-making fora.



As a dedicated farmer he continues to cut copra, as the price has slightly improved. He supplements his income with the allowance he collects as a Community Facilitator and is constantly looking for new alternatives to diversify his village's income in order to cope with the fluctuating prices of traditional commodities such as copra.

Manasa is working hard with the youth in the village to start up a fishing business which he says 'will help the youth earn a decent income and remain in the village.' This has created a positive wave among other youth in the area who are following in the footsteps of Manasa to make the most of the opportunities that they are creating by using the land and sea resources they have around them without leaving their village.

For more information, contact: Vikash Kumar, Regional Training, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, MORDI Programme, Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

Useful links:

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (<http://www.fspi.org.fj/>)

MORDI stories from the field (<http://www.youtube.com/MordiPacific>)





## The media's role in agriculture

By Verenaisi Raicola, Fiji Times

The media, in whatever form, is a vital component of the agricultural sector. Stories need to interest and inspire readers, listeners and viewers before they will be published.

Media organisations have deadlines to meet and it is vital for those in the agriculture sector to provide information as well as contacts in a timely fashion. Getting the right contacts so there is a continual flow in the dissemination of information is crucial.

Networking between agriculture officials and the media needs strengthening so that when there is a new or a follow-up story the media is alerted and there is open dialogue, allowing for clarification of information.

More effort needs to be put into translating technical information stemming from science and research into understandable language... any article that is full of jargon and figures will not interest a great percentage of our readers... There is no point having a story that cannot be read or understood so we need to target our readers with tact by using conversational language.

Media audiences want to know how a certain development in a news article impacts their lives or that of their loved ones. The media needs to play an active role to reach out to people's heart and to explore the implication of stories on people's lives through their finances ... where it hurts most! It is important to move readers...to create debate on topical issues to make them aware of issues so they can take precautionary measures if there is a need... and even use the media to gain attention of political leaders who make decisions on behalf of the people.

People need knowledge to make the best decisions and that is where the media comes in. Stories need to contain accurate information so readers are informed, not misled. In a recent workshop sponsored by CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU), SPC and GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) it was noted that there needed to be more meaningful and trustworthy relationships built between media organisations and the agricultural sectors... to clear misconceptions. It is heartening to know that media editors in the region and staff of agricultural sectors have committed themselves to build lasting partnerships to allow for free flow of information.

Officials in the sector need to realise that knowledge is power and that they need to realise their potential and make good use of it. The media plays an integral role in shaping the social context in which policies are developed.

Through the media, citizens learn how government policies will affect them, and governments gain feedback on their policies and programmes. Media systems act as the primary conduit between those who might want to influence policy in the agricultural sector and the policy-makers – controlling the scope of political discourse and regulating the flow of information. In agriculture interviews, farmers need to be encouraged to give their views as they put a human face to a scientific topic ... and that in many ways will capture the people.



## Making research relevant

by Emil Adams, LRD Publications Officer

Information from applied scientific research can help identify practical solutions to address some of the agricultural and environmental challenges facing the region provided it is translated into easily understood messages and extension materials.

Science is the driving force behind new technologies to improve agriculture through the use of sustainable farming practices. Research carried out by agriculture scientists at national and regional level can identify agricultural technologies that can help improve yields from limited land. Some of these new technologies include contour farming to reduce soil erosion, mulching and composting (using household waste as organic fertiliser), improved disease-tolerant crop varieties, farming methods for degraded mine lands, improved livestock breeds, improved pasture to increase milk and meat production, integrated pest and disease control measures, integrated livestock farming and aquaculture, the use of natural enemies to control invasive weeds, pathways to reduce post-harvest losses, and improved packaging.

Technology can also help address pollution problems. Some common

practices to reduce pollution include scrap metal recycling, recycling at dump sites, reducing the use of non-biodegradable plastics (e.g. shopping bags and food containers), adopting communal-based waste disposal measures, maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in rural areas through mulching, using composting toilets and penning livestock.

Science can also help research and identify climate change adaptation measures to help communities adapt to increasing temperatures, more unpredictable rainfall patterns, saltwater intrusion and more intense cyclones. SPC's Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) is currently screening its crops and trees for drought, heat stress and saltwater tolerance in order to support researchers and farmers in adapting to future conditions.

Involving farmers directly in the research helps ensure that results are relevant to them. It also helps generate stories for the media that give a human angle and demonstrate how research can improve livelihoods and incomes. In Samoa, where the taro leaf blight in the mid-1990s wiped out the taro industry, farmers have been involved in the Taro Improvement Project (TIP), which has been screening improved taro varieties for yield, taste and tolerance to leaf blight disease. This helps to ensure that improved varieties are not only disease resistant but also taste good and are therefore used by farmers and families. Similarly, through the Improved Plant Protection in the Solomon Islands (IPPSI) project, sweet potato and banana varieties are being evaluated by farmers, and through partnerships with the media, awareness is being generated about their nutritional benefits.

The media have a vital role to play in generating awareness about new technologies and scientific solutions that can improve the living standards of Pacific Islanders. They can also help to change attitudes when new or adapted technologies are introduced that people may be resistant to try or adopt. It is essential that researchers think about how the results of their work will reach and be adopted by communities and the type of message that will help this happen. Developing a communications strategy and building partnerships with media organisations are ways in which scientists and researchers can help ensure their message gets out and benefits as many people as possible.

For more information please contact [EmilA@spe.int](mailto:EmilA@spe.int).

Research carried out by agriculture scientists at national and regional level can identify agricultural technologies that can help improve yields from limited land.





Seniorl Anzu (right) and Maria Linibi (centre), the joint winners of the 2010 DWU/UNESCO Communication and Development Award receiving the award from DWU academic vice president, Br Andrew Simpson (right) last Friday. Looking on is Head of Communication Arts, Br Michael McManus.

## Farmer and agriculture journalist win media award

Congratulations to PAFPN member Seniorl Anzu on receiving the annual Divine Word University (DWU)/UNESCO Communication and Development Award recently. Seniorl, Communication Officer from the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) won the award jointly with Morobe farmer Maria Linibi from the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Women in Agriculture Development Foundation.

They received the award for their complementary efforts to promoting development through sharing information on agriculture via the mass media. 'We have recognised Seniorl and Maria because together they have been a great example of how communication and development go together hand in hand for real and ongoing development of PNG,' said Br Michael McManus, Head of

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Br Michael McManus, Head of the Communication Arts department at DWU

the Communication Arts department at DWU. He said Mr Anzu wrote many articles about Mrs Linibi's organisation, promoting her great work among the agricultural community in PNG and overseas. 'Maria herself has become more involved in communication too – particularly literacy programmes and agricultural education for other women farmers – and she has contributed greatly to NARI's mission as a research organisation that develops agriculture amongst the PNG farming communities,' Br McManus said.

## The importance of partnerships between the media and agricultural communicators

By Seniorl Anzu, National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), Papua New Guinea

Agriculture is now back on the development agenda globally. Similarly, the role of media is accepted as paramount in enhancing communication of agricultural information for development. The media (newspaper, radio and television) are a strategic link in the communications chain between the various stakeholders and many appreciate the nature and extent of the mass media's contribution to successful agricultural and rural development. The degree of media freedom also determines the extent to which partnerships and resource and information are shared between stakeholders, supported by emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs).

However, reporters and editors in the mainstream media have very little training, if any, or background in agriculture. This is compounded by a multitude of constraints, such as limited access to equipment, few resources for field visits, limited knowledge of the subject matter, non-specialisation of agricultural reporting, and relevance to editorial and readership requirements, which hold them back from reporting effectively on agriculture.

The PNG media enjoy great freedom under the national constitution and are able to publish any fair and well founded news items that are of national importance. PNG is an agriculture-based country with over 85% of its population of 6 million depending on agriculture for their daily livelihoods. Agriculture also contributes to socio-economic development through employment and national income. There is a growing recognition in agricultural agencies of the importance of information and knowledge sharing, communications and media, public relations, and the development of user-friendly publications. Almost all public agricultural organisations such as the Department of Agriculture and Livestock, the National Agricultural Research Institute, the Coffee Industry Corporation and the Fresh Produce Development Agency have information and/



or communications offices staffed by information, communications or media officers who connect their organisations with the media.

The responsibility of journalists working in these organisations lies in synthesising and presenting scientific and agricultural information in different media and other appropriate avenues for their target audiences. The media tend to depend on these agricultural communicators to provide contributions suitable for mainstream media use and they are well placed to do so given their understanding of agricultural issues and their journalism background. These organisations have used the media to create awareness of agricultural technologies and share relevant information with farmers, development partners and other stakeholders. Weekly agriculture columns are printed in the two English newspapers (Post Courier and The National) and Tok Pisin (Pidgin) newspaper (Wantok). Appropriate newsworthy materials are also published/produced in the media on other days as general news items. Over time, partnerships are developed and strengthened through a win-win situation. The media know the organisations are good sources of information and knowledge and therefore enquire freely on a range of agricultural and development issues. The organisations develop relationships with journalists that lead to greater trust in how the information provided will be used.

The PNG media outlets give substantial coverage to agricultural issues every week. Oseah Philemon, a veteran journalist with the Post Courier, recently said: 'The role of the media in agriculture is to inform, educate and raise awareness about developments in the agriculture industry. In order to achieve this, the media need to work with all stakeholders in the industry from researchers to growers/planters, exporters, buyers and even government, which sets policies.

'It is important that the media, particularly reporters covering agriculture, make every effort to know the main players in the various sectors of the agriculture industry in order to get a wider knowledge of what is happening in the industry.' Sincha Dimara, New Director of PNG's EMTV, stated: 'Media need to be made aware of the effects climate change will have on agriculture. Media are the bridge through which people are aware of their surroundings, especially those who depend largely on agriculture.'

While the media are available to run news and special programmes using agriculture information, organisations do not always provide materials consistently. Indeed, to fill the pages of a newspaper on a weekly basis is a huge challenge! To use the media more effectively, organisations need to develop partnership arrangements and be consistent in providing the media with information.

"Media are the bridge through which people are aware of their surroundings, especially those who depend largely on agriculture."

Sincha Dimara,  
New Director of PNG's EMTV





It is often difficult to explain the tangible benefits of having a strong, coherent policy framework in place to provide strategic direction to all stakeholders involved in the sector. Nunia Thomas of NatureFiji-MareqetiViti explains how the organisation has used the Fiji Forest Policy to guide its work and secure funding to develop a major project. The project will enable the local non-governmental organisation to work in partnership with the Fiji Department of Forestry to raise awareness of the policy among selected landowning (mataqali) groups and promote the creation of permanent forest estates and sustainable forest management practices. Congratulations NatureFiji-MareqetiViti!

## Creating Permanent Forest Estates for the Benefit of Fiji's People and Biodiversity

By Nunia Thomas

On the 23 March 2010, the NatureFiji-MareqetiViti team was assured support by the Fijian Affairs Board and the 14 Provincial Councils on our first large project: Creating Permanent Forest Estates for Fiji's People and Biodiversity. Funding for this project was secured in collaboration with the BirdLife International - Pacific Partnership and contributes to the efforts by the Department of Forestry, the University of the South Pacific, SPC and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) on promoting the SPC-GTZ model of community based sustainable forest management in Drawa, Vanua Levu.

Over 80% of Fiji's land is owned by indigenous landowners (mataqali), and over 99% of our endemic biodiversity is found in our terrestrial ecosystem. For too long, the management of our natural resources has been without the active participation of indigenous landowners. This has led to the loss of at least 50% of our forests to unsustainable logging, conversion of forest into agricultural lands, fires and improper land management decisions. All our endemic species are considered endangered because of their endemism and occurrence in forests that are at threat of disappearing to unwise use. In 2007 the Fiji Department of Forestry published a new Fiji Forest Policy, which reflects a radical change from timber exploitation to integrated resource management and sustainable forestry.

Through this project we will be able to translate the Fiji Forest Policy into the Fijian language, and then, with the Fiji Department of Forestry, select mataqali whom we will visit for an in-depth awareness campaign on the Fiji Forest Policy and the concept of creating Permanent Forest Estates and sustainable forest management.

Through their support, the Fijian Affairs Board and the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs is assuring opportunities for NatureFiji-MareqetiViti to engage with

landowners and talk to them about opportunities and alternative resource management available to them through the Fiji Forest Policy.

Now one year into the project, the additional support from the Fiji Department of Forestry, University of the South Pacific, GTZ, SPC, and National Trust of Fiji have already added value to the communication materials being developed for the awareness campaign.

We thank our project funder: the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, project partner (BirdLife International - Pacific Partnership) and key project stakeholders for their continued collaboration and support for the project.

The project team is due to embark on the first round of awareness in June 2010.

For more information on the project, please contact the project manager:

Nunia Thomas at [nuniat@naturefiji.org](mailto:nuniat@naturefiji.org), [www.naturefiji.org](http://www.naturefiji.org)

## What does mainstreaming mean to you?

Agriculture and forestry policy-makers are often told that they need to 'mainstream' a particular issue into their national policies. For example, youth, gender, climate change, food security. But what exactly does mainstreaming mean? We asked a few experts.

**Mainstreaming Climate Change**  
'Adaptation measures will need to be implemented as part of a broader suite of measures within existing development processes and decision cycles. This is known as – mainstreaming. For example, adaptation responses to the risks posed by climate change on agriculture might need to be incorporated as part of existing farming practices, within irrigation and community development plans and projects, as part of sectoral policies in agriculture, and within donor countries' assistance strategies as well as within national development and poverty alleviation strategies'. OECD, Policy guidance on integrating climate change into development cooperation.



**'Mainstreaming' climate change adaptation** means putting on your 'climate change glasses' when making decisions. For every planning process, formulation of policies and strategies but also decisions on investments or what to plant one we should ask: What are the effects of climate change on this and how can these risks and uncertainties be managed? Incorporating adequate responses is 'mainstreaming'.

Felix Ries, SPC-GTZ Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region

**Mainstreaming climate change** 'is pausing during everyday decision-making and planning and asking 'how might a changing climate affect this and what could I do differently?' and then acting on those reflections.'

Christopher Bartlett, SPC-GTZ Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region



**Youth mainstreaming** is 'assessing the implications for youth of any planned action, be it in local, governmental or regional issues.'

Rose Maebiru, Human Development Adviser for Youth, Secretariat of the Pacific Community

**Gender mainstreaming** is a process of consistently incorporating an awareness of and sensitivity to gender issues in all policy-making, planning, programmes, projects and budgeting at all levels in order to overcome inequalities between men and women, boys and girls. It is a strategy for making both women's and men's needs, concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the conceptualisation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes in all political, economic, cultural and social spheres, such that equality between men and women is respected and fostered. Gender mainstreaming recognises that gender equality is not solely the work of a specialised group of people in the margins of development processes but the work of everyone working in the mainstream of legal, social, technical and development projects.

Téa Braun, Human Development Adviser for Gender, SPC

**'Mainstreaming sustainable development is a process that enables environmental issues to be integrated into national development goals, policies and programmes and governance arrangements.'**

Seve Paeniu, former Sustainable Development Adviser at the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme



**Mainstreaming culture** is about making sure that culture is systematically factored in when designing, developing and implementing plans, project, programmes and policies in other sectors. Culture in this sense includes values, attitudes, world views, knowledge, beliefs as well as practices and expressions of culture. Mainstreaming culture therefore supposes understanding the context and the people; their aspirations, expectations and interaction with each other, their environment and beyond; before, during and while implementing plans, projects, programmes and policies.

Elise Huffer, Human Development Adviser for Culture, SPC



# Policy updates

The Solomon Islands Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock recently developed a national policy on Organic Agriculture Systems.

SPC and GTZ linked up with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization Sub-regional Office for the Pacific Islands (FAO-SAPA) to collaborate on the integration of climate change into the Tonga national Forest Policy. FAO had been supporting the Government of Tonga on the review of the forest policy and all parties recognised this as an opportune entry point for the integration of climate change related issues. The Tonga Forest Policy was formally endorsed by Cabinet in December 2009 and is one of the first national policies in the Pacific to specifically mainstream climate change issues.

The Vanuatu Ministry of Agriculture, Quarantine, Forestry and Fisheries has commenced a comprehensive review of its National Forest Policy and undertaken several stakeholder consultation workshops. It is anticipated that the revised policy will be endorsed by the Vanuatu Council of Ministers by the end of 2010.

All publicly available agriculture and forestry policy documents are available at

[http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=287&Itemid=130](http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=287&Itemid=130)

Please notify PAFPNet of any newly published/updated policies that can be uploaded to the website by emailing [lrdhelpdesk@spc.int](mailto:lrdhelpdesk@spc.int). Policy briefs, prepared by PAFPNet, highlight important issues for policy makers and recommended policy responses can be accessed at

[http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=286&Itemid=130](http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=286&Itemid=130)

## Win up to 1,500 euros and improve your capacity!

CTA in collaboration with PAFPNet and other regional networks, recently launched an essay contest. This contest, open to Youth between 18-25, is aimed at identifying innovative solutions on challenges faced by youth in agriculture and rural areas using Information and Communication Technologies.

Participants will write an essay (between 1,200 and 1,500 words) responding to any one of four different essay questions.

The questions and more details are available at <http://ardyis.cta.int/en/news/project-news/item/45-youth-rural-development-and-ict-ardyis-essay-contest-now-open>

The contest closes on July 31st. Good luck to contestants!

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