

# Strengthening Agricultural Innovations for Food Security and Agricultural Development

## *Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS)*

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## FS and Agriculture Challenges

- Agriculture
- Other FS Challenges Related to Agriculture

## Innovations for Food Security and Agriculture Development

- Extension and Advisory Services
- Changing landscapes

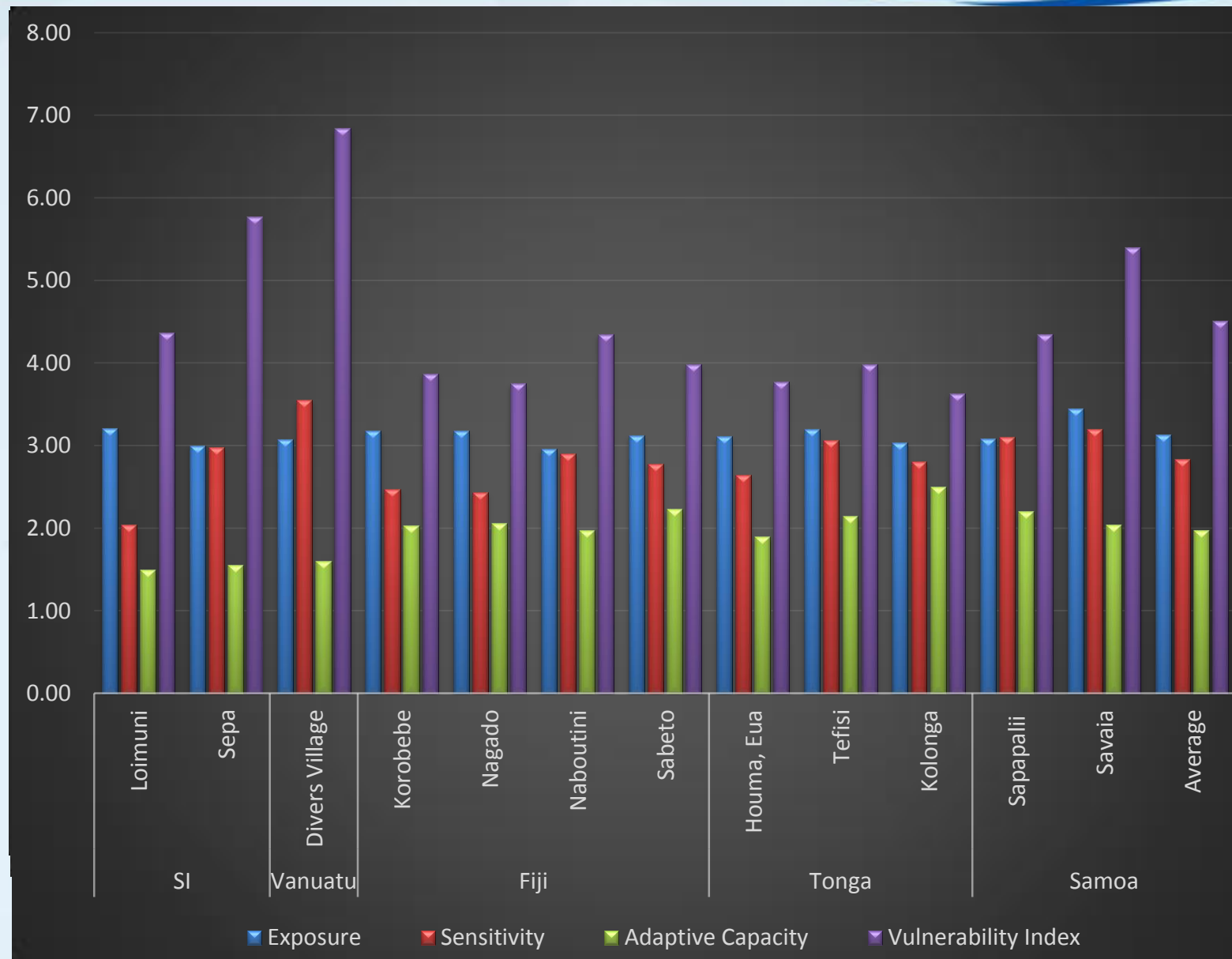
## Regional Approach to Strengthening Innovations

- PIRAS
- Activity Updates
- Planned Activities

# Agriculture and Food Security Challenges



- Declining food production per capita;
- Average agriculture annual growth rate has declined since 1990;
- Declining contribution to GDP;
- Increasing urbanisation while decreasing income per capita;
- Increasing NCD rates;
- Vulnerability to CC and Natural disasters;



- Agricultural efficiency and productivity depends on innovations;
- In Fiji, on average, around 25% of root crop production is lost due to technical inefficiency (Haszler et. al., 2003);
- A major growth in crop production and consumption is likely to be more dependent on the introduction of new technologies (Haszler et. al., 2003; Reddy, 2007);
- Technology adoption rates regarded low in Fiji (Haszler et. al., 2003) and the region;
- Global study by GFRAS pointed that poverty rates are directly linked to low agricultural technology and innovation systems;
- The Fiji Green Growth Principle “to accelerate integrated and inclusive sustainable development that inspires action at all levels in the country to build environmental resilience, build social improvement and reduce poverty, build economic growth and build resilience to the anticipated adverse effects of climate change”.

- Extension and research play critical role for efficient agricultural development
- Increasing demands for expanded role for extension
- Pluralistic but the challenge of coordination
- Often working in isolation of one another due to capacity and demands
- Increasing realisation of the role of ICT in service delivery
- Funding - <5% of national budget (project based)
- Capacity Needs (ACIAR & SPC, 2009)



# Regional Initiative to Support Innovations



- In 2005, Pacific Islands Extension Network (PIEN) was formed, endorsed by HOAFS/MOAF in 2009
- The Apia R&E Forum agreed on a number of actions to strengthening PIRAS:
  - Revival of PIEN, renamed to Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (PIRAS) network;
  - PIRAS Board representing the 3 subregionals, private sector, universities, FOs, research institutions, international linkages
  - Development of a Regional extension strategy (RES);
  - Agreed to establish an e-platform of key contacts and institutions, including research priorities from the meeting;
  - Agreed to establish an inventory of current and past research projects in the region.



## REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESEARCH & EXTENSION LINKAGES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY & TRADE



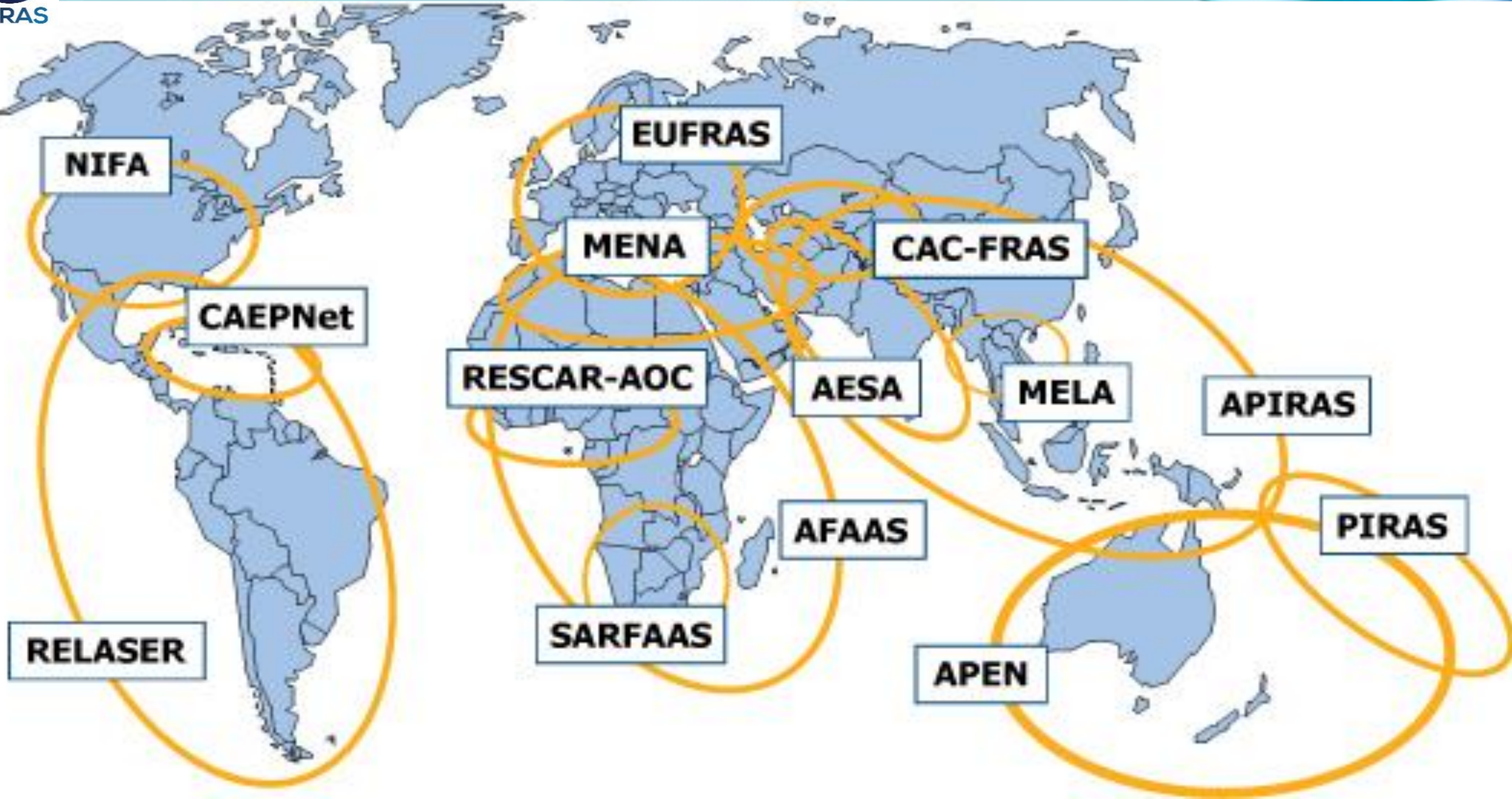
24- 28 AUGUST, 2015 - APIA, SAMOA

- PIRAS is a platform for professional development and networking among its members and other regional and global networks
- The **vision** of PIRAS is to promote Extension Excellence for Prosperous and Resilient Communities in PICTs.
- The **mission** of PIRAS is to provide advocacy and leadership on research and extension to meet sustainable livelihoods for PICTs.

- **PIRAS will focus on:**
  - Provide a voice and representation of PIRAS members at both regional and international forums to promote improved investment in RAS for the Pacific;
  - Support and develop the synthesis of evidence-based approaches and policies for improving the effectiveness of RAS;
  - Strengthen the network of national actors and fora in RAS through facilitating interaction and networking and sharing of best practices;
  - Collect, collate, inventory/store research results (and translate to meaningful form) and disseminate information on RAS in the region;
  - Maintain and enhance PIRAS links with national, regional and global agencies, institutions, organisations.



- Govern by Board, representation from the 3 Pacific Subregionals, Universities, Farmer organizations, Private Sector, Research Institutions, and International linkages;
- Membership is open to national RAS providers and other stakeholders in the Pacific;
- Other interested individuals, organisations and or networks may also become members of PIRAS;
- National focal points and ad hoc working groups will need to be appointed.



- Over 50 research priorities for livestock, crops and agroforestry
- Prioritisation based on - Potential impact, benefits, and research capacity, adoption likelihood
- Crops – Value addition, Market Access, Import Substitution Crops, CC Resilient Varieties and Genetic Resources; Off-Season Crops
- Livestock – livestock feed, livestock research inventory 30 years back; local breeds
- Agroforestry – Value Adding for of traditional seasonal crops (eg breadfruits); Study the Phenology of selected varieties of AF tree species to assist in Conservation purposes; Identification, domestication and promotion of native and introduced/modern agroforestry tree species for different agro ecological zones and farming systems for production and ecological objectives; Agroforestry and NCD; Integrated researching and documenting (on-farm trials); Determine nutrient (& other) limitations of each AF system & design try out corrective measures to address the deficiency; Atolls



- Pest and disease, soil fertility & degradation, crop field management techniques
- Pesticide use and residue values (MRL), testing kits need upgrading & GAP
- Policy, enabling environment for agribusiness
- Market Accessibility & utilisation
- Farmer training and upskilling (commercial focus)
- Lack of government support in infrastructure,
- Market access & enterprise development - PPP
- Value chain analysis



# Activities/Updates



- PIRAS Board Meeting, Nadi, September 2015
  - PIRAS Governance and Charter
  - PIRAS Workplan
  - Regional Extension Strategy Validation



2015

PIRAS CHARTER

# Update - Global Extension Review



	'Push' based approaches	'Pull' based approaches	'Innovation' based approaches
<b>Assumptions</b>	Early adopters will create market competition that results in broad technology adoption	Farmers need to be able to understand how technology will work in their context before adoption	Develop networks and create new institutions that address value chains
<b>Needs identification</b>	Researchers identify how production could be improved	Farmer based needs analysis	Farmers, trainers, market organisations, researchers, extension agents
<b>Locus and role of extension agent</b>	Information provider and educator	Facilitator and educator	Knowledge, network, systems and enterprise broker and convenor
<b>Tools/Techniques</b>	Supply chain analysis, field trials, train the trainer, train and visit	Participatory needs analysis / PRA Farmer field schools Participatory research – farmer led experiments Farmer to farmer and group learning processes	Farmer groups and or co-operatives Group learning processes
<b>Limitations</b>	Assumes relevance of technology to farmers and ignores contextual barriers to uptake	Ineffective on its own as farmers have insufficient power to challenge institutional norms that influence value-adding opportunities	Often focusses on early adopters who may narrow conversation scope to avoid losing competitive edge; Fails to address expectations of passive receipt of information

## GLOBAL REVIEW OF EXTENSION APPROACHES AND MODELS

Best Practices



- Challenges:
  - Funding
  - Coverage
  - Coordination and Communication
  - Capacity (Individual, institutional and systems capacities)
  - Limited policy support
- Approaches and Models:
  - Policies and PPPs (Innovation Systems)
  - FFS
  - Plant Health clinics
  - PRA
  - ICTs
  - FOs and Coops
- Regional Extension Strategy formulation

Land Resources Division

## The Pacific Islands Extension Strategy

Strategic Priorities in  
Agricultural Advisory and  
Extension Delivery 2015-2020

*Dr Christine King  
Dr Chris Jacobson  
Dr Salend Kumar*



*Extension Excellence, Resilient Communities*



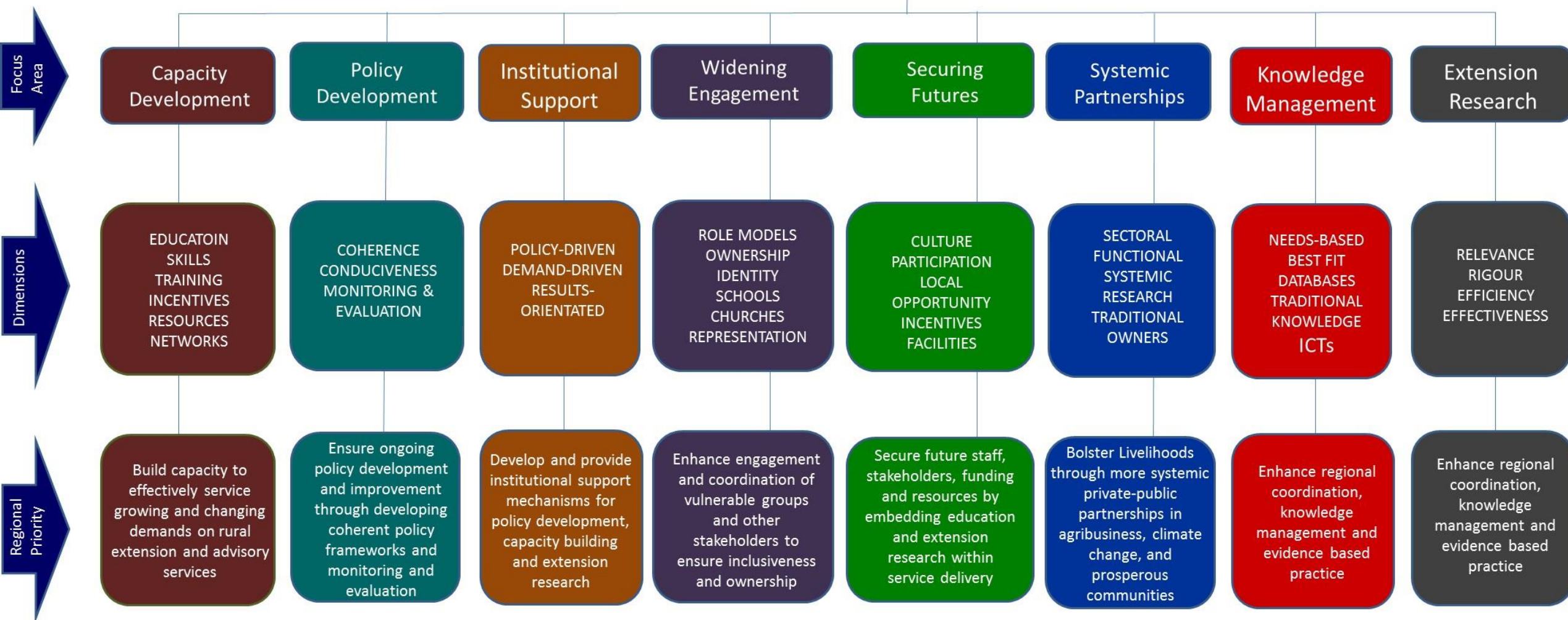
SPC  
Secretariat  
of the Pacific  
Community

 University of the  
Sunshine Coast  
Queensland, Australia

# Activity Update – Regional Extension Priorities



## Regional Governance Framework for Extension





# Activity Update - Online Platform Development



- Online Platform:
  - Information sharing and networking (national focal points)
  - Linkages to other regional and global networks



The screenshot displays the PIRAS website interface. The top header is dark blue with the PIRAS logo on the left, the text "Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (PIRAS)" in the center, and the SPC logo on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "About", "Events", "Resources", and "Networks & Partners". The main content area features a large group photograph of participants at a "REGIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP" held in Samoa in August 2015. The workshop banner also lists sponsors like GIZ, PAPP, and USP. At the bottom of the page, there is a PIRAS logo and a descriptive paragraph about the network's purpose and membership.

Pacific Islands Rural  
Advisory Services Network  
(PIRAS)

SPC  
Secretariat  
of the Pacific  
Community

Search

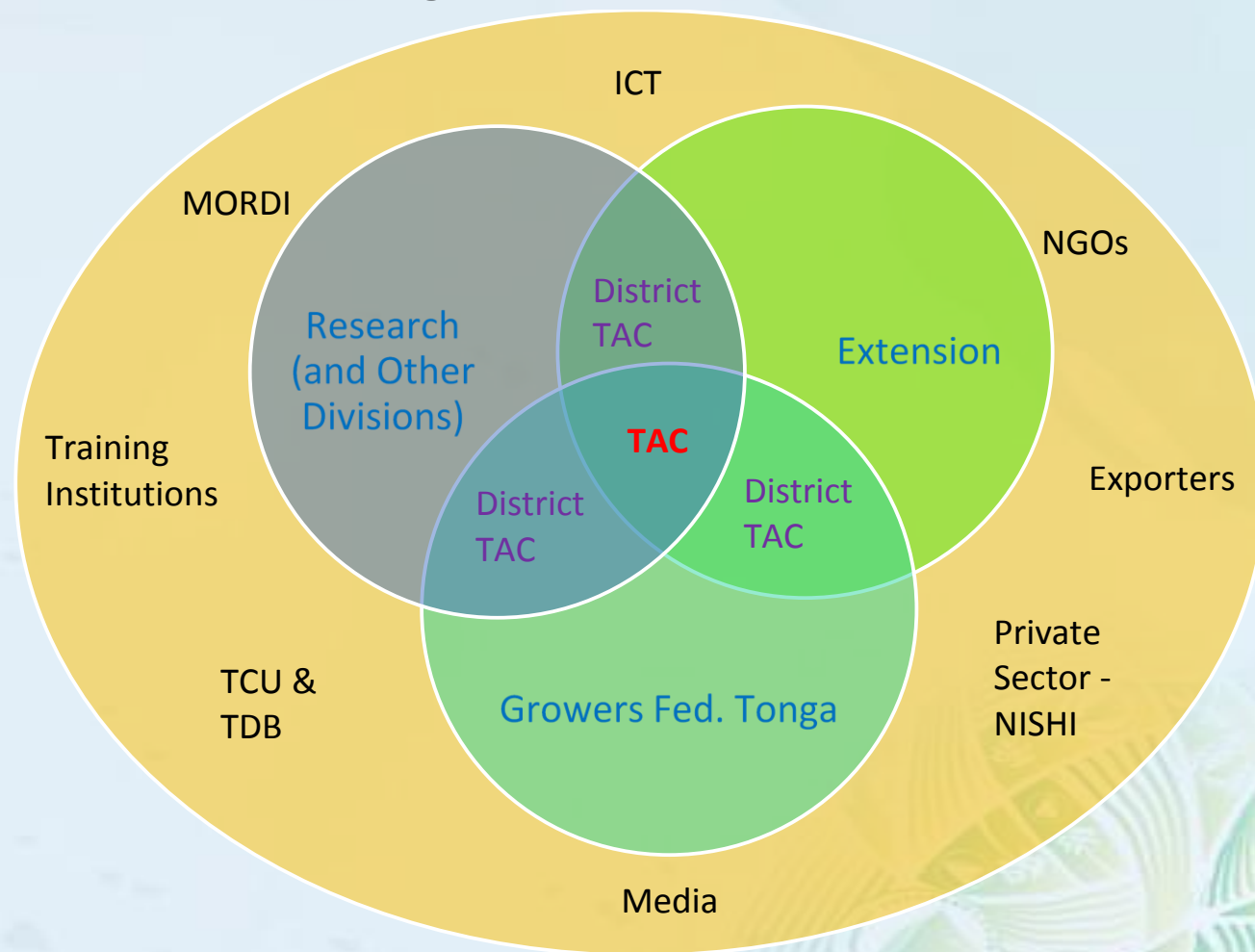
About Events Resources Networks & Partners

**REGIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP**  
STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESEARCH & EXTENSION  
LINKAGES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY & TRADE  
24 - 28 AUGUST 2015 • APIA • SAMOA

PIRAS is an informal network with ultimate aim to provide a platform for networking, professional development and representation of members. All the SPC member countries are recommended members of PIRAS. Other organisations and networks are also invited to apply for membership. PIRAS is hosted by the Land Resource Division (LRD) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

- National Platforms
- IFAD Funding to support PIRAS, pilot in Fiji:
  - Components:
    - ❖ National Platforms – identifying demand driven needs (Fiji)
    - ❖ IKM on best practices (Fiji/Regional)
    - ❖ Policy advocacy & dialogue (Fiji)

Tonga National Platform Model (PAPP)



- Linkages to global forums:
  - PIRAS – APIRAS - GFRAS – APEAEN Back to Back Annual Meeting in Fiji in 2016 (EU-PAPP, FAO and IFAD):
    - Date - proposed September 2016
    - Theme ***“Securing Futures in Agriculture: Ensuring the Next Generation of Agriculturists”***
- Research Inventory
- Research compendium
- Appointment of National focal points
- Advocate at regional and global



Thank you

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