

Regional Framework for Accelerating Action on Food Security and Nutrition in Pacific SIDS

DRAFT

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1. Introduction

The *Regional Framework for Accelerating Action on Food Security and Nutrition in Pacific SIDS* (the Pacific Framework) aims to strengthen the coherence and coordination of development partner support for food security and nutrition in Pacific Small Island Developing States (Pacific SIDS).¹ It will serve as the mechanism to coordinate implementation of the *Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States* (GAP) within the Pacific SIDS region. The Pacific Framework is a living document with an initial implementation phase of five years (2018-2022).

The GAP is a global guidance document aimed at accelerating action on food security and nutrition in SIDS to support their efforts towards attaining the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2017-2030) (2030 Agenda), and the agreed priorities of SIDS for the 2030 Agenda outlined in the *SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway* (2014)². It is intended to strengthen the coherence and coordination of global and regional support for food security, nutrition and sustainable development in SIDS, as well as to support SIDS governments in strengthening their national approaches and in ensuring that their needs and priorities are met in relevant global and regional policy processes.

The GAP is a tangible follow-up to the SAMOA Pathway, which underscored the need for closer international cooperation and a more integrated approach in order to accelerate progress towards internationally-agreed goals for the sustainable development of SIDS, and which highlighted as a priority the need to accelerate action on food security and nutrition in SIDS.

¹ The UN Pacific SIDS group is made up of Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Cook Islands and Niue are Associate Members

² Outcome document of the Third International Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS, held in Apia, Samoa in September 2014. The SAMOA Pathway was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in its Resolution 69/15 of 14th November 2014.

The overarching vision of the GAP is the achievement of the right of everyone to access safe, sufficient and nutritious foods, the end of hunger and malnutrition in all its forms, and the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources in SIDS for the benefit of present and future generations. It recommends actions at local, national, regional, and global levels to achieve three interconnected and mutually-reinforcing objectives:

- enabling environments for food security and nutrition;
- sustainable, resilient, and nutrition-sensitive food systems; and
- empowered people and communities for improved food security and nutrition.

The GAP was officially launched and endorsed at the 40th session of the FAO Conference in New York on 4th July 2017.

The Pacific Framework is based on the GAP framework, but focuses on a set of priorities that have been identified by Pacific SIDS and their development partners as being critical to accelerating progress in the region towards global, regional, and national goals and commitments relating to food security, nutrition and sustainable development.

In addition to the relevant goals and targets from the 2030 Agenda, this includes the 2025 global nutrition targets outlined in the *WHO Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition*, as well as the nutrition-related voluntary global targets for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) outlined in the *WHO Global Action Plan on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (2013-2020)*. It also includes binding and non-binding commitments outlined in the *ICN2 Rome on Nutrition*, the *10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP)*, the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* and its Paris Agreement, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, the *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, and the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD's) 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and associated Aichi targets (notably 4, 6, 13, and 14).

The Pacific Framework is also aligned with relevant regional strategies and action plans, including the *WHO Action Plan to Reduce the Double Burden of Malnutrition in the Western Pacific Region (2015-2020)*, the *WHO Western Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2014-2020)*; and the *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific: Towards a Food Secure Pacific (2011-2015)*.

Associated regional frameworks in support of the GAP are also under development for the Caribbean, and Atlantic and Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China

Sea (AIMS) SIDS regions. Effective cooperation, partnerships, and knowledge sharing across the SIDS, both intra- and inter-regionally, will be key to the success of the GAP and is a focus of all three regional frameworks. South-South collaboration across the SIDS will also be facilitated and supported by several other strategies and initiatives, including the FAO's new Inter-Regional Initiative (IRI) on SIDS.

Food security and nutrition situation in the Pacific SIDS region

The GAP and the Pacific Framework have been designed with the recognition that SIDS share a number of challenges that make them uniquely vulnerable to food insecurity, including: limited land mass and population; fragile natural environments and lack of arable land; narrow resource bases and reliance on ocean resources; high vulnerability to climate change, external economic shocks, and natural disasters; exposure to increasingly frequent and more intense severe weather and climate events, including droughts, floods and tropical storms; high dependence on food imports; dependence on a limited number of economic sectors; remoteness and distance from global markets; and high costs for energy, transportation and communication. These constraints imply increased vulnerability to shocks and limited development of commercially-oriented agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sectors.

The dispersion of Pacific SIDS communities over small land masses scattered over vast areas of ocean presents additional significant challenges to food transport, infrastructure development, and service delivery. Kiribati's 33 islands, for example, are spread across some 3.5 million km² of the central Pacific Ocean, forming one of the biggest EEZ in the world. The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) consists of 607 islands, atolls and islets with total land area of around 700 km² and EEZ of 2.98 million km² (one of the largest in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean).

In recent decades, all Pacific SIDS have experienced a dietary transition away from traditional staple crops towards imported cereal-based products (white rice, wheat flour, white bread) that are lower in essential micronutrients such as vitamin A and iron; as well as processed, energy-dense foods high in salt, sugar and fat. This dietary transition, alongside declining levels of work and travel-related physical activity, has been the driving force behind the rapid rise in overweight, obesity and associated non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the region over the last three decades.³ The top seven most obese countries in the world are Pacific SIDS, and of the ten countries with the highest diabetes prevalence in the world, seven are Pacific SIDS.⁴

³ Finucane. M, Stevens. G, Cowan. M, et al. (2011) "National, regional, and global trends in body-mass index since 1980: systematic analysis of health examination surveys and epidemiological studies with 960 country-years and 9.1 million participants," *The Lancet* 377:557-67

⁴ Pacific Possible: Health and Non-Communicable Diseases. Background Paper. The World Bank, 2016.

NCDs now represent the leading cause of death and morbidity in most Pacific SIDS. Cardiovascular disease accounts for the greatest mortality burden in the region, followed by diabetes.

At the same time, undernutrition, including stunting, wasting, low birth weight, and micronutrient deficiencies, remains a serious concern in many Pacific SIDS, particularly among specific, vulnerable population groups, including women of reproductive age and children less than five years of age. Half of children under-5 in Papua New Guinea (49.5%) and Timor-Leste (50.2%), and almost one-third of children under-5 in the Solomon Islands (32.8%) and Vanuatu (28.5%), are stunted.⁵ On average, over 40% of children under-5 and over 30% of women of reproductive age suffer from anaemia.⁶ As a result, Pacific SIDS face a “triple burden” of malnutrition, in which persistent undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies coexist with a growing burden of obesity and related NCDs.

This triple burden of malnutrition has considerable health, economic, and social costs. The costs of managing and treating obesity and associated NCDs alone are already a significant drain on the resources of Pacific SIDS, and are projected to rise exponentially.⁷ Public expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP is much higher in Pacific SIDS than the global average for lower-middle income countries, with expenditure on treating and managing NCDs exceeding more than 50% of the health budget for many countries.⁸ Expanding public health expenditure in the context of low rates of economic growth, limited capacity to generate tax revenue, and high vulnerability to economic shocks and natural hazards presents a significant health financing challenge for these countries. The biggest driver of lost output is the potential loss of labour due to early death. By 2040, it is estimated that mortalities due to cardiovascular disease and diabetes alone will have reduced the labour force of Pacific SIDS by between 6-20%.⁹

Subsistence fishing and agriculture traditionally served as the major sources of livelihood and food for Pacific SIDS communities. Fish and fishing are culturally and economically critical for most Pacific SIDS and are a mainstay of food security in the region. In many Pacific SIDS, per capita fish consumption is more than 3–4 times the global average, with fish providing 50–90% of animal protein in the diet of coastal communities.¹⁰ The majority of seafood consumed in the Pacific originates from

⁵ WHO (2016). Global Health Observatory data repository. UNICEF-WHO-WB Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates. <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.ngest?lang=en>

⁶ WHO (2016). Global Health Observatory data repository. <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.imr>

⁷ World Bank, 2012, The Economic Costs on Non-communicable Diseases in the Pacific Islands, Final report.

⁸ World Bank, 2016. Pacific Possible: Health and non-communicable diseases.

⁹ World Bank, 2016

¹⁰ SPC 2011. Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change.

coastal shallow water fisheries and includes fish, shellfish, crustaceans and seaweeds. Coastal fisheries also provide the primary or secondary source of income for up to 50 per cent of households in the Pacific region. However, a combination of population growth, ineffective management, over-exploitation and pollution of near-shore shallow water resources has resulted in significant declines of coastal food fisheries and thus represents a significant threat to food security in the region.

The decline in shallow water resources coupled with the absence of national skills and resources to safely harvest fish in the near-shore deep oceanic waters has contributed to the entry of low-price, imported canned fish alternatives which now dominate food stores. In the case of staple crops, trade liberalisation, coupled with high rates of rural-urban migration and low-rates of investment in both the production and marketing of traditional staple crops, have contributed to a reduced cost of imported substitute foods relative to more nutritious local staples, fruits and vegetables. The above challenges to food security are compounded by high poverty levels (ranging from 12.7 per cent in Vanuatu to 31 per cent in Fiji),¹¹ rapid urban population growth, high rates of unemployment (particularly among youth), and insufficient skills development and training to meet labour demands. More than half of youth in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Kiribati are unemployed.¹² While country-level population growth rates vary markedly (ranging from net negative growth in Niue and the Cook Islands to 2.3% annual population growth in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu)¹³, the total population of the Pacific SIDS is predicted to grow from 11.2 million (in 2015) to 18.6 million by 2050 (an increase of almost 7.5 million people, or 67%).¹⁴ Rapid urban population growth is already placing extreme pressure on land and infrastructure in urban centres in a number of Pacific SIDS.

2. The Pacific Framework

Goal and vision

The goal of the Pacific Framework is to strengthen the coherence and coordination of development partner support for food security and nutrition in Pacific SIDS. As with the GAP, the overarching vision is universal access to safe, sufficient and nutritious foods, the end of malnutrition in all its forms, and the sustainable

¹¹ UNDP 2014. The State of Human Development in the Pacific: A report on vulnerability and exclusion in a time of rapid change. United Nations Development Programme, Pacific Centre, Suva, Fiji.

¹² UNDP 2014

¹³ SPC (2016) Pacific Island Populations – Estimates and projections of demographic indicators for selected years – updated June 2016

¹⁴ UNDESA 2015. World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision.

management and utilization of natural resources in Pacific SIDS for the benefit of present and future generations.

Objectives, priority outcomes, and proposed actions

In order to achieve this vision, the Pacific Framework is based on the three overarching objectives outlined in the GAP: 1) Enabling environments for food security and nutrition; 2) Sustainable, resilient, and nutrition-sensitive food systems; and 3) Empowered people and communities.

Through initial consultations between Pacific SIDS leaders and technical partners¹⁵, a series of initial priority action areas have been identified where strengthened cooperation is most urgently needed to support progress towards the GAP objectives within the region. These 17 priority action areas translate into four priority outcomes, which align with the GAP objectives (see Table 1 and text below). In order to achieve GAP Objective 1 (enabling environments for food security and nutrition), for example, enhanced support is needed to improve the generation and use of high-quality evidence for policy formulation, including comprehensive systems for monitoring food availability, consumption, and related health and nutrition outcomes; and monitoring and evaluation of food-related policies and initiatives (Pacific Framework Priority Outcome 1.1). Support is also needed for Pacific SIDS to implement their commitments to establish multi-sectoral approaches to food security and nutrition (Priority Outcome 1.2).

Based on these initial priority outcomes and action areas, as well as on each partners existing and planned projects and programmes, development partners have identified a series of joint activities for the period 2018-2020 (see Appendix 1). These joint activities address urgent priorities for accelerating progress on food security and nutrition within the region, while leveraging opportunities for coordination and maximizing synergies across each development partner’s current and planned work programmes.

Table 1. Summary of objectives and priority outcomes

Objectives	Priority outcomes
1) Enabling environments for food security and nutrition	1.1. Evidence base strengthened to support multi-sectoral policy action
	1.2. Enhanced multi-sectoral commitment and action

¹⁵ The following technical partners were involved in the development of this framework: The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank Group (WB), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

2. Sustainable, resilient, and nutrition-sensitive food systems	2.1. Improved sustainability, resilience and nutrition-sensitivity of Pacific SIDS food systems
3. Empowered people and communities	3.1. Actions to improve food security and nutrition among key target groups are scaled up

Objective 1. Enabling environments for food security and nutrition

Building and sustaining enabling environments for food security and nutrition is an important area of focus globally, and an area in which Pacific SIDS and their development partners are investing significant resources. Coordinated, whole-of-government approaches, and the alignment of processes, policies, legislation, systems, regulations, and investments across sectors, are key components of enabling environments. For multi- sectoral approaches to work, there needs to be strong leadership, effective governance and institutional arrangements, including meaningful civil society participation; sustained commitment across all sectors over time, mobilisation of sufficient capacity and resources; generation, dissemination and use of reliable and timely knowledge and evidence; clear national targets and regular reviews of progress against these targets.

Priority outcome 1.1. Evidence base strengthened to support multi-sectoral policy action

Timely, high quality trend data on food availability, consumption, and nutrition and health outcomes is essential for generating and sustaining political commitment across sectors, as well as for detecting policy impacts, and guiding and strengthening future investments. Assessing the economic impacts of policies (both proposed and implemented) is also essential for generating and sustaining public and political support and commitment. At the Joint Forum Economic and Pacific Health Ministers' Meeting in July 2014 in Honiara, Solomon Islands, Pacific SIDS economic and health ministers agreed on five strategic action areas for tackling NCDs, including reducing consumption of unhealthy food and drink, and strengthening the evidence base to enable better investment planning and programme effectiveness.

Since the early 2000s, many Pacific SIDS have developed and adopted fiscal policies aimed at reducing consumption of foods and drinks that are associated with obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other diet-related NCDs. More than half of Pacific SIDS have adopted sales or excise taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) and/or sugar, including the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, and Tonga. A number of Pacific SIDS have also implemented fiscal policies aimed at reducing consumption of high-fat animal products, including Samoa (100% import duty on turkey tails), and Tonga (taxes on turkey tails and animal fats, and a 15% import duty on turkey tails, lamb flaps and lamb breasts). The Fiji government has removed excise duties on imported fruits, vegetables, and legumes, and in 2012 raised the import duty on

palm oil (to 32%). In 2016, Samoa raised excise taxes on certain high salt food products. There has been less attention given in the region to other, non-fiscal policy for improving diets, although several Pacific SIDS have introduced maximum standards for salt levels in foods (e.g. Samoa), mandatory school food standards (e.g. Fiji), and bans on the sale of SSBs in schools (e.g. Vanuatu).

Implementing well-designed fiscal policies to encourage and support healthier food and beverage purchasing behaviors is a key global policy recommendation, with the strongest evidence available for taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages. However, despite high-level support for tackling unhealthy diets and related NCDs in the region, not all policies have been successfully sustained. Challenges include lack of availability or allocation of sufficient resources for implementation, inadequate legal or regulatory capacity, constraints and disputes relating to compliance with international trade law, lack of sustained political commitment from all ministries and agencies involved in policy administration, and lack of assessment of policy impacts.

Enhanced support is needed to improve the design and implementation of fiscal policies targeting unhealthy diets (including ensuring compliance with international trade law), and to ensure policy impacts (including on government revenues; food availability, prices and consumption; and on nutrition and health outcomes) are systematically monitored and evaluated.

Support is also needed to facilitate and strengthen the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of other key global policy recommendations for improving diets, including: restricting marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to children; setting standards for foods and beverages in public facilities, including schools; mandatory or voluntary reformulation to reduce the amount of salt, sugars and saturated fat in processed/prepared foods; mandatory removal of trans fats from the food supply; and reviewing agricultural policies to ensure they contribute to a healthy and sustainable food supply.

There is a particular need to explore the potential effectiveness of policy measures to improve the supply and competitiveness of locally and regionally-produced nutritious foods (including fruits, vegetables, pulses, nuts and seeds) in the region, in order to make these foods more available, affordable, and safe for all consumers, particularly the poorest. Potential strategies include greater investment in the infrastructure required to produce, store and transport these foods (including domestic and regional inter-island transport), investment in agricultural research on these foods; and incentives for production and sale of healthy foods in areas where the poorest live.

Finally, support is needed to improve the sharing of evidence, experiences, and ‘lessons learned’ on promising and effective policies and approaches - nationally, regionally and internationally. This is vital for sustaining commitment and support across sectors, as well as for supporting other countries (within the region and internationally) to implement effective policies.

Priority outcome 1.2. Enhanced multi-sectoral commitment and action

Overall, there has been a general increase in the commitment of national resources for tackling poor diets and associated health outcomes in the region over the last decade, along with improved targeting of these resources towards packages of priority, essential interventions drawn from global ‘best buy’ recommendations. However, a lack of sustained commitment from outside of the health sector, a lack of integrated national approaches to food security and nutrition, and a chronic insufficiency of capacity and resources continue to constrain progress.

Pacific SIDS representatives committed to whole-of-government and whole-of-society responses to tackling NCD’s at the 2014 Joint Forum Economic and Health Ministers Meeting. This commitment was reaffirmed at the 2016 Pacific NCD Summit. In 2014, the Pacific Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Partnership was established to encourage a multi-sector approach to implementing the 2014 NCD Roadmap and achieving globally agreed NCD targets by facilitating collaboration between Pacific Health Ministers, UN agencies, development partners, and regional and international organizations.

A number of Pacific SIDS governments have taken steps towards establishing multi-sectoral NCD platforms at the national level (including Palau, Samoa and Tonga), and/or have developed multisectoral national plans of action to address NCDs (including Fiji, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga). Several Pacific SIDS have also taken steps towards multisectoral coordination on food security and nutrition (including Vanuatu and Fiji).

However, Pacific SIDS leaders have highlighted the need for enhanced support to establish/strengthen high-level multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder governance and coordination platforms for developing and overseeing integrated national approaches to improving food security and nutrition, and for supporting and sustaining multi-sectoral commitment and collaboration. This includes strengthening human and institutional capacities for addressing food security and nutrition challenges in all relevant sectors.

Much can be drawn from the experiences and lessons learned of the 60 countries currently involved in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement internationally.¹⁶ Since its launch in 2010, the SUN Movement has made significant progress in catalysing and supporting collective, cross-sectoral action, increased investment, and aligned implementation to advance progress towards global nutrition targets. The SUN Movement promotes a country-led approach whereby governments convene multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms supported by organized networks of partners – civil society, business, UN agencies, and donors. These multi-stakeholder platforms coordinate efforts across sectors to support a dual approach to nutrition, coupling the scaling up of a set of evidence-based, cost-effective nutrition-specific interventions¹⁷ with strategies to enhance the nutrition outcomes of effective, large-scale nutrition-sensitive interventions.¹⁸

Objective 2. Sustainable, resilient, and nutrition-sensitive food systems

The SAMOA Pathways highlights the need to promote the use of sustainable practices relating to agriculture, crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture to improve food and nutrition security in SIDS, while ensuring the sustainable management of the required water resources. Effective management of fisheries resources is highlighted, given any future collapse of shallow water coastal fisheries resources would also increase the reliance of SIDS on imports of animal-based proteins at a time when the diets of emerging global economies are demanding more meat and dairy products.

Priority outcome 2.1. Improved sustainability, resilience and nutrition-sensitivity of Pacific SIDS food systems

Given that healthy, productive and resilient fisheries, oceans and seas are the cornerstone of food security, sustainable livelihoods, economic development and essential ecosystem services in the Pacific, enhanced support for effective and sustainable fisheries management is an urgent priority. All regional policy with regards to fisheries management in Pacific SIDS is clear: community-based

¹⁶ <http://scalingupnutrition.org>

¹⁷Which act to address the immediate determinants of fetal and child nutrition and development: adequate food and nutrient intake, feeding, caregiving and parenting practices, and low burden of infectious diseases. Examples include promotion of optimum child feeding practices and behaviours; micronutrient supplementation; fortification of foods; and treatment of severe acute malnutrition.

¹⁸Which address the underlying determinants of foetal and child nutrition and development – food security; adequate caregiving resources at the maternal, household and community levels; and access to health services and a safe and hygienic environment – and incorporate specific nutrition goals and actions. Examples include: agricultural interventions to make nutritious food more accessible to all, and to support sources of income for women and children; improving access to clean water and sanitation to reduce infection and disease; ensuring social protection programmes support good nutrition; enhancing access to health services, particularly for women and children; and resilience-building interventions. (See [Lancet 2013 Series on Maternal and Child Nutrition](#) for more detail)

management (in all communities) supported by strategic actions of government (co-management) has been identified as the most effective strategy moving forward. This will rely strongly on the existence of community rights over near-shore resources, whether traditional or specifically assigned under new legislation. Identifying the most effective management models and facilitating exchanges between affected communities will be critical to ensuring enduring positive impacts on food security and nutrition.

A two-pronged strategy is needed to grow the supply and consumption of domestic fish: (i) resources that contribute to more effective management of inshore lagoon resources and (ii) greater opportunities to safely harvest, trade, and consume oceanic fish. In both cases, professionalizing the supply chain workforce (skills and work place training) to share the responsibilities for resource stewardship, coupled with the provision of tools to safely harvest, process, store and transport high quality fish and fish products are key.

Sustainable management of land resources, including soils, freshwater, animals, and plants, based on agro-ecological principles, is another key priority for promoting food security and income generation in Pacific SIDS. There is an urgent need to strengthen the conservation and use of traditional crop varieties that are resilient to climate change, and to support the use of climate smart agricultural practices. Improving access to a variety of nutritious fruit and vegetable genetic and planting material, as well as the development, adoption, incubation, and sharing of innovative technologies and practices developed for, and in, islands and atolls that lead to high yield crops, will be critical to ensuring more resilient, nutrition-sensitive food systems in the region.

Strengthened partnerships and cooperation are needed to support integrated approaches to the conservation (and multiplication) of traditional crop varieties, including in situ (e.g. on-farm and home-garden) and ex situ (e.g. in plant genetic resource facilities), as well as their utilization (including for research and development of indigenous nutrient-dense varieties incorporating local farming practices).

Inefficiencies along agricultural value chains play a key role in the lack of affordability and availability of a nutritious diet, which is the main obstacle to food security and nutrition in Pacific SIDS. In particular, problems with harvesting, storage, packing, transport, and retail infrastructure and/or market price mechanisms lead to significant levels of food loss and waste. This is an area that is gathering increasing global and regional interest and action.

Addressing infrastructure and transport challenges are key priorities for the Pacific SIDS. Developing domestic markets (including tourism markets) for nutritious, locally produced crops such as breadfruit has the potential to deliver wide-ranging benefits for food security and nutrition, rural development, and economic growth. Intra-regional markets also present opportunities to deliver safe, healthy, affordable food to Pacific SIDS communities, while improving food system resilience, supporting rural development, and promoting economic growth. However, inadequate infrastructure, and high logistical and cost barriers currently impede trade between Pacific SIDS. Enhanced support is needed for infrastructural development (including roads, port, storage and processing facilities, electricity and power generation, and information and communications) that maximizes pro-poor development. Innovative strategies are urgently needed to address transport barriers and strengthen access to services and markets (domestic, regional and international).

Enhanced support is also needed to facilitate the engagement of smallholder farmers (particularly women) and small-scale enterprises in nutrition-sensitive value chains, including through financial literacy education, technical advice, value chain education, access to finance mechanisms; and childcare facilities.

The private sector has an important role to play in supporting robust agri-food markets and for increasing the resilience and nutrition-sensitivity of Pacific SIDS food systems. Encouraging and leveraging private sector investment is also important for increasing small-holder farmers access to, participation in markets, and for supporting farmer livelihoods. There is an urgent need for enhanced public-private cooperation to stimulate investment in greater productivity and value chain efficiency in order to improve the availability of nutritious, local foods in domestic markets, and to stimulate demand for these foods.

Objective 3. Empowered people and communities for food security and nutrition

Poverty is the most important root cause of malnutrition, with low-income households much more likely to be food insecure and have poor diets than their wealthier counterparts. Without income or adequate resources, people are less likely to be able to access sufficient, healthy food. For poor urban households, energy-dense foods of low nutritional quality are often the most affordable and easily accessible. Malnutrition, in turn, affects the ability of individuals and households to escape poverty by impairing child growth and development; reducing individual's capacity to work, earn income, and produce food, and contributing to social and economic inequality and instability.

The first 1,000 days of life – from pregnancy to two years of age – represents the most critical “window-of-opportunity” for reducing the global burden of malnutrition, in terms of impact and returns on investment. Inadequate nutrition during this period can have particularly devastating impacts in terms of increased risk of mortality, stunted growth, impaired cognitive development, lower educational attainment, reduced adult productivity and economic loss to the country. The effects can be life-long and inter-generational. Women whose growth was stunted in utero and childhood are themselves more likely to give birth to children who are stunted. Children who are born with low birth weight, or who are wasted or stunted in early childhood, are also at elevated future risk of adult obesity and NCDs, particularly when exposed to a more ‘obesity prone’ environment with wide availability of cheap energy-dense, processed foods and low physical activity). Patterns of behavior established in childhood persist throughout life and become increasingly difficult to change as people get older. Therefore, establishing healthy eating patterns from the early years of life is critical to improving life-long and inter-generational nutrition and health outcomes.

Tackling malnutrition requires a dual approach, combining improved targeting and effectiveness of direct nutrition interventions, programmes, and services with scaling up nutrition-sensitive approaches to address the underlying determinants of nutrition across sectors, including agriculture, water and sanitation, education, employment, and social protection. Nutrition-sensitive approaches encompass: improving access to land, resources, innovative technologies, markets, and employment opportunities; improving access to clean water and improved sanitation facilities; ensuring social protection programmes support nutrition; and supporting the participation of vulnerable groups in policy and governance processes. It is essential that these strategies are underpinned by enabling political, institutional and social environments, including pro-poor, inclusive, and gender-sensitive regulatory and policy frameworks that protect, promote, and support nutrition and healthy diets.

Effective nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes target nutritionally vulnerable population groups (particularly the critical ‘first 1,000 days’ window of opportunity), incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators, improve income, foster linkages between essential services, include education strategies to raise awareness and influence behaviours, and include strategies to reduce vulnerability to external shocks. This entails understanding behaviours of individuals, families and communities, including the beliefs, values and social norms that influence dietary practices; and engaging with communities through participatory approaches that empower individuals and communities to take actions to adopt appropriate behaviours for improved nutrition and health status across the life course.

Priority outcome 3.1. Actions to improve food security and nutrition among key target groups are scaled-up

Across the Pacific SIDS, the burden of food insecurity and malnutrition disproportionately affects low-income and other vulnerable groups, including women, infants, young children, adolescent girls, and youth. Pacific SIDS leaders have committed to implementing the package of essential nutrition measures outlined in the *WHO Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition*, as well as the recommendations outlined in the *WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes* and subsequent relevant WHA Resolutions, in order to address malnutrition during the first 1,000 days. Enhanced support is needed to scale-up the delivery of quality nutrition interventions across the life course, as well as to ensure a more integrated approach to addressing the triple burden of malnutrition across the region.

Pacific SIDS leaders have identified the empowerment of individuals, families, and communities as an essential component of the regional approach to food security and nutrition. Priority areas in which greater cooperation and support is needed include: Improving access of small-scale farmers and enterprises, particularly women and youth, to knowledge, resources, services, and market opportunities; Strengthening nutrition education in the agricultural and primary health care sectors; Improving the targeting, effectiveness, and nutrition-sensitivity of social protection programmes, including income support and cash transfer programs, home and community garden programs, school food and nutrition programmes, and water, sanitation and hygiene programmes; and strategies to better promote, support, and value traditional knowledge relating to local food and cuisine in Pacific SIDS.

School food and nutrition programmes – encompassing the procurement and provision of more nutritious and locally grown foods to be provided or sold in schools, as well as education and skill-building programmes – are well-recognized social protection programmes. Schools provide excellent entry points for reaching children as well as their families and communities, and are a setting in which multiple sectors can join forces in improving nutrition.

In settings in which undernutrition is the primary concern, school feeding programs linked to agricultural development have been identified as a priority social protection strategy for improving children's access to nutritious foods while

supporting nutrition-sensitive public food procurement. There is a growing evidence base demonstrating that linking school feeding to agricultural development works.¹⁹

Schools also provide excellent settings for supporting the development of life-long healthy eating habits. With the prevalence of obesity among adolescents and youth rising at alarming rates across the Pacific SIDS region, young people have been identified as a key target group for interventions to promote healthy eating and to tackle the region's obesity/NCDs burden. Given the emergence of the multi-sectoral Health Promoting Schools initiative across many Pacific SIDS - drawing in agriculture, education and health sector stakeholders to support a healthier school environment for students – school-based approaches provide an important locus for piloting improved co-operation and co-implementation of multi-sectoral approaches to improving food security and nutrition. These approaches are also potentially effective ways of diversifying school meals and nutrition-sensitive public food procurement, with significant potential to be extended beyond schools to other institutional procurement programmes (including hospitals and prisons).

Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed to track progress in implementing the Pacific Framework at the regional level. An inter-agency network, comprising the key technical partners involved in developing the Framework, is proposed to oversee, and monitor progress in, implementation of the Framework. The QUINTS technical network, established to oversee implementation of the 2014 Pacific NCD Roadmap, could be used as a model. As such, the network would meet annually to review progress, with meetings coordinated by an annually rotating chair. Development of a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan would be one of the first orders of business for the network.

It is expected that this plan will draw on relevant established global and regional indicators and targets, as well as relevant existing mechanisms for surveillance and monitoring at the national and regional levels, where appropriate. In addition to minimizing monitoring and reporting burden, this will support sharing of knowledge and best practices among Pacific SIDS, as well as with the other two SIDS regions. It will also serve to provide an important link between global- and national-level reporting on progress towards the objectives, goals, and targets of the GAP, the 2030 Agenda, and other relevant global strategies (including the World Health Assembly global nutrition and NCD targets).

¹⁹For example, World Food Programme's (WFP's) Home Grown School Feeding and P4P programmes, and Brazil's national school feeding programme

Appendix 1. Proposed implementation strategy for the Pacific Framework: Initial joint activities for the first five years (2018-2022)

OBJECTIVE 1. ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION					
OUTCOME 1.1. EVIDENCE BASE STRENGTHENED TO SUPPORT MULTI-SECTORAL POLICY ACTION					
EXPECTED RESULTS	PRIORITY ACTION AREAS	INITIAL JOINT ACTIVITIES (2018-2022)	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	FOCAL COUNTRIES ²⁰	GAP OUTCOMES TO WHICH IT CONTRIBUTES
1.1.1. Evidence base on effective multi-sectoral policies strengthened and shared	1.1.1.1. Support policy-makers to assess/estimate the actual/potential impacts of multi-sectoral policies, including on government revenues and service delivery; food availability, prices, and consumption; and food security and nutrition outcomes; and to identify best policy models to be adopted and complimentary actions required to achieve desired outcomes.	Conduct pilot study to monitor trends in food consumption (HIES/STEPS/NNS), availability and nutrient content (Shop Surveys), and diet-related biomarkers (STEPS); and model economic and health impacts of implementing a range of food-related policies	FAO SPC, WHO, WB, University partners e.g.FNU/C-POND, University of Sydney (George Institute for Global Health)	?	1.3.1. Collection, generation, dissemination and use of reliable, timely, locally-relevant data and knowledge, including surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.
	1.1.1.2. Support the sharing of knowledge, experiences and lessons learned from innovative and effective policies and programmes at national, regional, and inter-regional fora		FAO SPC, WHO, UNICEF, WB	Region-wide	
1.1.2. Systems for surveillance and	1.1.2.1. Support collection, integration, analysis and reporting of relevant, quality food production and		FAO, SPC, WHO	Region-wide	

²⁰ Focal countries for initial joint activities (2018-2022) are based on implementation partner's current and planned work programmes. Successful targeted activities may be expanded region-wide in later phases of the Pacific Framework's implementation.

monitoring of food security and nutrition trends, including food availability and access, consumption patterns and food-related health risks are strengthened	nutrition statistics in a timely way, including regular monitoring of trends in food production, consumption, availability and nutrient content, and food prices	Provide technical assistance to improve standardisation of approaches (e.g. gender disaggregated data collection) and indicators used in national surveys which collect information relevant to food and nutrition security outcomes (including population censuses, HIES, Demographic Health Surveys/Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey)	FAO, SPC, UNICEF	Region-wide	
OUTCOME 1.2. ENHANCED MULTI-SECTORAL COMMITMENT AND ACTION					
EXPECTED RESULTS	PRIORITY ACTION AREAS	INITIAL JOINT ACTIVITIES (2018-2020)	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	FOCAL COUNTRIES	GAP OUTCOMES TO WHICH IT CONTRIBUTES
1.2.1 Political leadership and commitment strengthened across all relevant sectors	1.2.1.1. Strengthen political leadership and commitment for food security and nutrition across all relevant sectors, at national and regional level		SPC, FAO, WHO, UNICEF	Region-wide	1.1.1. Enhanced political commitment to eradicate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition.
1.2.2 Effective multi-stakeholder governance and coordination platforms are in	1.2.2.1. Support establishment/strengthening of high-level multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder governance and coordination platforms for developing and overseeing integrated national approaches to improving food		SPC, FAO, WHO, UNICEF	Region-wide	1.1.2. Inclusive governance, coordination, and accountability mechanisms for

place at national level	security and nutrition, and for supporting and sustaining multi-sectoral commitment and collaboration				food security and nutrition in place at all levels.
1.2.3. Legislative and institutional frameworks are strengthened and harmonized to improve food security and nutrition	1.2.3.1. Support development/adoption/strengthening/harmonization of legislative, regulatory and institutional frameworks to improve food security and nutrition in line with global guidelines and national priorities.		SPC, FAO, WHO, UNICEF	Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, RMI, Kiribati, Niue & W&F	1.1.3. Legislative and institutional frameworks are strengthened and harmonized to improve food security and nutrition.
1.2.4. Comprehensive, multi-stakeholder national food security and nutrition plans are in place	1.2.4.1. Support development/strengthening of multi-sectoral plans of action for food security and nutrition		FAO, SPC, UNICEF, WHO, IFAD*, ACIAR	Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Kiribati and Tonga	1.1.2. Inclusive governance, coordination, and accountability mechanisms for food security and nutrition in place at all levels.
1.2.5. Evidence-based policies are developed and aligned across all relevant sectors to maximize benefits for food security and nutrition	1.2.5.1. Support development/adoption/strengthening/harmonization of evidence-based public policies across all relevant sectors to improve food security and nutrition, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taxation, food fortification, food labeling, school food standards and other settings-based policies, salt reduction policies, food marketing to children, policies to control marketing of breast milk substitutes (WHO) 		FAO, SPC, WHO UNICEF	Region-wide	1.1.4. Effective and coherent policies are in place to promote food security and nutrition. 1.1.5. Policies and strategies across

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and strategies to incentivize and support production and consumption of healthy local foods, including through implementation of food-based dietary guidelines (FAO, IFAD*, SPC) - Support for revision of national policies which constrain the capacity of Agriculture Ministries to implement nutrition-sensitive agriculture programmes (FAO) 				sectors are aligned to maximise benefits for food security and nutrition.
1.2.6. Human and institutional capacities for addressing food security and nutrition challenges enhanced in all relevant sectors	1.2.6.1. Support institutional and human capacity development for addressing food security and nutrition challenges in all relevant sectors, including for inter-sectoral coordination, policy development, advocacy, surveillance and monitoring, program and service delivery, food safety.		FAO, SPC, IFAD*, WHO, UNICEF, WB	Region-wide	1.2.2. Human and institutional capacities for addressing food security and nutrition challenges enhanced in all relevant sectors.
	1.2.6.2. Develop resource toolkits and deliver capacity-building assistance to assist countries to implement Food Based Dietary Guidelines		FAO, SPC	Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Kiribati	
	1.2.6.3. Develop national roadmaps for improved public-private collaboration to strengthen the capacity of governments, farmer and private-sector organizations, to develop strategies and programmes that can increase poor rural people's access to nutritious and healthy food		IFAD*		

OBJECTIVE 2. SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND NUTRITION-SENSITIVE FOOD SYSTEMS					
OUTCOME 2.1. SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND NUTRITION-SENSITIVE PACIFIC SIDS FOOD SYSTEMS					
EXPECTED RESULTS	PRIORITY ACTION AREAS	INITIAL JOINT ACTIVITIES (2018-2020)	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	FOCAL COUNTRIES	GAP OUTCOMES TO WHICH IT CONTRIBUTES
2.1.1. Inshore fisheries sustainably developed and managed	2.1.1.1. Support development and implementation of effective policies, legislation, management frameworks and financing mechanisms for the sustainable development and management of inshore marine resources, including through training and capacity-building, education and awareness raising, empowerment of communities to manage marine resources, implementation of an adequate resource mobilisation program, and establishing appropriate mechanisms for effective collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.		FAO	Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Kiribati	2.1.1. Oceans and seas and their resources are sustainably managed and used for food security and nutrition.
	2.1.1.2. Support the sustainable management of coastal fisheries, including those that contribute to livelihoods, food security and dietary health, through the Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program		WB	Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, FSM, RMI, Tonga, Kiribati	2.1.1. Oceans and seas and their resources are sustainably managed and used for food security and nutrition
2.1.2 Sustainable, resilient agriculture, forestry and fisheries systems	2.1.2.1. Promote and support sustainable and climate-smart practices to help build resilient agriculture, forestry and fisheries systems, including through provision of technical assistance, training and capacity-building; support for the development or revision of national policies and plans; support for young farmers and farmer		FAO, IFAD*, WB, SPC	Region-wide	2.1.1. Oceans and seas and their resources are sustainably managed and used for food

<p>promoted and supported</p> <p>2.1.3. Increased productivity and efficiency of inclusive domestic and regional agri-food value chains that increase access to safe, nutritious, and affordable foods</p>	<p>organisations to share and analyse information and adopt climate-resilient agricultural production practices; and support for increased investment in horticulture and livestock development</p>				<p>security and nutrition.</p> <p>2.3.1. Terrestrial resources are sustainably managed and used for food security and nutrition.</p>
		<p>Invest in horticulture and livestock development through the Samoa Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Project (2013-18), which includes a partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Ministry of Health to promote healthy eating and consumption of fresh fruit & vegetables</p>	WB	Samoa	
	<p>2.1.2.2. Build evidence base on potential for development of small-scale tuna value chains for domestic markets</p>	<p>Evaluate costs and benefits associated with upscaling a new small scale fleet sector to supply tuna into domestic markets for domestic consumption</p>	SPC-FAO joint project	Regional? Perhaps Frank can advise	<p>2.1.1. Oceans and seas and their resources are sustainably managed and used for food</p>

					security and nutrition.
	2.1.2.3. Identify and promote practices to facilitate efficient domestic and regional agri-food value chains that increase access to safe, nutritious, and affordable foods, including providing technical assistance to reduce post-harvest losses and risks from food borne diseases, and uptake of technologies that extend the shelf life of fish.		FAO	Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	2.4.2. Increased productivity and efficiency of inclusive, nutrition-sensitive value chains.
2.1.4. Improved participation of vulnerable groups in nutrition-sensitive value chains	2.1.4.1. Support opportunities for small-scale farmers and enterprises, particularly youth, women, and remote communities, to participate in nutrition-sensitive value chains		SPC, IFAD*, FAO	Region-wide	2.4.1. Increased access to and participation of smallholders and small-scale enterprises in nutrition-sensitive value chains.
2.1.5. Resilience of Pacific SIDS food systems and communities to climate change, disasters and shocks strengthened	2.1.5.1. Support development and implementation of local adaptation plans of action, and use of climate resilient production technologies, methodologies, and tools		SPC	Region-wide	2.5.1. Increased resilience of food systems and communities to climate change, disasters and shocks.
	2.1.5.2. Establish feasibility of an expanded core regional program for the identification, preservation, propagation and dissemination of climate change resilient/nutritionally superior crop varieties		FAO	Region-wide	

	2.1.5.3. Strengthen capacity of health care systems to plan for, adapt to, and recover from disasters and for longer-term climate changes.		UNICEF, WHO	Region-wide	
OBJECTIVE 3. EMPOWERED PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES					
OUTCOME 3.1. ACTIONS TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION AMONG KEY TARGET GROUPS SCALED UP					
EXPECTED RESULTS	PRIORITY ACTION AREAS	INITIAL JOINT ACTIVITIES (2018-2020)	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	FOCAL COUNTRIES	GAP OUTCOMES TO WHICH IT CONTRIBUTES
3.1.1. Improved access of small-scale farmers to knowledge, resources, services and market opportunities	3.1.1.1. Improve coverage and delivery of extension and marketing support services for nutrition-sensitive smallholder value chains	Foster private sector partnerships for delivery of cash crop extension and marketing support to small-scale farmers	WB, IFAD*	Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea	3.1.1. Improved access of rural and urban poor to knowledge, resources, services, markets, and decent employment and income opportunities, particularly among youth and women.
		Strengthen marketing skills and capacity of farmers/fishers/small-scale processors, including from outer islands	FAO	?	
	3.1.1.2 Enhance support for farmer/fisher organizations and other local organizations	Strengthen capacity of National Farmer Organisations and sub-national networks to better provide extension services, market linkages and selected seed support.	SPC, IFAD*	Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, RMI	

3.1.2. Improved targeting, effectiveness, and nutrition-sensitivity of social protection programmes	3.1.2.1. Strengthen design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school food and nutrition programmes linked to smallholders and pro-poor rural development.	Conduct scoping study of existing school feeding programmes in the region; Develop and pilot school-feeding programmes capable of improving access to more nutritious and affordable school meals; Establish feasibility of a free fruit plate programme for pre- and primary school students; Monitor and evaluate the impact of pilot programmes and develop recommendations for future rollout in other countries; Develop a regional school feeding program toolkit to support implementation, including links to local agriculture	FAO, ?	Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, RMI	3.2.1. Improved access to, and effectiveness of, nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes.
	3.1.2.2. Strengthen design of social protection systems and interventions to make them more nutrition-sensitive and more flexible and responsive to external shocks	Support development of nutrition-sensitive social protection policy frameworks, and design and expansion of income support and conditional cash transfer programs	WB	Tonga	

		Establish feasibility of cash-based transfers targeting women and other vulnerable groups, rather than imported food aid, following extreme weather events	FAO	Vanuatu, Fiji and Solomon Islands	
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3.1.3. Improved access to, demand for, and utilization of, targeted interventions and services to prevent and treat malnutrition in all its forms	3.1.3.1. Support community- led initiatives to improve food security and nutrition, particularly among vulnerable groups, including through Health Promoting Schools (HPS) and Healthy Islands/Villages initiatives, school feeding programmes linked to smallholder farmers; home garden programmes; and education, skill-building and behavior change initiatives	Support rural communities to develop and implement community-level investment plans focusing on improving food security and nutrition, including through the establishment of farmer field schools, stronger local farmer networks and sub-national and/or existing sub-national entities /service providers	IFAD*, SPC	Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji	3.3.1. Improved access to, demand for, and utilization of, targeted interventions and services to prevent and treat malnutrition in all its forms, particularly among children and women of reproductive age, adolescents, and youth.
		Support development of community initiatives in the outer islands of Abemama, Tab North, Beru and Nonouti in Kiribati to improve management of home gardens, tree crops and root crops for household food consumption.	IFAD*-ACIAR-SPC	Kiribati	

			WHO,		
		Support education and capacity development of primary caregivers to adopt best-practice recommendations for care practices	UNICEF	Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu	
	3.1.3.2. Strengthen nutrition education in the agricultural and primary health care sectors;	Improve delivery of integrated, quality health and nutrition services	WHO, UNICEF	Region-wide	
		Provide household-level training on nutrition and good dietary practices to smallholder cocoa and coffee farmers, through the Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (2012-2019)	WB	PNG	
	3.1.3.3. Improve access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities, particularly for vulnerable population groups	Assist communities in rural and remote outer islands to benefit from the expansion of small-scale infrastructure, including water supply systems	WB, IFAD*	Solomon Islands	
		Support development and implementation of community initiatives in the outer islands of Abemama, Tab North, Beru and Nonouti in Kiribati to establish small-scale rainwater harvesting	IFAD*-ACIAR-SPC	Kiribati	

		structures to improve drinking water supplies			
		?	IFAD*	Vanuatu	
		?	WB	Kiribati	

* All activities involving IFAD to be reviewed by IFAD before being finalized

