



## **Regional workshop on integrating gender perspective in food security in the context of climate change**

**20 to 23 October 2015**

**Novotel, Nadi, Suva**

**Workshop Report**

### **Introduction**

The goal of the regional project “**Improving food security for building resilience to changing climate change in Pacific islands communities**”, is to evaluate and implement innovative techniques and management approaches to increasing the climate change resilience of terrestrial food production systems for communities in selected PICTS (Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu). The project does this through the introduction of integrated agricultural production systems based on assessments of the climate resilience of existing systems at selected sites.

There is a growing recognition that gender equality is critical for achieving sustainable development in the Pacific Islands countries. In the Pacific, women play a critical role in food security but it is not enough acknowledged. As a result, women’s knowledge and vast experience in food security and the impacts of a changing climate is often overlooked.

To cope with a changing climate, Pacific communities will need to explore new livelihood options, modify land use and how they manage natural resources. Partnership within the households between women and men is critical to successfully become more resilient to those changing environments.

Within the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation there is a need to strengthen gender-responsive approaches to ensure that the needs and priorities of men and women are met and that their respective skills and knowledge are drawn upon to improve outcomes.

Earlier this year, a gender assessment of the project was conducted and reveals that the Project benefited the women in their practical and productive roles as the main carers within their households and their communities. The gender assessment identified notable good practice in the process engaged by the project, to ensure that men and women participated equally in the participatory rural assessments and their views on vulnerability, exposure, sensitivity and adaptation were taken into consideration. However, it could have had a greater impacts on securing livelihoods if the project partners would have adopted a more 'conscious' strategy to empower women to be partners throughout the project., i.e. a systematic process of integrating the needs of women and men across all stages of programs and projects,

## **The Workshop**

This regional workshop organised by SPC and held in Nadi, Fiji, from 20 to 23 of October 2015 was organised for the benefit of the partners in the USAID-funded project "**Improving food security for building resilience to changing climate change in Pacific islands communities**", namely, government officials from Ministries of Agriculture and Office of Climate change from the Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Its goal was to expand the impacts of food security in the context of climate change by building resilient livelihood systems that are inclusive, gender responsible and benefit all members of households and communities. More specifically, the workshop had the objective:

This 3-day workshop was an introduction to gender mainstreaming approach. It focussed on the key concepts, gender analysis tools and principles of gender mainstreaming in the context of food security and climate change. At the end of the workshop, participants were expected

- to have shared and learned from each other about strategic approach to ensure that women and men have shared benefits from food security and climate change programs;
- to have identified practical actions to promote equitable access and benefits for women and men from food security and climate change programs
- to have identified entry points in current and upcoming food security and climate change programs to integrate gender perspective

Nineteen people participated in the workshop – 7 women and 12 men – (see annex 1 for participants' list). The workshop was facilitated by Brigitte Leduc and Dean L Solofa from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

The first session initiated the participants to key gender-related concepts such as equity, equality and empowerment. It was followed by a discussion on how gender affects people experience. Participants were invited to reflect on the impacts of issues related to food security on women and men and discussed specific constraints women or men may face because of their roles in the family and in the society, and social norms and expectations towards women and men. It was followed by an interactive session on gender stereotypes.

To raise awareness about the differential impacts climate change can have on people due to their socioeconomic status, the participants were invited to take part in a “power walk” exercise. This exercise provided the opportunity for the participants to discuss an intersectionality perspective, i.e. the experience of being a woman or a man is further altered by other factors affecting people status such as age, location, marital status, relationships within the family, employment situation, physical ability, etc. Participants could understand that people’s vulnerability to economic and environmental crisis is not only caused by where they live and what they have; their social status is critical in shaping people’s capacities. Afterwards, the participants were introduced to key gender issues in the Pacific. An important message from the morning session consisted in understanding that “not taking into account gender issues” or “not making any differences between men and women” in our programs, may induce discrimination or reinforce gender inequality.

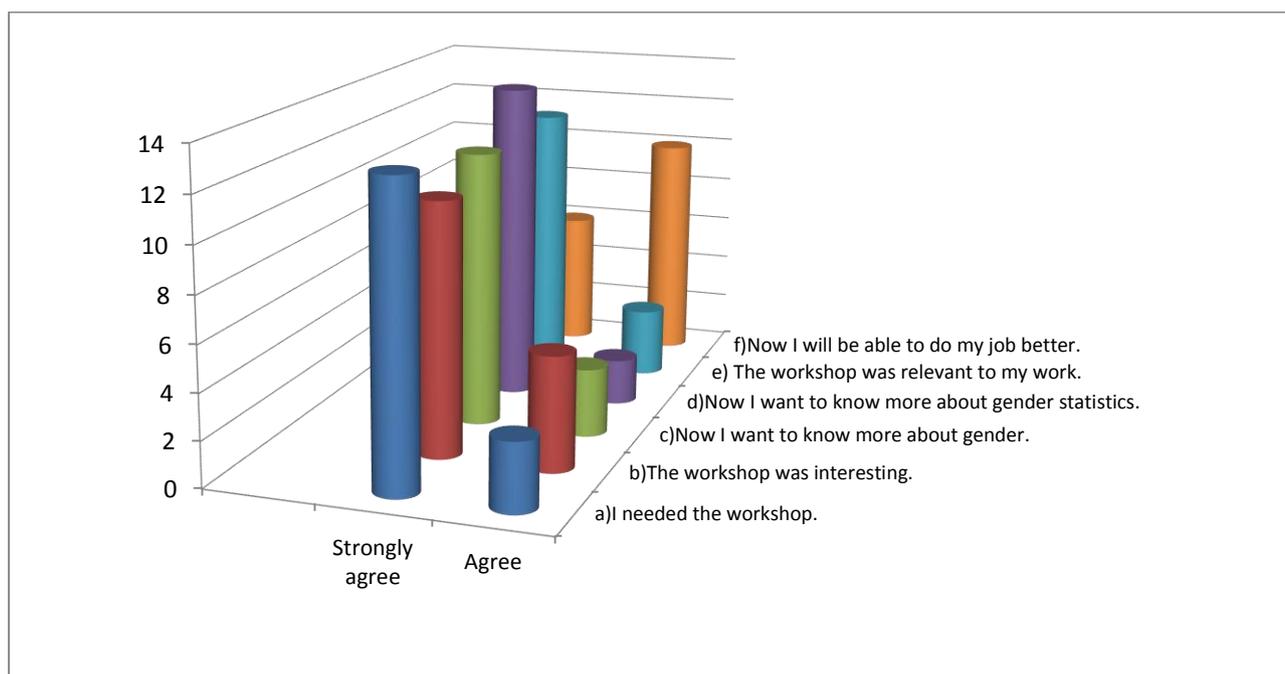
The afternoon session started with another exercise for talking about and assumptions we have about women’s and men’s proper place in the society. This session was followed by a presentation on the linkages between gender and climate change. The last part of the afternoon session included a presentation of findings from the gender impact assessment of the programme “Improving food security for building resilience to changing climate change in Pacific islands communities made in the Solomon Islands and Samoa and a panel discussion with participants representing each country to discuss the findings.

The second day of the workshop was dedicated to gender analysis. The participants were initiated to few gender analysis tools such as time use and activity profile that support the identification of different aspects of women’s and men’s roles and contribution in addressing issues such as disasters preparedness, climate change and food security. Outputs of those exercises stressed the importance to recognize the diverse contributions, experiences, knowledge and skills women and men that have to be reflected in food security and climate change programmes. Failure to do so may exacerbate gender inequality and affect the whole society. Other tools like the analysis of access to and control over resources and benefits and the level of empowerment on diverse aspects of women’s life looked at the potential constraints unequal rights have on women’s capacity to enjoy equal opportunities and fulfil their aspirations and address their family’s needs.

The last part of the workshop looked into gender mainstreaming as a process to address gender issues and support better design of food security and climate change programmes. Projects’ briefs on food security programs in the Pacific were presented to the participants who use those as case studies to identify entry points to address gender issues, empower women, and support gender equity. This was followed by a reflection on where and how the participants can integrate a gender perspective into their work on a day-to-day basis.

## Level of Appreciation

The participants were asked to fill an evaluation form at the beginning and at the end of the workshop. All participants fill it. Three participants had previously taken part to gender-related training previously to this one. The participants expressed a high level of satisfaction towards the content and the format of the workshop and stated that the content was relevant and will help them to do their work better.



## Following up

For the majority of participants, it was their first training on gender mainstreaming approach. The level of participation was very good throughout the workshop and most countries have expressed their interest to conduct similar training on gender mainstreaming in food security and climate change programmes in their respective country.

There is obviously a need to further develop capacities about gender mainstreaming approach. Countries needs to be able to conduct gender analysis that would inform policy making and programmes' designed; use an empowering approach to meaningfully build people's resilience to climate change; and define indicators that to monitor and assess how food security and climate change programmes benefit women and men.

It may be useful to accompany each country in developing a simple gender strategy within national food security and/or climate change strategy that would enable government to support not only equality of opportunities to participate in initiatives building resilience; but also for ensuring equality of outcomes, i.e. that women benefit equitably from those programs.

## Annex 1: List of Participants

	Name		Gender	Position	Organisation	Country
1.	Esron	Mark Vano	M	Gender and Protection Cluster Coordinator- Economic Desk	Ministry of Justice	Vanuatu
2.	Rutiana	Kareba	F	National Coordinator and Senior Agriculture Officer	Agriculture and Livestock Division	Kiribati
3.	Kabuati	Nakabuta	M	Senior Agriculture Officer	Department of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development	Kiribati
4.	Reeten	Bobai	F	Account Officer	Ministry of Finance & Economic Development	Kiribati
5.	Lorfan	Pomana	M	Accountant	Ministry of Agriculture	Tonga
6.	Paul	Ne'e	M	Finance Department	Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock	Solomon Islands
7.	Nelly	Kere	F	Solomon Islands National Climate Change and Meteorology Coordinator	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management	Solomon Islands
8.	Vinaisi	Dilikuwai	F	Project Officer- Climate Change	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Fiji
9.	Jalesi	Mateboto	M	Community Forester	SPC-LRD	Fiji
10.	Manu	Manuofetoa	M	National Coordinator SPC-EU GCCA:PSIS Project	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	Tonga
11.	Maria	Elder Ratutokarua	F	Sustainable Land Management Adviser	SPC-LRD	Fiji
12.	Toifalefahu	Moala	M	National Project Coordinator for USAID/SPC Food Security Project	MAFFF	Tonga
13.	Emele	Meleisea- Ainuu	F	National Project Coordinator for USAID/SPC Food Security Project (Samoa)	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Samoa	Samoa
14.	Mateilili	Tautalagia Leana	M	Senior Information/Communications Officer	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Samoa

15.	Aleni Uelese	M	National IPM/ICM Project Coordinator (Samoa)	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Samoa
16.	Fonoimoana Esira Maui	F	Hydrology Officer	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment- Samoa	Samoa
17.	Cenon Padolina	M	Forest Genetic Resources Officer	SPC-LRD	Fiji
18.	Mark Biloko	M	Food Security Coordinator	SPC/USAID	Solomon Islands
19.	Inosi Yabakivou	M	Agriculture Technician	SPC	Fiji
20.	Amelia Caucau	F	Research Assistant	SPC/USAID	Fiji