



HORIZON 2030

**FIJI'S PATHWAY
TO
"A SAFE, RESILIENT, INNOVATIVE FOOD SYSTEM"**

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1.0 **BACKGROUND**

- Fiji is a large archipelago with diverse landscapes and climate. More than 300 islands are scattered over 1.3 million square kilometres of ocean. The islands are categorized by diverse ecosystem including significant areas of natural forests, fresh water, and coastal and marine life. As the hub of the South Pacific, Fiji has a land area of 18,333km², is a unique and diverse nation with many comparable challenges.
- A radical approach is therefore key to unlocking the full potential of Fiji’s food systems. Transformation, therefore, would require a systemic, multi-stakeholder approach, taking into consideration the strengths of Fijian food systems as well as unique vulnerabilities to factors such as climate, environment, biodiversity, and food safety challenges.
- This transformational pathway aims to describe Fiji’s current food system, identify binding constraints and develop optimal pathways that will enable a safe and sustainable food system that considers key actions, such as promotion of; sustainable livelihoods, preservation of essential forest ecosystems and native biodiversity, provide food and nutrition security, that will ensure economic growth for a better and secure future for all Fijians.

2.0 **FIIJ’S FOOD SYSTEMS – THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY AND BINDING CONSTRAINTS**

<i>Fiji’s Primary Sectors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop, livestock, fisheries and forestry is an important source of income, livelihoods, and employment. • 65% of agriculture farmers are small-holder operators with land of 1 hectare or less. • Increase in farming population by 26% since 2009, and noticeable increase in activity since COVID-19 pandemic. • Recognised as a high potential sector with a high level of interest from all stakeholders since COVID-19.
<i>Food System Supply Chain</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value chain is driven by wholesalers, retailers, seed companies, farmers, and consumers. • Need for an inclusive approach to achieve a seamless and integrated mode of supply chain which is efficient and effective. • Value-adding is an untapped potential with green and blue foods. • Food handling, storage, and processing limitation, together with well-integrated infrastructure and transport facilities is a constraint. • Inconsistency and low production/supply during off-season for certain commodities.
<i>Food Trade and Marketing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade and marketing hindered by geographical distances and inadequacy in infrastructure and transport. • Limited marketing knowledge and bargaining power with subsistence farmers – limits ability to upscale production to commercial scale. • Strong “Fiji Brand” image that can be capitalized on for Agricultural sector.

<p><i>Food Environments, Diets and Consumer Behaviours</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are eating less healthy local foods (root crops, vegetables and fruits) – prevalence of NCD’s in Fiji as leading cause of death. • High level of imported foods (cereal-based diet, fats and sugar) which are highly processed and less nutritious, but also in many cases cheaper, and easily available in many local stores, and non-perishable. • Accessibility of fresh local foods such as fruits, vegetables, fish and other seafood are sometimes limited to urban dwellers in Fiji, because of price, seasonality, and lifestyle choices.
<p><i>Food Security and Nutrition Outcomes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food availability is not an issue in Fiji, with the country being self-sufficient in several key commodities including chicken, pork, taro, and cassava. • Affordability or access to a healthy diet remains a key challenge for most Fijians, and food and nutrition security indicators has scarcely improved in decades. • Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity was estimated at 14.3 percent in 2018-2020. • In terms of nutrition, while prevalence of undernourishment in Fiji is very low at 5.6 percent in 2018-2020. Under nutrition (7.2 percent stunting among children under five years in 2020) and micronutrient deficiencies persists.

Our Challenges and Binding Constraints

- Fiji remains vulnerable to impacts of climate change and focus needs to also be on building resilience to enhance ability to bounce back quickly in the event of a natural disaster.
- Better production planning, improved market information and rural infrastructure, and access to capital are required for market improvement.
- Lack of access to land to plant and grow food especially in urban areas, restricted movements of fresh produce from farms to the markets.
- Releasing arable land for productive use – estimated 70% of arable land in Fiji is under-utilised; need for enabling solution for native lease land.
- Enhancing connectivity through provision of e-agriculture tools with enabled trade opportunities which are currently not fully evolved and in extensive use at producer level.
- Access to finance to secure additional farm power and mechanisation remains a key constraint.
- Production is constrained by poor agricultural practices and limited access by smallholder farmers to modern technology, knowledge, and markets.
- Low level of sophistication in the production systems, making primary an under-developed sector on a commercial scale.
- High production and labour costs, coupled with low productivity and inefficiency, are disincentives to staying in the agricultural sector.
- Involvement of private sector in the field of agriculture, in particular value-adding venture remains limited.
- Hotels and restaurants favour importing produce versus opting for local produce, citing consistency in supply and quality as key factors in opting for imports.
- Need for free and fair-trade opportunities – it is vital that trading partners allow streamlining of processes to enable export of fresh produce, which under current arrangements, can take years to establish.

3.0 FIJI'S FOOD SYSTEM – GAME-CHANGING SOLUTIONS

While a transition to healthier, more sustainable food systems requires a well thought out plan and well executed activities suited to local settings and dynamics, several cross-cutting, game-changing solutions have been evident from the dialogues and inputs gathered due to a high degree of importance and potential to achieve a real transformation with respect to our food systems in Fiji.

Fast forwarding to 2030, Fiji envisions that its picture of success will be denoted with the achievement of the following outcomes:

- Benchmark level of productivity in nature-positive food systems and healthy, vibrant society with access to safe and nutritious food always.
- Balanced and sustainable equation of green and blue food consumption patterns that fully meets domestic food requirements, as well as positions Fiji strongly as a net exporter of food.
- Well-developed and sustainable nature-positive food production systems that prevents biodiversity loss, limited use of inorganic inputs and replacing monoculture with poly culture nature-based farming practices.
- Thriving primary sector that not only is a leading contributor to Fiji's economic growth agenda but also is an attractive commercial proposition that ensures a sustainable and equitable livelihood for all.
- Innovative, efficient, climate smart and resilient food system that is ably positioned to cushion the impact of future shocks.

In realizing Fiji's aspirational goals, the dialogues paved way to the following game-changing solutions which supports the delivery of the above 5 destination goals of the food system in Fiji by 2030.

1. CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR IMPROVED NATURE-POSITIVE FOOD SYSTEMS: GOVERNANCE, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

- i. Strengthen government capacity to work interactively and collaboratively with other agencies and partners to find better solutions and use best practices.
- ii. Prioritise investments in key sectors in the food systems such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry; - key areas would be on infrastructure, technology, enhancing output, diversification and improving market access.
- iii. Adoption of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy and successful implementation of agreed programmes.
- iv. Optimise policies and put in plans in place across different agencies to promote ease of doing business in primary sectors towards achieving our 2030 aspirations.

2. INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD: BLUE & GREEN FOODS TO TRANSFORM AND SUSTAIN NATURE-POSITIVE FOOD SYSTEMS WHILE PROTECTING VULNERABLE ECOSYSTEMS

- i. Boost national nature-positive production to compensate for potential disruptions to food imports and to provide jobs and incomes for a wider population.

- ii. Promote release of arable land for agriculture production.
- iii. Promote use of technology through incentives and other schemes to improve productivity.
- iv. Enhance knowledge on farming options according to weather and soil type and the benefits of protection of ecosystems and biodiversity.
- v. Develop and promote models of organic food forestry or agroforestry systems with processing facilities and business management plans for the retail of nutritious local food products that can easily scaled up for communities and/or down to fit into Home Gardens.

3. UPSCALING PROCESSING AND REDUCING FOOD WASTE

- i. Upscale value-adding operations for diversity of products across the Fijian food system to create economic gains, employment and food security.
- ii. Support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMS) and provide initiatives for supporting farmers to add value to their local production (examples include breadfruit flour/banana chips/cassava flour) for self-consumption and local markets through public private partnerships.
- iii. Develop a “Food Hub” production setup as an enabling platform for entrepreneurs to bring their ideas to life.

4. TAPPING INTO EMERGING MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- i. Boost commercialization and facilitation of market access to different actors across Fiji’s food system.
- ii. Increase commercial participation from primary sector through infrastructure development for better market access and establishment of new market pathways for agriculture, agroforestry, fisheries products.
- iii. Develop a robust online system throughout the value chain, enabled through the current wide access to mobile phones and internet to improve communication from/to rural areas, identify better options to deliver food from rural to urban areas, open new marketing opportunities and promote more involvement of rural actors in the national and international market.
- iv. Strengthening Agri-tourism linkages, including the promotion of contract farming schemes, providing support to farmers to enable transition from small scale to semi-commercial and commercial farming.

5. BUILDING RESILIENCE

- i. Climate smart practices and technologies to be promoted and adopted across the primary sectors, learning from other countries on their successful programmes and adopting benchmark practices.
- ii. Promote regenerative agriculture, and support communities to plant a diversity of trees, crops and integrating livestock activities in degraded areas to complement reforestation and sustain ecosystem services.
- iii. Provide an effective, multi-pronged rehabilitation support package to primary sector producers to bounce back quicker from external shocks such as natural disasters.

- iv. Achieve sustainable multiple trees and/or cropping system, based on local traditional plant biodiversity and market's demands to promote high value ecosystems that are beneficial for people and the environment.
- v. Provide technical assistance for the diversification of productive activity to farmers and fishers to promote resilience.

6. FINANCE AND INSURANCE

- i. Drive improved and higher level of investments and financial security, while minimizing the risks of the operations.
- ii. Form alliances with financial institutions and international development partners to increase finance access for farmers, fishers and forest workers through financial inclusion programmes, with more blue and green financing instruments, and insurance schemes, for example climate risk insurance.

7. TECHNOLOGY / DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

- i. Provide accessible digital platforms that can provide information and guidance to producers/end-users for the design, planning and implementation of their activities and enable e-trade.
- ii. Utilise private-public partnerships for adjusting existing platforms and getting tailor made solutions, to facilitate their broader use by different stakeholders across the food system, for example, mPaisa mobile wallet, VitiKart online shopping, etc.
- iii. Promote use of smart gadgets for "Internet of things in agriculture" by ensuring all online tools used in agriculture are all connected to provide timely information in monitoring farm activities.
- iv. Use Block chain technology and digitalization to help to engage younger people in the food system, as for example in the use of drones for monitoring land use changes or digital devices to measure changes in the ocean temperature.
- v. Pilot model technology enabled farms (land/sea) as learning platforms to learn and gradually drive inception of technology across wider agriculture area over time.
- vi. Promote digital literacy training and facilitating access to mobile phones and internet in rural areas targeting women and youth to enable using farming advisory services, mobile payment and credit, digital marketplaces etc.

8. INCLUSIVENESS – WOMEN & YOUTH

- i. Empower youth and women through specifically funded and targeted programmes and provide them with opportunities to increase their income according to their expertise and skills.
- ii. Better integrate women into planning and development of green and blue food production systems, with better level of representation in local and national institutions and in natural resource governance mechanism.
- iii. Launch a National "Call to Action" to transform food systems include efforts to engage young people as agent of change and being essential for bringing innovative ideas and solutions.

9. RESEARCH DRIVEN INNOVATION AND GROWTH

- i. Enhance capabilities to achieve a solid research and innovation system to keep up with latest developments in science and technology and put them at disposal of the national stakeholders.
- ii. Drive the development of more resilient crop varieties with special focus on regenerative agriculture and livestock breeds adjusted to the different climate and soil conditions together with gene pool conservation, sustainable land management practices, pest and disease management and crop modelling for climate change among others.
- iii. Drive Food fortification or enrichment programs to address the nutrient deficiency problems, as well as partnerships with private sectors for reformulating products and reducing salt, sugar, and fats.
- iv. Carry out further research in fisheries involving innovation and technology transfer in several key aspects, including ocean data on salinity and pH to identify which native fish species are affected by changing conditions and how this in turn affects the supply to communities.
- v. Enhance Extension capability, to translate and disseminate innovative practices and technologies, and train farmers, fishers and foresters across the country to make better informed decisions.

10. IMPROVING LAND UTILISATION

- i. Promote smart and innovative ways of making large size arable iTLTB land available to producers for longer term (99-year lease for example) whilst ensuring resource owners (landowners) are treated as partners and get an equitable return to achieve an improved quality of life and enhanced livelihoods (win-win solution).
- ii. Provide effective rehabilitation methodology where needed and facilitating accessibility through iTLTB.
- iii. Provide support for land preparation and assistance to proper land use planning and adoption of sustainable practices in the long-term, and commitment to integrated approaches for land management.

11. EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

- i. Improve accessibility of healthy products in the local markets and reducing access to cheap unhealthier options.
- ii. Launch a movement for the the population on the nutritional value of foods, using info graphics and social media platforms and TV programmes for informing and advising people through very straightforward messages and measure progress against set targets and objectives.
- iii. A clear innovative, technology enabled system for agricultural, fishery and forestry products, with nutritional information that can assist consumers when deciding what to buy to be considered for implementation.
- iv. Local chefs to be innovators and change-makers in a sustainable food system through discovering unique sources of gastronomy by engaging with neglected and underutilized food materials and exploring diverse culinary knowledge that holds potential for productive engagement with food system transformation efforts.

- v. School environments to play a major role in the ability of Fijian children to access healthy diets - children to be taught on benefits of eating healthy diets at school and the curriculum to include agriculture and nutrition as core subjects from early stages aiming to increase their knowledge on traditional crops and local fisheries and forest foods.
- vi. Improve attractiveness of agriculture as a subject of study in tertiary institutions by promoting modern aspect of food production and entrepreneurship potential of the primary sector.

12. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE FOOD SYSTEM

- i. Promote targeting learning and awareness activities to empower people with knowledge to strengthen ownership of our natural resources and strengthen training for traditional leaders in the landowning units so that they become key advocates on sustainable resource use and protection of our biodiversity.
- ii. Educate farmers and fisher and equip with both traditional knowledge and latest scientific technology to ensure efficient and sustainable production systems.
- iii. Enhance extension division capabilities, including modernizing processes, systems and internal capabilities in Ministries and related agencies to support accelerated growth through improved service delivery and provision of sound technical support across the primary sectors.

4.0 OUR COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMING FIJI'S FOOD SYSTEM

Fiji is well poised to achieve this vision for food systems transformation by 2030, anchored in a robust policy environment. To do so, we must work in an inclusive and participatory manner, across national and divisional level.

The development partners and civil society stand ready to support government in the implementation of this roadmap. Fiji's transformed food systems will serve as a critical foundation to achieving the 2030 Agenda and ensuring that no one is left behind through:

1. Providing leadership and required resourcing to drive the inception of the agreed nature-positive game changing solutions and turning them into tangible actions and activities that forms a critical component of Government's nature-positive food system blueprint.
2. Ensuring a collaborative, inclusive and unified progress on the 12 game changing solutions identified through the Fiji Food Systems Dialogues and regularly review progress against plan to ensure real change.
3. Creating a conducive environment for bolstering primary sector performance, promoting own learning and sharing knowledge with others to drive a multi-agency collaborative approach in achieving nature-positive food system transformation and maximise impact of the interventions.
4. Ensure relevant agencies are accountable for delivery of agreed objectives, measuring progress through annual planning reviews and robust monitoring and evaluation.

