



NAURU NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS PATHWAY

United Nations Food System Summit 2021

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Background/Overview

The Republic of Nauru is an island of Micronesia with a land mass of 21.1km² and a total population of approximately 11,550 people¹. Nauru's GDP per capita was US\$ 9,397 in 2019,² and the country has been upgraded from an Upper Middle Level Income Country to a High-Income Country for 2021 by the World Bank.³The small island nation is characterized by geographical remoteness, fragile biodiversity, and a limited natural resource base.

Nauru continues to face critical developmental challenges due to its distinct situation of a narrow resource base to generate livelihoods. The high cost of imported food products, limited capacity for food production and constrained economic situation constitutes the main threat to food security. These inherent vulnerabilities have further impacted the health and wellbeing of the general population that have led to the prevalence of obesity and NCD's that is the leading cause of death and amongst the highest regionally and globally.

The existing challenges to food security and nutrition in Nauru have been further compounded by the impacts of COVID-19. Despite no cases have been recorded on the island, the state of border closures has greatly disrupted the food supply chain that further underscores the fragility of Nauru's food security and nutrition challenges⁴. As a country that depends almost exclusively on imported foods (over 90% of food consumed in Nauru is imported), safeguarding its food imports is of high priority as well as exploring local options for food and nutrition security.

In preparation for the Food System Summit in September 2021, the government of Nauru organized series of Member State Dialogues led by the Department of Commerce Trade & Environment, that nominated Director of Agriculture, Ms Marissa Cook as the National Convener.

This national pathway was informed from the outcomes of national dialogues and is congruent with the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), Nauru National Agriculture Strategy 2021, the Republic of Nauru Framework for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (RONAdapt), relevant sectoral strategies for food and nutrition security, environment, natural resource management, gender, and social inclusion; and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

¹ Nauru Mini Census 2019

² 'GDP per Capita (Current US\$) - Nauru | Data'
<<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=NR>> [accessed 19 December 2020].

³ 'World Bank Country and Lending Groups – World Bank Data Help Desk'
<<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>> [accessed 19 August 2021].

⁴ Nauru Agriculture Sector Strategy 2021-2031



The game changing interventions in this document supports a multi-sectoral strategy to improve the performance of the national food systems and while it is led by the DCIE (Agriculture Division), it will be of paramount importance to engage the participation of several other actors and agencies in the institutional mechanisms laid out in this pathway and other supporting strategies in place linked to food and nutrition security, environment, natural resource management; and gender and social inclusion. This success of this national pathway will serve as a framework under which a sustainable food system for the country of Nauru is being pursued.

Vision for sustainable food system for Nauru 2030

By 2030, all Nauruans will have reliable access to food for nutritional adequacy that contribute to optimal health, improved quality of life, education and training, and sustainable economic growth and development. Food systems will function to boost domestic food production,

promote resilience and equitable livelihoods and harness institutional capacities across sectors for improved governance.

Priorities for Nauru- 2030 implementation:

Four main priorities have emerged from national dialogues as outlined below:

1. **SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR ALL BY BOOSTING NATURE-POSITIVE PRODUCTION-**

Nauru will ensure that all citizens are able to have reliable access to the healthy diets and nutritious foods. The country is heavily reliant on imported food of low nutritional value and while the agricultural sector is critical to assuring availability of food, the depletion of land caused by the phosphate industry has greatly reduced land that is available for agriculture and animal husbandry. Overall, there is the dire need to improve the management of natural resources to support agricultural productivity.

Therefore, public and private investments will be made available to rehabilitate and lease land to use for and agriculture and increase household production of food with local staple crops. In the medium term, while the rehabilitating of land is underway, a greater focus on the investment in small scale fisheries and aquaculture production will be used to complement the efforts to adapt and improve the productivity of the agriculture sector. Policies and programmes will focus on boosting the productivity of producers, improving access to domestic markets, promoting the benefits of sustainable land management, integrating climate-smart technologies, and encouraging youth participation and entrepreneurship in small scale commercial agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, and aquaculture production. Promoting the health benefits of traditional crops and increasing the access to healthy food for consumption is also crucial to address the obesity and NCD's crisis in Nauru. This will be done along with policy interventions for agriculture and health that are conceived in concert using a multistakeholder approach.

Gamer Changers:

- **Supporting diversification and sustainable intensification-**
 - I. **Green technology innovation-** Technical assistance will be rendered through the improvement of extensions services to upskill producers on sustainable land management techniques that focus on soil management for improve soil fertility e.g composting, mulching. This will be done while pursuing proactive measures to mainstream climate change that include improved soil and water management, diversification of food crop varieties, pest management, and strengthening of land use planning for the increase production of local staple crops commercially and at the household level.
 - II. **Blue food transformation** – Blue foods will be integrated into the food system discussions alongside crops and pig farming to be prioritized in food production and consumption. This will be done by embedding blue foods into policy reforms and public investment in developing sustainable aquaculture to support small and medium enterprises that contribute to equitable livelihoods in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- I. **Improved access to food-**

- I. **Investment in infrastructure and access to markets-** existing infrastructure will be improved so that Nauruans have better access to food. This will be done through the establishment local functional markets with diversified 'green' and 'blue' foods that are accessible to small producers to improve income opportunities and expand beyond subsistence production.
 - II. **Marketing and promotion using Digital Agriculture-** the division of agriculture make use of digital platforms and social media to promote and create consumer awareness on nature positive productions. The promotion of digital agriculture especially to the youth will enable players with an interest in a particular value chain to access information on key issues and build synergies, communicating with each other through virtual channels to maintain dialogue and share ideas remotely. The tool will complement face-to-face interaction conducted during national meetings training workshops and roadshows.
2. **Food utilization for improved nutrition –** will seek to reduce the high level of obesity and NCD's in Nauru and promote access to safe and clean water for consumption and health.
- I. **Public health education-** this will emphasize supporting and strengthening the ongoing school feeding programme; introducing and supporting the Baby Friendly Hospital initiative and promotion of exclusive breast feeding; as well as advocating for good family nutrition through home gardening and healthy food preparation. This will be complemented through nutrition education, sensitisation, training, and social media campaigns to shift consumption to healthier and more sustainable patterns. Safety net programs for children and pregnant and lactating women will include blue foods, as fish can be a rich source of essential micronutrients for vulnerable populations.
 - II. **Social protection and strengthening of social safety nets -** this will involve the introduction of a nutrition sensitive social protection scheme building off the current scheme in place by the government. Particular attention will be given to expectant mothers, children, people living with disabilities and NCD's.
 - III. **Strategic partnerships-** Emphasis will also be placed on cooperation with the private sector and schools to maintain food safety and improve the availability of nutritious food choices that are provided to students.
 - IV. **Affordable and healthy diets -**a review of the import the import duty regime will be done to reduce the importation of unhealthy processed foods and incentivising nutritious food choices among population.
 - V. **Reducing food waste and improving safety of food-** Preservation techniques and proper composting of waste promoted at household level. Also, consumer protection policies and regulations will be revised along with the Department of Health to improve food labelling for safe consumption of food.
 - VI. **Clean water and sanitation –** WASH (Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene) programme and training will be used to address the sustainable use of water, sanitation and good hygiene practices across agriculture, education, and health departments.

MILESTONE 2030: An innovative, diverse, and resilient food sector is achieved, domestic food production and sustainable consumption improved, and nutritious food is made affordable for all Nauruans.

2. ADVANCING EQUITABLE LIVELIHOODS FOR NATURE POSITIVE PRODUCTION

Nauru pledges that underpinning all the priorities to transform food systems there is the commitment to ‘leave no one behind’ by ensuring representation for most vulnerable groups in the food systems and to aim for all members of society to have equitable access to resources, information, and equitable livelihood opportunities. This will involve generating and improving opportunities for decent work, income, and social safety support. In turn, these actions will increase food production, sustain livelihoods in the agriculture and small-scale fisheries sector and promote social wellbeing to all.

The Nauru government will encourage and promote the holistic development of the food sector, while demonstrating to producers that they can improve their livelihoods from the incentive and technical support provided by the public sector and development partners.

Game changers:

- I. **Capacity development and partnership building of small and medium enterprises** - Capacities of producers (focus on youth and women) will be enhanced in order to increase domestic food supply and diversify livelihood income.
- II. **Equitable access to resources for small scale producers** – through the Division of Agriculture and Commerce the small-scale commercialization of agriculture and fisheries will be supported to improve domestic food production. This will involve basic training on business management and marketing, financial literacy programs, building of private partnerships.
- III. **Blue Food investment-** public investment in developing sustainable fisheries aquaculture to support small and medium enterprises that contribute to equitable livelihoods in the fisheries sector will be supported. The production of milkfish for local consumption along with tapping into the regional market for high quality and safe tuna commercial prospects for small scale fishermen will be tapped into to support local livelihoods.
- IV. **Access to financing** - this will be done by using fiscal measures to encourage better land use and the investment in small scale agriculture. The investment from public and private sector will be used to provide access to credit to make small scale agriculture and fisheries viable for small scale producers.
- V. **Access to markets and infrastructure** – equitable access for small-scale producers will be enhanced by facilitating access to local market for producers to sell local staple crops, livestock, and fish on the domestic market.
- VI. **Gender inclusion** - A strong emphasis will be place on gender for the inclusion of women in the agriculture and fisheries sector. Extension services to increase productivity will be tailored to women needs to promote equitable labour in food production.

MILESTONE 2030: Equitable livelihoods supported through efficient and inclusive food supply chains.

3. PROMOTING RESILIENCE TO VULNERABILITIES, SHOCKS AND STRESS

Nauru will strive to build resilience across the food systems with recognition of the interlinkages and the co-benefits of food security and improved nutrition. Implementation of policies, technologies, practices and partnerships that increase the capacity of food systems to anticipate multiple risks and build back from shocks will be deployed at all levels. Most importantly to achieve the Paris agreement goals, the national and regional capacities to access climate finance and implement resilient food system initiatives will be capitalized upon.

- I. **Investment in Climate-smart technologies** – This will be done by pursuing proactive measures to mainstream climate change in the agriculture sector through improved soil and water management, diversification of food crop varieties, preserving biodiversity, and strengthening of land use planning for the increase production of local staple crops.
- II. **Land rehabilitation** – Notably, land rehabilitation is synonymous to building resilience in Nauru and fundamental to improving the sustainability of food systems through improved production and reduced carbon sequestration to mitigate against climate change. The efforts to pursue this will be fast tracked through collaboration with Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation and the Republic of Nauru Phosphate Corporation (RONPhos).
- III. **Promoting resilience of aquatic biodiversity-** the governance of locally managed marine areas will be strengthened for sustained use and protection of coastal fish stocks for local consumption. Ecosystem based management measures to prevent damage to fish habits from run off erosion will also be incorporated into sustainable land management programmes.
- IV. **Improvement of safety nets during time of crisis-**
 - **Stable and affordable imported food-** mechanisms to maintain predictable and stable food imports, particularly healthy and nutritious foods will be put in place for consideration. Regulations for in place for price gauging during food crises will be enforced along with offset mechanisms through the relevant state-owned enterprises will be activated.
 - **Food Reserve-** the implementation of a strategic food reserve mechanism will be put in place to be managed by a dedicated taskforce. This will ensure that the country can reliably maintain access to adequate stocks of food to respond to future food crises brought about by a pandemic, disaster related events or the downturn in economic performance.
- V. **Improvement of early warning systems and forecasting-** The improved dissemination of improved data information will be done to raise public awareness on the importance of food security and understanding of the climate change and its impact on food production. Early warning systems (weather and tide forecasting) in

the mass media for fishermen and growers will be incorporated into daily news broadcasting.

- VI. **Strategic partnerships-** the institutionalization of adaptation capacities will be supported through partnerships with NGO's, civil society, private sector and intergovernmental regional organizations.

MILESTONE 2030: The resilience of Nauruans citizens is strengthened to withstand future vulnerabilities brought about by social, environmental, and economic shocks.

4. STRENGTHENING ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Relevant considerations in this pathway will focus on cross-cutting actions implemented through a multistakeholder approach that can be used at a comparative advantage to accelerate the government's efforts in transforming the food system and meeting the SDG's. The effective implementation of this pathway, hinges on appropriate governance and management systems in place and therefore the interventions to be put into place will be consistent in nature with existing policies and strategies that strengthen the enabling environment for a sustainable and productive food system.

Overall, the creation of an enabling policy environment will focus on protecting the food and nutrition needs of all individuals, especially vulnerable populations. Interventions to support this will address cross-cutting issues related to the environment, climate adaptation and resilience, social protection, and gender equity. These include the introduction of cross-sectoral policies, with greater coordination and cooperation between various ministries and value chains actors, practical support in the areas of education, training, skills and technology development, greater private and public investment, development of microfinancing schemes, and stronger partnerships between departments, development partners, the private sector and youth.

Game changers

Strengthened policy and legislative frameworks- At the sectoral level, progress will be made towards policy formation/ revision in agriculture, health, and education to capitalize on synergies in the food system.

- A cohesive food security and nutrition policy will be developed to achieve co-benefits across the agriculture and health sector.
 - Including blue foods in policymaking for the food system allows governments to better manage the interconnections between terrestrial and aquatic food systems. Blue foods will be integrated into food security policies that regulate, guide and support the food sector.
 - Dietary guidelines will be developed and include nutritional contributions of different blue foods, to help consumers understand their value for addressing nutrient deficiencies and obesity and the NCD Crisis.
- II. **Cross sectoral partnerships and inclusion** – food systems have a transversal impact on all aspects of development therefore close coordination among key stakeholders

will be pursued to achieve the vision and goals of this pathway with institutional support especially for women, youth and people living disabilities.

- **Formation of an Agriculture Sector Partner Group/Steering Committee-** will provide technical assistance and oversight in coordinating and monitoring of this pathway.
 - **Stakeholder engagement and management-** close coordination, information sharing, capacity building, consultations and collaborations with all the relevant public and private institutions in mutually beneficial sectors will be done i.e., Department of Climate Change, Fisheries, Health, Port Authority, Customs, Transport, Commerce, Planning & Aid Division, Private Sector, Women & Youth , Development partners.
- III. **Enhancement of human and institutional capacities/Capacity development** – capacities will be strengthened in the public sector, civil society, and the private sector to support the planning, coordinating, training, and monitoring and evaluation of the activities and strategies to be implemented by this pathway in the food sector.
- VII. **Raising awareness**
- **Community level actions** – particularly community driven activities, will be supported to ensure that food production is increased at the household level and nutrition is addressed within households, communities, and schools across the country to address issues stemming from food insecurity and undernutrition i.e., school-based activities focused on agriculture and nutrition education, development of awareness campaigns for agriculture and fisheries through extension services at the community level to increase awareness.
 - **National Dialogues** – A Food and Nutrition Stakeholder’s Dialogue that includes public sector, civil society, community-based organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies will be established to discuss and consult on the progress of the implementation of the pathway and related strategies.
- IV. **Investment support and Resource Mobilization**
- Public investment on behalf of the government and co-financing through development partners for projects currently in the pipeline will be utilized to fund projects in the short term.
 - Technical assistance will be sought from donor partners to reorganize and expand the skills, mechanisms, and material resources necessary for the Food Sector Partner Group to function effectively and to enable the food security and nutrition monitoring activities to be carried out.

MILESTONE 2030:

- Robust policy options, innovative financial solutions, inclusive cross-sectoral partnerships, and strategies to transform food systems under a changing climate.
- Strong and efficient human and institutional capacities of the public sector, civil society and the private sector carrying out effective planning and implementation to synergize efforts and accelerate food system transformation.

Delivery Framework to accelerate progress

The government of Nauru will increase efforts across sectors to get back on track with the global trajectory envisaged under the 2030 agenda. However, it must be emphasized that the priorities noted in this pathway are not comprehensive but has been developed within the context of existing policies and strategies that will complement the efforts achieve a sustainable food system pathway.

The institutional mechanisms to achieve this pathway is laid out in detail in the Draft National Agriculture Strategy 2021-2030 and relevant supporting strategies and policies related to agriculture, fisheries, **climate** change and health. In the medium term (2021-2025), after this pathway is tabled and approved by Cabinet, considerable attention will be placed in strengthening the institutional framework for coordination of food and nutrition security through a cross sectoral implementation plan that will feature projects and programmes that game changing actions outline in this document. A key element of this plan will be to develop the necessary capacity to lead such activities. Long term goals (2025-2030) will focus on making consistent progress towards the sustainable achievement of food security and nutrition goals laid out this pathway in concert with the relevant strategies and action plans of the government. The Food Sector Partner Group to be led by the division of Agriculture will be an important feature that will monitor the implementation, evaluate effectiveness, and make recommendation to the modifications of this pathway.

Concluding Statement

Through the development of this pathway the government of the Republic of Nauru declares its commitments that will be put into motion to reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition in the country over the next ten years. The government of Nauru welcomes the implementation of a sustainable food system pathway as an important and timely call to action. The consensus is clear that transforming food systems is a critical part of tackling the climate, health, and nature crisis. This will require a paradigm shift that draws from a food system approach to enable food system transformation and the country's post-COVID recovery leading up to 2030.

Nauru's national pathway will be delivered through 4 mutually reinforcing intervention areas:

1. Nauru will increase food production and enable sustainable consumption patterns through the strengthening of agri-food supply chains and access to domestic markets.
2. Nauru will invest in an innovative and climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries sector that serve to improve the livelihoods and resilience of all Nauruans.
3. Nauru will work to address the critical nexus between food and nutrition for improved access to safe and nutritious foods for all its citizens.
4. Nauru will implement a multi-stakeholder approach to support the transformation to an efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food system.