

INTERVENTION HIGHLIGHT

Standardising Rabi's coconut nectar production Helping farmers adopt quality and food safety standards

Timoteo and Mere Tabeti are a couple from Tabwewa Village on Rabi Island who have been producing kamaimai (coconut nectar) for over 30 years. This traditional practice involves extracting the sap of coconut blossoms, which is boiled to create a sweet syrup. Banaban farmers like Timoteo and Mere generating income by primarily supplying coconut nectar to Marama Niu, a Suva-based company, that uses the nectar as a healthier substitute for sugar and to make vegan coconut-based ice cream. However, the production chain is not standardised with suppliers having lack of knowledge on food safety and hygienic practices.

At a glance

- PHAMA Plus began working with Marama Niu to strengthen its logistics and supply chain for sourcing coconut nectar from suppliers in Rabi and adopt product quality and standards.
- In October 2023, PHAMA Plus and Marama Niu visited the island to conduct a food safety and standards training for 55 coconut farming households.
- The training, facilitated by an experienced Food Technologist, helped suppliers to better understand standard fermentation and hygiene practices, including equipment and methods to help the suppliers test the quality of the coconut nectar.
- During the reporting period, seven farming households, comprising of nine women and 10 men, have supplied coconut nectar to Marama Niu at FJD \$25.00 per litre.
- The training also assessed the potential of more coconut farmers to supply nectar to Marama Niu. Most farmers on the island traditionally sell fermented toddy (alcohol).

This intervention unlocks sustainable income opportunities for Banaban families like Timoteo and Mere and help local and women led businesses like Marama Niu launch into the export market.



Initially we did not have enough coconut nectar to retail and sell them separately. And now with our work with communities on Rabi we've been able to visit them and talk about the difficulties they face with making a product like this. As our business grows, we're able to encourage more suppliers to come on board.

- Kylie Daunoco,
Marama Niu co-founder