

PHAMA PLUS'S WORK SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE AGRICULTURE

AUGUST 2025

Pacific market systems are not equal. Women, men and people with disability experience market systems differently, and are often restricted to pre-defined roles shaped by existing socio-cultural norms and values. PHAMA Plus supports the introduction of new business models and approaches to create more inclusive market systems. It's a win-win – marginalised groups gain opportunities for empowerment, while businesses benefit from a broader and more diverse pool of skills and experiences.

WE HAVE:



Kaiming Agro Managing Director Calvin Qiu with staff after a Workplace Domestic Violence Policy training.

PARTNERED WITH GOVERNMENTS AND PEAK BODIES TO SHAPE MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE POLICIES

In Niue, PHAMA Plus supported the Chamber of Commerce to develop the country's first Child Protection Policy in 2023. We've since continued partnering with the Chamber to support training and policy rollout across staff, volunteers, contractors and member organisations.

In Vanuatu, PHAMA Plus partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Biosecurity (MALFB) and the Vanuatu Primary Producers Authority (VPPA) to establish a Positive Workplace Policy for the productive sector. The policy requires agriculture stakeholders, employers and operators, especially the public sector, but also all primary producers and exporters registered with VPPA, to establish equitable, inclusive, and harassment-free workplaces. These workplaces must also have simple, transparent and fair mechanisms for addressing concerns. The policy was launched in June 2025 at a national workshop with participants from the Vanuatu agriculture sector and government.



A thriving workplace starts with safety, respect, and inclusivity. We must build environments that empower, protect, and uplift everyone.

Ian Wilson, the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Vanuatu.

WORKED WITH PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS TO STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

In Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga, PHAMA Plus has supported exporters and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to develop and adopt Domestic Violence and Child Protection Policies, and delivered sensitisation training on gendered roles, disability inclusion, and workplace violence and harassment.

Safety and security for women workers, particularly shift-workers, remains a barrier to full participation. In Fiji, PHAMA Plus partnered with two agro-processing businesses to construct safe accommodation for their predominantly female workforce. This provides a secure option during peak processing periods and emergency shelter for those experiencing domestic violence. Women have reported improved safety, wellbeing and financial savings through reduced travel. Employers have also seen productivity gains.

Just knowing the Workplace Domestic Violence Policy exists is empowering. I tell women who come to me that it's there to protect them. It provides leave, salary advances and accommodation if needed.

Having this in place gives women peace of mind, knowing they have support when they need it. PHAMA Plus isn't just supporting agriculture, they're supporting the women who make it thrive.

**Elina Tawayaga, Factory Administrator,
Kaiming Agro Processing, Fiji.**



SUPPORTED AGRIBUSINESSES TO MAINTAIN MARKET ACCESS THROUGH INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Agribusinesses report that PHAMA Plus support is helping them maintain access to niche markets such as the European Union, where Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards are becoming more stringent. In Vanuatu, for example, PHAMA Plus supported Gaston Chocolat to obtain B-Corp Certification, recognising their commitment to inclusive employment and positive social and environmental outcomes. Currently, 70% of their workforce comes from traditionally marginalised groups, including women and farmers with disabilities.



We wanted to prove that inclusion does not come at the cost of profitability. I want our way of doing business to be the norm — not the exception.

**Olivier Fernandez, Gaston Chocolat,
Vanuatu.**

CREATED MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN FARMING AND AGRIBUSINESS

To date, 60% of new jobs created under PHAMA Plus have been taken up by women.

Yet much of the region's farming work is informal and not captured in official employment data. The roles of women, youth and people with disabilities are often under-valued and invisible. One of the biggest barriers to export growth is consistency of supply – many farmers do not plan production as a business, instead growing food for household use and selling any surplus to meet daily or communal needs.

In response, PHAMA Plus has been trialling the Family Farm Teams (FFT) approach – an initiative from the University of Canberra and ACIAR that supports smallholder farmers to shift from subsistence to more commercial practices. FFT promotes shared decision-making and a more equitable division of labour by positioning men and women as co-directors of their farming household. It also builds women's and youth's skills in business and financial management, acknowledging the vital roles they already play. FFT was first piloted during Phase 1 of PHAMA Plus but paused due to COVID-19. In 2025, the program started a developmental evaluation approach to assess past outcomes and inform future integration of FFT. Early signs are positive, with past participants reporting stronger incomes and household resilience. In Vanuatu, MALFB has included FFT in its Corporate Plan for 2025-2026. As part of the rollout, 1,000 Bislama-language FFT workbooks have been printed and will be distributed by MALFB to support national training.



“FFT is a powerful reminder of the value of sitting down as a family, setting goals together and sharing work fairly. It also reinforced the importance of recognising everyone's contributions, especially women managing farm and care work.”

Anare Lewanavanua, General Manager of Nature's Way Cooperative, Fiji.



COLLABORATED WITH ORGANISATIONS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (OPDs) TO STRENGTHEN INCLUSION IN AGRICULTURE

In 2025, PHAMA Plus engaged Strategic Development Group to work with OPDs and partner agribusinesses across the Pacific to co-design a practical Inclusive Agribusiness Guidance Note.

The project was Pacific-led and owned, strengthening relationships between OPDs and agribusinesses and building understanding of disability inclusion and its value to business. The Guidance Note contains a checklist aligned with six preconditions for inclusion identified by the Pacific Disability Forum, as well practical steps for implementation.

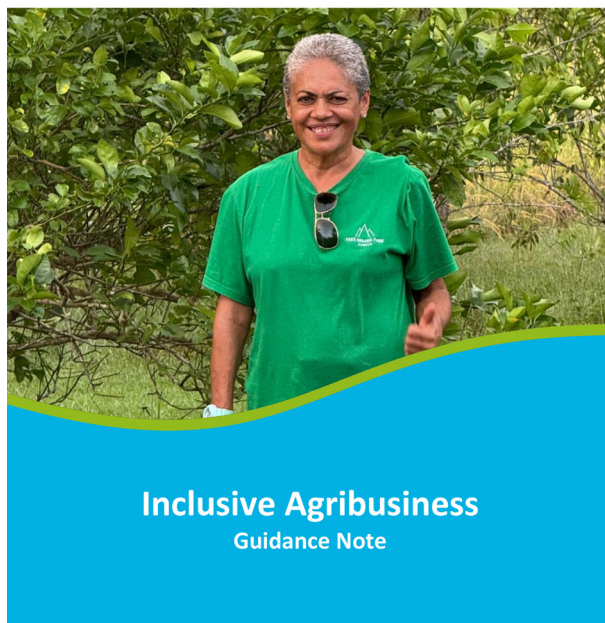
In Vanuatu, this work helped to connect the Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy (VDPA) association with MALFB – creating new pathways for collaboration and access to government-supported training and materials via the Departments of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry.

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This is an area we really should be doing more in, but we didn't know where to start. This process has demystified inclusion and helped us to directly engage with OPDs and to take simple immediate steps.

Mele Sisi Finefeuiaki, Chief Executive Officer for Lotopoha Export Trading, Tonga

This is more than just an inclusion effort; this initiative addresses labour shortages by unlocking an untapped workforce capable of contributing to agricultural production.

With the right support and enabling mechanisms, we can fulfil our potential.

Setareki Macanawai, Strategic Development Group, Fiji.

