

The Family Farm Teams work in PNG is continuing through the ACIAR project: *Gender equitable agricultural extension through institutions and youth engagement in Papua New Guinea (SSS/2018/137)* which began in late 2019. The project is moving forward with positive outcomes after a year of COVID-19 uncertainty, interruptions and restrictions.

Objective 1: To explore and develop the capacity of PNG churches to work in a gender inclusive way to engage rural agricultural communities in smallholder farm development

The project team have been invited to extend the project into Western Province. This will begin in July 2021. The project team are currently developing a context analysis and have engaged a Western Province coordinator to further support the project in this new area. The team is looking forward to adapting the Family Farm Teams materials to not only work with church programs but also to suit fishing families and communities.

Objective 2: To explore and develop pathways for increasing PNG youth involvement in family farm teams and sustainable farming futures

Recent in-depth and focus group interviews on our East New Britain ‘Youth as Change Agents’ trial showed positive change in youth attitudes and engagement in their family farms and other agricultural initiatives.



Kiteni Kurika interviewing ENB female youth



Early in 2021, the Rabaul LLG supported our *Youth as Change Agent* program by providing 13 youth with 20 chickens each. The Rabaul LLG provided the chicks because “these group of people from Rabaul do not have land mass to grow food and cash crops like the three other (project) sites (Pomio, Kokopo and Gazelle)” (Rabaul LLG representative). Recent monitoring and evaluation data shows that the project has helped youth to change their attitude to agriculture and reducing their engagement in negative behaviours as they are busy implementing their new skills as change agents — “Everyone who is raising the chicken are so busy sharing information on how to take care of the chickens etc (mother in Rabaul District)”. Parents of the participating youth and representatives of the Rabaul LLG reported that youth who are a part of the youth as change agent program and who received chickens are taking on other farming activities – “youth were

empowered to really make a difference in their families and the community” (female researcher observation after a series of interviews). Similarly, youth in the Gazelle District were provided with cocoa seedlings and are now very busy on their family farm. One female DPI officer explained “they do not have time to cause trouble or get into trouble, they are fully engaged in their cocoa farms and they do not have time to misbehave”. One mother, who is also a member of the Youth Advisory Committee, stated that “generally, the attitudes of youths have been very positive since the ACIAR workshops and the gift they received from the LLG personnel”.

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<https://aciarc.gov.au/project/sss-2018-137>

