

Family teams ASEM/2014/095

December has seen us digesting the wide range of information and issues from our Mid Term Review - and we are now considering the implications for 2017 and our new Islands Hub.

We would like to thank all of our colleagues in PNG and Australia for their wonderful contributions across 2016. Wishing you all a rewarding and refreshing festive season!

Canarium FST/2014/099

- Bruce Randall and Votausi Mackenzie-Ruer, a food product entrepreneur, visited NARI in Kerevat to present a workshop for female entrepreneurs in Kokopo. Votausi described her vision of Lapita café and development of the business over the past ten years. The workshop was well attended and gained positive feedback from participants.
- Emma and Brett recently returned home after living in Kokopo for the past 6 months. They were able to reach out to many aspiring female entrepreneurs through various workshops and advance production processes at the NARI pilot factory during their stay. Their farewell was met with floods of tears and their presence will be missed in ENB.
- Canarium nuts produced at the NARI factory are now selling well in ENB, particularly at the Tropicana supermarket.
- The NARI factory is also building up supply in readiness for the canarium nut product launch in supermarkets in PoM in mid 2017.
- The company 'Paradise foods' are conducting product trials for use of canarium nuts in their biscuits.
- Kim Jones returned home from his last trip with NARI factory produced canarium nuts in order to undertake microbial testing. All samples tested adhered to Australian food safety standards.

Bougainville cocoa HORT/2014/094

N/A

PNG cocoa HORT/2014/096

A Project Coordinators' Meeting, involving all provincial coordinators, leaders of Provincial DPIs, staff from UNRE including the new Vice Chancellor (Prof. John Warren), research staff of CCI, leaders of PPAP and staff from Agmark, was held at CCI, Tavilo, on 29 and 30 Nov to share experiences and ideas emerging from the project work over the first 10 months. The change in the concept of the village trainers (from 'Village Extension Workers' to 'Cocoa Model Farmer-Trainers') on advice from DPI and CCI extension staff was discussed and supported. Building on the example set by Kula Daslogo in New Ireland, each CMFT will establish a budwood garden/nursery and a model farm, including both a new and rehabilitated block, established with help from their 24 client farmers, who in turn receive on-going training and support in budding, block establishment and rehabilitation, and 300 budded plants from their work during training in the central nursery. All CMFT budwood gardens and nurseries are to be certified by CCI for commercial operation, thus ensuring the CMFTs have an ongoing business in addition to their advisory work. Driven by the demand expressed by villages during the initial awareness meetings, the number of CMFTs to be supported in the project has been doubled from 33 to 66, necessitating substantial changes in the budget; a Project Variation reflecting these changes has now been approved by ACIAR and LaTrobe University.

Kenny Francis presented a report to the Coordinators' Meeting on the construction and testing of a Solomons solar drier at Tavilo. Max/min thermometers, digital temperature/ humidity monitors and cocoa moisture meters have been purchased for this work. Initial batches of cocoa have been dried successfully, although small eaks in the plastic roof have necessitated some redesigning. Kula Daslogo has completed construction of a solar drier in Kavieng and successfully dried several batches of cocoa during dry weather. During a wet week the solar drying had to be supplemented by kiln drying. An important point raised at the meeting was the fact that the current regulations in PNG restrict the types of materials that can be used to construct driers, increasing the cost to smallholders and discouraging use of alternative drying methods. Eventually the new solar driers will have to be inspected and certified by the Cocoa Board.

At Meeting., Kula outlined the project development in New Ireland, including 30 awareness meetings in villages, 2 radio programs, an awareness meeting for 6 cooperatives, identification of sites for CMFTs, conduct of a baseline survey, an initial 6-day hands-on training in budding and nursery management of all CMFTs (23 along with an extra 8 self-funded groups) along with distribution of bicycles and small chainsaws for cocoa block rehabilitation, followed by the setting up of 13 budwood gardens and associated nurseries and commencement of rehabilitation of blocks by chupon budding. Two sites now have mature budwood available and one nursery has commenced commercial operations. Barbara Pamphilon, working with Kula and Josie Saul on a visit to New Ireland on 20-23 Nov, built links to the DPI officers and two CMFT villages for her TADEP project next year.

Jimmy Risimeri prepared a well illustrated Powerpoint summary of project activities but unfortunately was unable to deliver it in person because of airline problems. Chris Toli stood in and described the development of 25 CMFT sites over 6 districts, including two sites led by women. The leadership provided by a woman DPI extension officer in North Wosera, Angela Gossiba, has been impressive. To date 8 budwood gardens/nurseries, 12 fermentaries and 3 training houses linked to CMFT sites have been established. On 4 Dec, Phil met with Thompson Fafungian at Jackson's Airport and discussed the good progress in developing the budwood garden/nurseru/training centre/solar drier at his home village of Yekimbole, led by Nola Sasingian. Thompson recently obtained more clones from CCI to augment the budwood garden. Also at Jackson's Airport, Phil met Matthew Akon from the Tenkile (Tree Kangaroo) Conservation Alliance and confirmed that the project staff in East Sepik will work to train his staff at Lumi. also confirmed in a letter from Trevor. The integration of goat husbandry with cocoa farming will be an important aspect of cocoa development at Lumi as it provides an alternative source of animal protein to tree kangaroos and other threatened bush animals.

In his presentation at the Coordinators' Meeting and a later report, Aitul Weoh confirmed that 20 CMFT sites and 18 CMFTs (one woman) had been established in Madang, covering 6 districts and 12 LLGs. Aitul described how the initial work in Madang had been held up by the lack of a vehicle available for project work and how critical the purchase of a vehicle had been. Budwood gardens/nurseries have been commenced at 9 sites. In collaboration with Jeffrie Marfu, two sites (Suala in Bogia District, and Korona in Usino/Bundi District) have been selected for testing of 50 new hybrid clones by CCI. Jeffrie has also visited East Sepik and New Ireland to establish similar sites and also to certify budwood gardens.

John Konam also had problems with the airlines and arrived at the Coordinators' Meeting late on 29th but was able to present his summary of activities at Karimui at a separate meeting at CCI Tavilo on 30 Nov. John Thomas and John Komba were able to attend the meeting on 29th Nov.

A baseline survey using forms is being conducted. The renewal and certification of quarantine facilities at CCI and NARI for use in transferring cocoa clones to the highlands has now been completed. It is planned that clones will be taken to Karimui by April 2017. John Konam discussed the range of studies that will be required to support the clone selection and testing at Karimui, including determination of appropriate spacing, differences between big and small clones, the cocoa production cycle, and the possible need for less shade under the heavier cloud-cover at Karimui.

At the Coordinators' Meeting Jeffrie Marfu outlined his plans to test 50 new hybrid clones at several CMFT sites in the project; this is an important expansion of his initial involvement on the project which was to collect potentially useful Trinitario clones identified by farmers. Peter Bapiwai summarised his plans to compare the growth of the main cocoa clones and other selections at Karimui and Tavilo. Chris Fidelis summarised the planned soil fertility study at a kunai grassland site at Wingei in East Sepik. The Vice-Chancellor and staff from the University of Natural Resources and Environment, Vudal, attended the meeting and discussed their intention to concentrate on studies to develop the integration of goats in cocoa farming systems, and Hosea Turbarat discussed the training of CMFTs in the provinces using the trainers and training modules developed at the Kairak Training Centre.

After the Coordinators' Meeting, it was concluded that another day would have been useful to fully discuss the experiences and problems seen in the development of the project in the various provinces, which have their own particular challenges (e.g. travel in the large provinces of Madang and East Sepik dissected by large rivers, lack of road access to Karimui and the fact that the cocoa industry is in its infancy there). It was also concluded that holding such a meeting between mid-Nov and late February poses problems with airline bookings and school graduation and enrolment commitments.

Sweetpotato HORT/2014/097

- Field testing of the CommCare value chain mapping survey was completed on 12-16 December in Goroka, Daulo and Lower Asaro. A number of required small changes in survey have been identified and will be in place ready for the full scale survey in EHP, Jiwaka and WHP in late January/February 2017.
- Planning meetings were held in Bundaberg and Canberra with the QDAF and ANUE teams to prioritise activities for early 2017
- A socio-economic review of sweetpotato production and marketing has commenced using available documents. ANUE team members plan to liaise with FPDA after the Christmas break to gather up to the minute data and 'ground truth' the previously documented material
- Trips to PNG by Australian team members are planned for late February for training and value chain survey activities, and in the week leading up to the TADEP annual meeting for community participatory workshops.
- Contracting has been completed for the aligned 'sweet potato pest and diseases' project led by Charles Sturt University. Tentative plans have been made for a meeting in PNG in late February, with discussion in place for a meeting to coincide with a visit by the sweetpotato TADEP project team.
- On behalf of the TADEP sweetpotato team, we wish all TADEP partners and supporters a happy and safe Christmas and look forward to an exciting and productive 2017.