



GTFS/RAS/198/ITA
Support to the Regional Programme for Food Security in the Pacific Island Countries

FAO/ITA/NAU/01
Household Food Garden Development Project
Extension Phase

TERMINAL REPORT

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Introduction & Background

Project FAO/ITA/NAU/01 Extension Phase commenced in the late February, 2008 with the assistance of FAO Consultant Mr. Anau R. Manarangi working closely with the Division of Agriculture, Commerce Industry and Environment (CIE) and Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM) (ROC) through the Agriculture Division.

Objective of this extension phase of the project is to help community, farmers and The Division of Agriculture officers assisting the project are to continue growing vegetable crops in their locale. Hands on experience will give them the confidence and knowledge necessary to pass on to growers. The Officers are to continue to sow and provide the farmers with seedlings and seed.

The Republic of Nauru is made up of a single raised atoll with a limestone escarpment rising to a central plateau or topside. The topside is encircled by a coastal plain, measuring 100m to 400m wide. Apart from Buada Lagoon, there is no surface freshwater. The only freshwater is the groundwater which is often slightly brackish.

The coastal soils around the coast are about 25 cm deep and of coarse textured. It has more coral gravel than sand in the lower horizons. The topside soils have a high level of organic material and are generally fertile. It is reported however, that nitrogen is sufficient for all but not intensive agriculture. On the other hand potassium is low because it is suppressed by high levels of calcium. In some poorly drained swampy areas on the coast including Buada Lagoon, the wet soils are relatively fertile.

Historically, agriculture and fishing have always been the foundation of subsistence livelihood of the people of Nauru. Coconuts, breadfruit, Soursop (*Annona muricata*), papaya, pandanus and bananas have been the main food crops. Subsistence fishing, the occasional back yard pig farming and free range poultry (Chickens) were the main source of protein for population. These days imported food such as rice, sugar, tinned food, etc, have taken over the main source of carbohydrate which also adversely contributed to the peoples high growth rate of diabetes, heart diseases and other ill-health complications.

The weakened economy plus the rising prices of food stuffs; there is now a growing interest to grow their own food crops. The Department of Commerce Industry and Environment (CIE) view this initiative of growing food crops as one of the first steps in reviving backyard farming to secure food for the population.

The project attempts, through Workshop's and technical assistance to the community to increase the availability of food through home gardening. FAO support is given to the Government of Nauru which is implemented by the Division of Agriculture which is under the CIE.

This project aims to focus on Communities, willing individuals, schools children, and youth as producers of food in the households by providing them with more information to improve their ability to grow food. Focusing on the willing, will help them provide different kinds of food crops necessary for a nutritious serving to their families. Also, others may be motivated to follow the footsteps of the growers that are doing well with their garden.

2. Summary

Atoll agriculture and fishing has always been the mainstay of subsistence livelihood of the people of Nauru. At present imported food have taken over and have adversely contributed to the people high growth rate of diabetes, heart diseases and other illnesses

The assistance from International Consultant and Technicians are well based through technical advised and practical skills on hands on training during conducting a workshop's which covered self sufficiency in food for home consumption. The healthy eating and methods of growing fresh vegetables were communicated to the participants.

In the past workshop's been conducted through communities, groups and other stakeholders, participants were ask to answer questionnaire. The majority from the communities see that there a lot of work need to be done to help the community and other willing individuals to encourage themselves through the help from consultant and technical assistant.

The current economic downturn and the rising prices of imported foodstuff, the local population are encouraged to grow crops in their backyard. For the project to be successful the Division of Agriculture, FAO, Taiwan Mission and other projects assistance must maintain and work closely with community and help growers in all aspect of vegetable crop production.

3. Project Output/ Activities

There are 19 established community groups as part of the NSC members involve with the projects. Since the departure of International Technician the attached Division of Agriculture and Taiwan Technical Mission have been generally maintaining, monitoring, assisting and held workshops with the communities.

To date, there are more established community and willing individuals are not being utilized to their potential due to the factors such as; lose/lack of interest to develop and maintain, Focusing with community right now is basically through technical advices, workshop and more into container growing suitable for willing individual growers to determined and implement the basic skill in planting vegetables.

The objective of the project is to attempt through technical assistant to community to increase the availability of food crop through home gardening. Provide the community growers with the necessary advice and knowledge to increase and improve crop production; Meet the household food requirements, for better health and living standards.

When the growers were visited they were reminded that the crops they will be planting are for their family use and any extra can be sold or given away to families/neighbor. Each grower was reminded to have compost at all times to replenish the soil in the garden/container after every harvest. The seedlings and the seeds are supplied by Agriculture for the duration of the project.

Participatory training method was used to involve everyone in setting up and planting the crop in the container system.

Working closely with the Taiwanese project to help and maintain crop production in Nauru and they are located near the Buada lagoon in which water is more accessible to their programme.

The crops are grown in open field on a 0.1 hectare using 3,000 liters of water per day. According to the Agriculture project Manager Mr. Douglas Mo their first priority is to test varieties that will do well for Nauru. The next is to transfer what they learn to interested people. Their programme also aims at teaching the theory of agriculture production as well as cooking. The principle of growing crop is simply. Through a number of bio-chemical processes that employ sunlight, carbon dioxide, water, oxygen and many essential nutrients gives vigor and health to the plant. The processes must function efficiently to give the necessary yield.

4. Terms of Reference

1. ensure technical feasibility of all home garden practices promoted in the Nauru situation
2. be thoroughly conversant with the project objectives, outputs and activities
3. support the conduct of community awareness and consultations about the project
4. prepare seedlings at the identified training site for distribution after each training session
5. ensure farmers are consistently meeting their commitments to sustain their home garden activities as stipulated in the selection criteria
6. develop a field guide on home gardening for Nauru
7. conduct training, workshops with the Taiwan mission every month for the 19 community to take part.
8. ensure agriculture staff practices in their home gardens are technically consistent with appropriate practices and meet their commitments consistent with the agriculture up- skilling strategy
9. actively encourage and engage partnership with community entities like schools and other agriculture service providers like DSAP, TTM ROC and CATM through the sharing and exchange of technical expertise and resources
10. encourage and engage participation of health and education authorities and CBO's in community awareness programmes and farmer training activities
11. responsible to the Division of Agriculture

5. Recommendations & Conclusion

Nauru in General is unfamiliar with the introduction of most of these initiatives and bigger public awareness campaigns are needed for the development of interest and understanding. It also lacks the capacity of human resources and initially skills for these fields with the Division striving to produce trained personnel. Attitudinal changes in the population will also contribute to the success of these initiatives. International personnel should be made aware of the restrictive and sometimes frustrating conditions on the Island. They should also have genuine interest to the development of sustainable Agriculture to supplement the inadequacy reform measures will continue to impose on the well being of its population.

