NON-SUGAR, CROPS & LIVESTOCK

Fact Sheet

BACKGROUND

The agriculture sector remains as a cornerstone of Fiji's economic resilience and prosperity, deeply entrenched in the diverse landscapes of its islands. Blessed with abundant rainfall and nutrient-rich soils, Fiji's lush terrains offer an ideal canvas for cultivating a diverse array of crops. From traditional staples like rice, taro, yams and cassava to a rich tapestry of fruits and the iconic sugarcane, Fiji's agricultural landscape is as vibrant as it is varied.

CURRENT STATUS

Fiji's non-sugar, crops and livestock sector, in 2022, contributed 7 percent to Fiji's GDP (in 2022), underscoring its rising importance. There was a notable increase of 4.9 percent in the value of fresh/chilled exports of crop and livestock commodities compared to 2021, although imports of both fresh/chilled and value-added crop and livestock products reached $1 billion. While certain commodities experienced decline in export value, including kava, turmeric and pawpaw, others saw increases, such as taro, ginger and eggs. Importantly, there was a substantial decrease in both volume and value of rice imports. Livestock farming, particularly poultry, plays a crucial role in meeting protein needs, with advancements in biosecurity measures ensuring the health of the poultry population.

CHALLENGES

1. *Climate Change Vulnerability*: Escalating temperatures, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events significantly impact crop yields and water resources.

2. *Market Access Constraints*: Ensuring consistent quality, meeting international standards, and navigating trade regulations pose significant challenges.

3. *Transportation Costs*: Exorbitant transportation expenses diminish profit margins for farmers, particularly in remote areas.

4. *Value Chain Constraints*: Limited value-added processing facilities hinder income generation and economic diversification.

5. *Sluggish Adoption of Technology*: Lack of access to modern farming technologies impedes productivity and efficiency.

6. *Access to Finance*: Smallholder farmers face hurdles in accessing finance for investing in essential inputs and equipment.

7. *Human Capital Challenges*: Aging farming population and diminishing interest among the younger generation threaten long-term sustainability.

8. *Inadequate Infrastructure*: Limited transportation networks, storage facilities, and processing units impede efficient movement of agricultural products.

9. *Land-use Constraints*: Limited access to arable land and complex leasing procedures constrain expansion potential for agriculture.

10. *Pest and Disease Management*: Pest and disease outbreaks lead to devastating losses, affecting food security and livelihoods.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. *Climate-Resilient Agriculture*: Adoption of practices that mitigate environmental impact and ensure long-term sustainability.

2. *Market Diversification*: Establishing market linkages, improving information dissemination, and enhancing rural infrastructure.

3. *Value-Added Processing*: Transforming raw materials into higher-value goods, creating employment opportunities, and contributing to economic growth.

4. *Agro-tourism*: Capitalizing on Fiji's natural beauty and agricultural richness to attract environmentally conscious tourists.

5. *Intercropping with Sugarcane*: Maximizing land use efficiency, promoting biodiversity, and diversifying income streams.

6. *Modern Agricultural Technologies*: Bridging the digital divide and promoting technology literacy among farmers.

7. *Access to Finance and Credit*: Introducing low-interest loans, grants, and financial literacy programs to support farmers.

8. *Human Capital Development*: Implementing comprehensive training programs and promoting agribusiness entrepreneurship.

9. *Infrastructure Development*: Developing and upgrading transportation networks, storage facilities, and marketplaces.

10. *Legislative Reform*: Updating laws and regulations to reflect evolving economic landscapes and support sector growth.

FUTURE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

➤ **Strengthening food and nutrition security for all:**
   - ✓ Improve production and access to local, safe and nutritious food.
   - ✓ Undertake crop diversification to cultivate variety of nutritious foods.
   - ✓ Develop improved crop varieties and livestock breeds.
   - ✓ Implement resilient backyard models in peri-urban communities.
   - ✓ Improve multi-sector coordination of national food and nutrition security action.
   - ✓ Implement Food and Nutrition Security Policy.
   - ✓ Implement school nutrition programmes.

➤ **Better livelihood of farming households**:
   - ✓ Increase income of farmers.
   - ✓ Continue financial support mechanisms.
   - ✓ Implement farming community infrastructure programme.
   - ✓ Improve rural infrastructure investment.

➤ **Build strategic agreements and market access**:
   - ✓ Improve connections between farmers and markets.
   - ✓ Undertake bilateral and multilateral negotiations on trade agreements.

➤ **Improve community resilience and adoption of Sustainable Resource Management and Climate Smart Agriculture**:
   - ✓ Develop a National Climate Change Disaster Risk Management Policy.
   - ✓ Undertake research projects on farming system.
   - ✓ Undertake promotion of organic farming.
   - ✓ Continue dissemination of new technologies to farmers.
   - ✓ Improve Land and Water Resources Management in farming communities.
   - ✓ Reform degraded agriculture land.
   - ✓ Improve Disaster Risk Management and Recovery.
   - ✓ Develop Agriculture Drought Policy.

➤ **Enhance commercial agriculture**:
   - ✓ Improve domestic agricultural production via plans for major commodities.
   - ✓ Improve adoption of modern technologies and mechanization support to farmers.
   - ✓ Develop and provide quality seeds and planting materials to farmers.
   - ✓ Improve increased access to land and financing for commercial agriculture.
   - ✓ Establish database of available arable land.
   - ✓ Continue update and development of National Farmers Database.
   - ✓ Improve supply of domestic produce to tourism and export markets.
   - ✓ Conduct ad hoc community surveys and National Agriculture Census.