

# FAST FACTS

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## The Markets for Change - Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu Project

The Markets for Change (M4C) project is a six-year, multi-country initiative that aims to ensure marketplaces in rural and urban areas of Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Market vendors are predominantly women, and marketplaces offer important venues to effect women's social and economic change.

A UN Women project, M4C project is implemented in partnership with UNDP and supported by the Australian Government and is a key contribution to the achievement, in the Pacific, of SDG 5 which focuses on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

### Improving the socio-economic security and rights of market vendors especially women market vendors (Outcome 2)

Through this project under the framework of outcome 2, UNDP aims to:

- Improve lives of women market vendors through better financial and business competencies.
- Increase access by women market vendors to financial services such as credit, micro-insurance and livelihood protection
- Improve market vendors business and leadership skills
- Increase production and incomes for producers, market vendors and the vulnerable
- Improve knowledge management and production of knowledge products.

### Increasing Agricultural Productivity & Income of Vendor-Farmers (IPI-VF)

The IPI-VF, implemented by UNDP, aims to improve the socio-economic security of market vendors and the farmers linked to the markets in the three countries.

#### IPI-VF target

A niche group operating within most of the municipal markets is the vendor-farmers or the market vendors who are farmers themselves.

#### Markets for Change (M4C project)

- Goal: Markets that are safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory will promote gender equality and the empowerment of women
- Countries: Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu
- Duration: Six years started in April 2014
- Financial support: Primarily Government of Australia; other financial support includes UN Women
- Executing Agency: UN Women
- Responsible Party (Outcome 2): UNDP

Vendor-farmers usually work in family units and provide an important link between farms and the municipal markets by producing and supplying fresh produce to retailers and consumers.

The IPI-VF will assist these vendor-farmers to improve their agricultural productivity and enable them to run their farm businesses more efficiently and effectively thus enabling them to produce better quality and a greater quantity of crops while paying attention to environmental and economic sustainability.



A Vendor-farmer demonstrates a traditional planting technique in New Tenabuti, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.

#### Why is this important?

With increasing environmental pressures and economic hardship, farmers need to practice climate smart farming taking advantage of modern development in agribusiness and agricultural technologies. This will help to reduce impacts of climate change, farm costs and improve farm incomes.

Assisting vendor-farmers will not only benefit the vendor-farmers themselves but is also expected to have a beneficial ripple effect in the municipal markets whereby other vendors (retailers in particular) will be able to source from these vendor-farmers better quality and a greater quantity of produce at competitive prices.



Jeannette Wilson, a vendor-farmer tending her vegetable farm in Paunangisu, North Efate, Vanuatu.

### How will vendor-farmers be assisted?

In partnership with vendor-farmers, the IPI-VF will:

1. Identify and profile vendor-farmers in all the target markets in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to establish a database. This database will enable the project to determine baselines as well as help the vendor-farmers link with other agricultural stakeholders.
2. Conduct detailed farm surveys and soil analysis (where applicable) to determine soil conditions as the basis for interventions.
3. Assist in creating farmer groups/ clusters to enable the vendor-farmers to coordinate their farm activities and to share and learn from each other.
4. Provide selected farm inputs as per the input needs of the vendor-farmers and based on the soil and farm assessments.
5. Conduct a series of farm related training topics for vendor-farmer clusters with a hands-on practical approach where possible.
6. Involve key agricultural officials and other stakeholders at different stages of the interventions to promote dialogue, enable better networking and sharing of lessons among vendor-farmers.

### Training topics for vendor-farmers

- Topic 1: Agribusiness & Farm Management
- Topic 2: Soil care & management
- Topic 3: Early plant care & management
- Topic 4: Weed management
- Topic 5: Pest & disease management
- Topic 6: Fertilizers & plant nutrients
- Topic 7: Harvest & post-harvest handling
- Topic 8: Agro-sales & marketing

### Expected outcomes and results

- Participating vendor-farmers will have accurate soil analysis of their farmlands
- Participation in farming related trainings will increase their knowledge and skills in modern farming techniques, practices and technologies.
- Interaction with other vendor-farmers and stakeholders will enable sharing of farming knowledge and skills
- Input support (such as establishing small nurseries) will enable better crop husbandry practices.
- Vendor-farmers will be able to produce better quality and a greater quantity of crops and move towards self-sufficiency for sale in the market.

For more information, visit: [www.fj.undp.org](http://www.fj.undp.org)

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