

FAMILY FARM TEAMS

CULTIVATING FOOD, PROSPERITY AND RESILIENCE

WHAT IS A FAMILY FARM TEAM?

The 'Family Farm Team' approach, or 'FFT', is a practical, family-centred training program that helps Pacific farming households to plan, grow and thrive together. Developed by Professor Barbara Pamphilon at the University of Canberra, with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), FFT supports shared decision-making and the shift from subsistence farming to semi-commercial, small farm enterprises.

Through interactive modules and talanoa-based learning, FFT helps families:



Work together toward shared goals



Plan farm businesses and diversify income sources



Improve nutrition and food security



Strengthen communication and decision-making

PHAMA Plus has integrated FFT into its Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) approach, supporting efforts to encourage move inclusive and equitable household dynamics.

OUR WORK WITH FFT

PHAMA Plus has partnered with the University of Canberra to deliver Training of Trainers (TOT) and pilot FFT rollouts across the Pacific in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. PHAMA Plus has:



Developed FFT workbooks for Vanuatu and refined the PNG manual.



Delivered TOT sessions for exporters, processors, government officers and farmer groups.



Supported accredited trainers to roll out FFT workshops at the community level.



Integrated FFT into interventions to promote more inclusive, resilient value chains.

In 2025, PHAMA Plus carried out a new Training of Trainers pilot in Fiji, bringing together partners with the mandate and resources to deliver FFT widely. Roll out of the pilot was accompanied by dedicated evaluation to better understand and capture lessons learned about how the approach can be implemented to best support sustainability and impact.

WHAT FFT COVERS

KNOWLEDGE

Roles of women, men and youth in farming families

How income flows into and out of the household

Nutrition and food security for the whole family

How to communicate and make joint decisions

SKILLS

Track money: know household income and spending

Share work: family balance tree

Talk and decide: respectful communication

Secure future: food, nutrition and scaling up

ATTITUDE

Valuing equity and teamwork

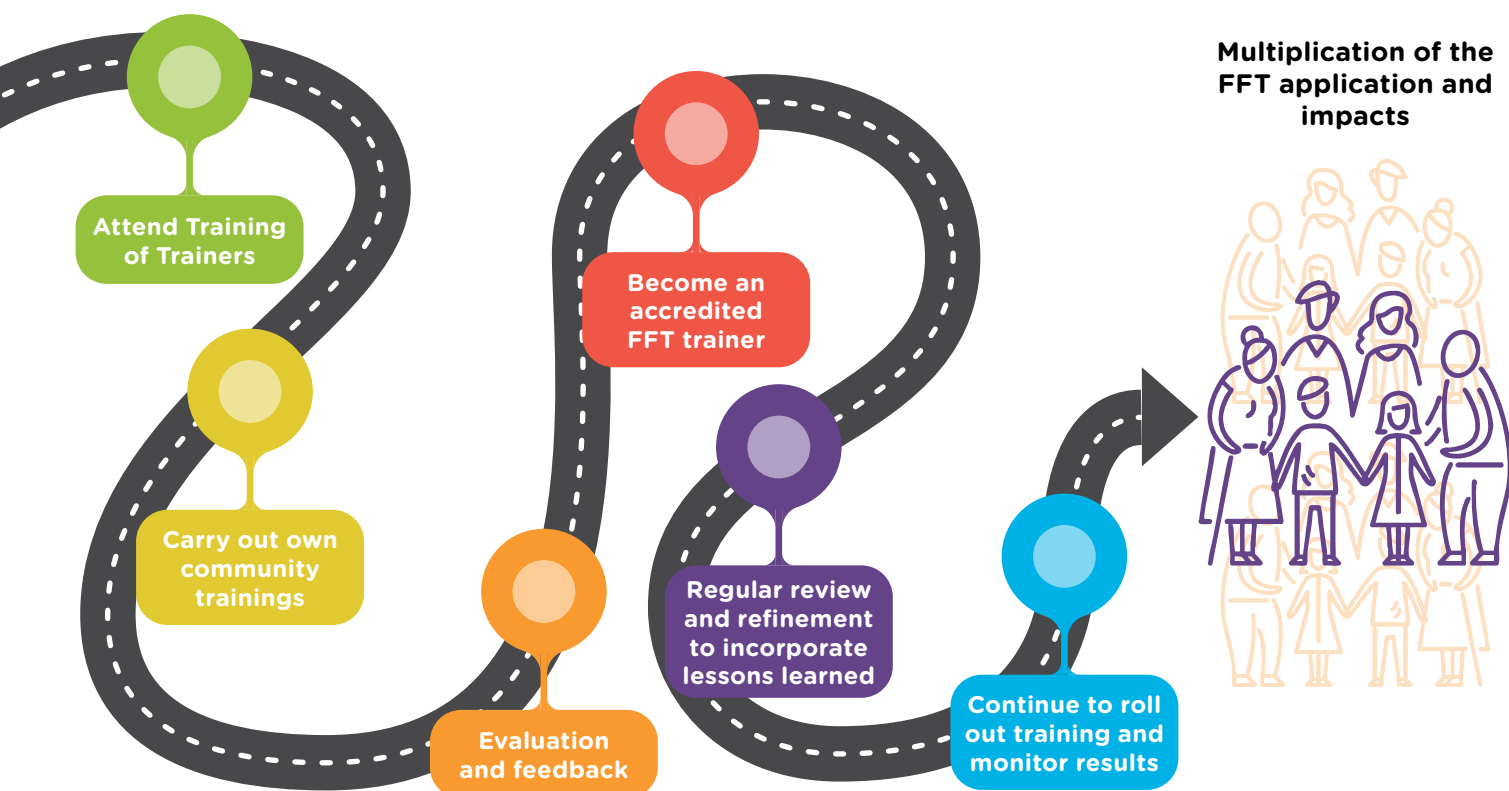
Seeing the farm as a family business

Building respect, trust and shared responsibility

Encouraging youth participation

Celebrating progress together

THE FFT JOURNEY FOR TRAINERS



BENEFITS AND IMPACTS OF FFT



ECONOMIC

Enables families to transition from subsistence to semi-commercial farming, increase and diversify incomes, and improve market reliability for exporters.



GENDER AND INCLUSION

Encourages the active engagement of women and youth as decision-makers and entrepreneurs.



SOCIAL

Strengthens family teamwork, promotes equitable decision-making, and improves nutrition and food security.



RESILIENCE

Reduces vulnerability to climate shocks by focusing on farm planning and crop diversification.

LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- PHAMA Plus has rolled out FFT Training of Trainers to private sector, civil society and government, which have all shown positive signs. It has been observed that the model works best where funding is available to roll out the training to farmers, and where there is a reason or focus for the training. For example, where the training targets a specific crop or is part of an existing program, and is accompanied with outreach and market access, the program is more likely to be successful.
- Gender balance within the training teams is important to ensure messages can be communicated in the most appropriate way.
- Face to Face training is recommended, and builds a community of practice among trainers for ongoing peer learning and support.
- Training can be adapted and delivered to suit the particular context to suit trainers and farming families.
- An abridged version of FFT would benefit micro-businesses.
- Having FFT Guides and Trainer Manuals in the relevant local language strengthens delivery and messaging, and enhances local ownership.
- FFT is a highly valued and successful program that could be incorporated into donor programs, government planning, or in partnerships with international NGOs and universities.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Working Together for Better Results - Miriama's Story



Miriama Tikoibaravi is preparing to share her knowledge with others after completing the Train the Trainers course as part of the FFT program.

Miriama's role is crucial in ensuring that the knowledge and skills she acquired are passed on to future farming families, fostering sustainable livelihoods in the Pacific.

Before the FFT program, I saw the importance of collaboration. Now, I truly understand that when everyone, men, women, and children, work together toward shared goals, the results are far more successful.

Miriama Tikoibaravi, a long-time facilitator at Tutu's Rural Training Centre in Taveuni, Fiji

Food, Cash, Confidence - Elesi & Aleveo's Story

Now we have cabbages, eggplants, cucumbers, beans, pineapples, chicken, eggs and beef for food and cash... we feel more secure about the future as we age.

Elesi Mila & Aleveo Basaga, Navuniso Village, Fiji



After FFT training, Elesi and Aleveo shifted from farming kava only to diversifying their crops and livestock production, securing their food supply and boosting cash income.

Building Resilience through Vegetables - Fine's Story



Fine Tuitoga, her husband and their eldest son, joined the PHAMA Plus FFT training in 2025. Delivered in evening sessions over six weeks by Winsome Farm, the training encouraged families to share decision-making, plan their farms as businesses and work together to achieve a shared vision.

Following FFT, we now have a purpose and a plan, and we can take action. Growing vegetables to sell is an excellent way to strengthen our business. They provide us with a regular income and help us withstand market shocks.

Sorrel Fine Tuitoga, Ura Estate in Taveuni, Fiji

Manure to Money - Usitino's Story

The training opened my eyes... my poultry manure bags sell quickly. If I manage my finances well, I'll be in this business for a long time.

Usitino Rasila, Delasui Village, Fiji



Usitino launched a successful poultry manure business after his TOT training, which was held at Navuniso village. He now also teaches community members in Delasui village to apply FFT skills.

For further information on any of PHAMA Plus's work supporting inclusive agriculture, please contact info@phamaplus.com.au

For further information on Family Farm Teams, please visit www.familyfarmteams.com or contact barbara@pamphilon.com