



## Background

The South Pacific Extension and Development Institute (SPEDI) will be a mechanism for FNU and CAFF staff and students to reach out to the local, regional, and global communities in terms of research, training, and development to improve livelihoods and address climate change impacts of these communities as well as enhancing our teaching and research aligning to FNU 2024-2026 Strategic Plan, Fiji National Development Plan 2025-2029 and MDG vision 2050.

The intent is of three-fold (i) enrich the CAFF and other college department's curriculum through teaching, research and (ii) address FNU and CAFF strategic Plans, including climate change impacts, and (iii) address the government's agenda through research & development (R&D), advisory service, monitoring and evaluation of projects

The emphasis is to reach the communities and to work along with to address climate change challenges and to improve their livelihoods in the space of sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and with an entrepreneurial outlook. It creates an environment in which SPEDI can develop climate smart innovations in terms of devices, new ideas, special skills, improved practices, and abilities into entrepreneurship models. SPEDI will then package, trial, and display climate smart entrepreneurial ideas and innovations on campus as well as in model villages in selected communities. Learnings and active participation through the process and settings will create interest among students and youths to be motivated to start smart farming, fishery, or forestry as sustainable business and environmentally friendly when they leave the University, so they become self-employed and perhaps employers including youths in rural sectors. The platform will also facilitate avenues to address farmer's needs.

## Vision

The vision of SPEDI is to be a transformative hub empowering individuals and communities through innovative education, climate smart sustainable practices, and collaborative research and development initiatives, fostering economic growth, social equity, and environmental stewardship where knowledge meets action in Fiji and Pacific Island Countries.

## Mission

The mission of SPEDI is to enhance community well-being, promote climate smart sustainable agriculture, education, and facilitate economic and social development through research, training, and outreach activities.

## Strategic Goals.

- Promote opportunities for staff and students to reach out to the community to engage in research, development, and extension programs and activities.
- Make CAFF a technology-fostering agent by developing appropriate farming innovations with the intent of climate smart entrepreneurial outlook,
- Establish demonstration projects and learning centers in communities as climate smart model villages with direct participation of staff, students, and farmers,
- Create a database, carry out consultancy services, and evaluate agricultural research and livelihoods development projects and programs, and
- Take lead in regional development agenda including climate change.

## Core Values

- **Excellence:** Maintaining the highest standards of research & innovation rigor, development practices, professional ethics, and scholarly integrity.
- **Relevance:** Ensuring all research & innovation and programme activities are grounded in Pacific realities including climate change and community needs.
- **Inclusivity:** Recognizing and respecting the diversity and holistic approach of multidisciplinary issues including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, health, education, cultural traditions, gender, climate change, and livelihoods of people across the Pacific.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering genuine partnerships with governments, development organizations, international bodies, and rural communities.
- **Impact:** Measuring success not only by research outputs but by measurable improvements in rural livelihoods and policy environments.

## Approach

Our research and development process will be guided by the Vanua Research Framework (Nabobo-Baba, 2006), which emphasizes the interconnectedness of culture, land, and community, which requires action research through multidisciplinary approaches. We will start where the people are through a bottom-up participatory approach.

The above the process of the how SPEDI will search and reposit researched based knowledge and package into useful innovation that will be disseminated to the end users and assess knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirational (KASA) and practice change of the users (farmers)

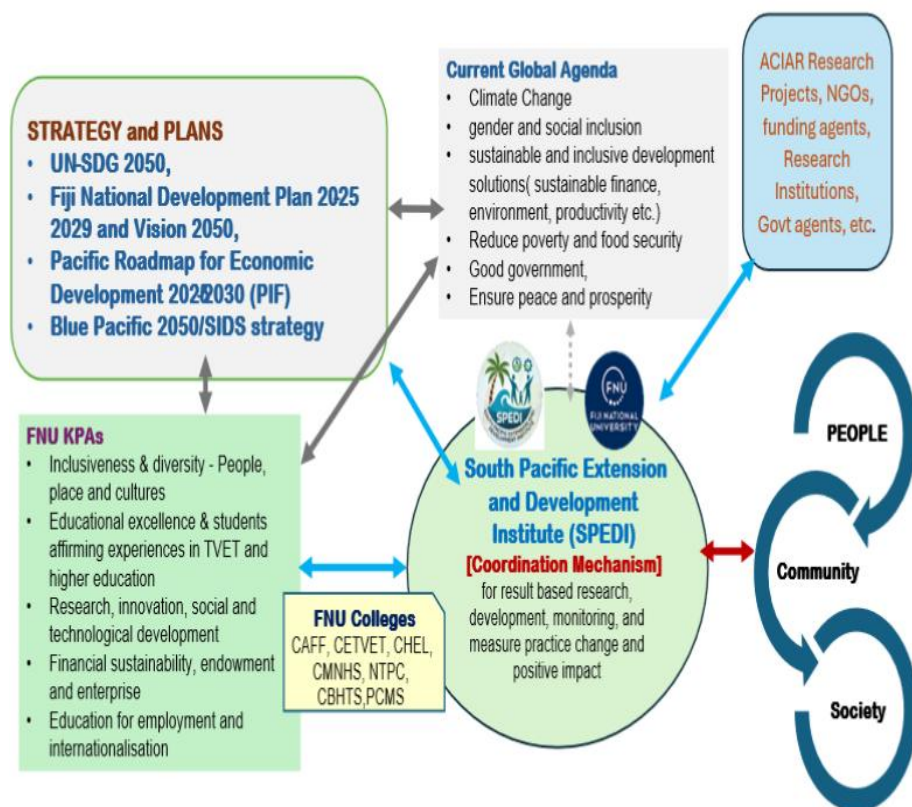
## Key Development Strategy

The functions of SPEDI mentioned above will be achieved through the following strategy.

- Establishing an appropriate innovation incubation hub (IIH) with entrepreneurial outlook in CAFF Campus
- Develop appropriate climate smart innovations/technologies with entrepreneurial outlook for farming and livelihood improvement
- Trial innovations of climate smart & economic viable demonstration farm on campus and analyse the outputs.
- Refine the innovations and package for field tests in various geographical settings.
- Establish climate smart model villages (CSMV) to scale out and as a learning hub in selected villages along with smart integrated farming system.
- Carry out baseline studies and need analysis in the selected villages.
- Based on the output of the study, build a resource center in selected villages and establish model farms to trial out the innovations at rural settings based on community needs.
- Multidisciplinary need-based action research with development approach, training, and facilitate development at community setting to improve their farming systems and livelihoods.
- Continuous implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities and programs
- Including the assessment of practice change, and impact of projects.
- Create a database (Agriculture Information System - AIS), carry out applied research, provide advisory and consultancy services
- Report to FNU management and funding agents and advise government for policy matters and interventions.
- Strengthening Partnership and Collaboration
- Learnings will be inputs in improving college curriculum through teaching, research and extension, and
- Scale up, down, and out to other Pacific Island Countries

## Strategic Alignment and Partnership Outlook

SPEDI will serve as FNU's central coordination mechanism for community projects, government-funded programmes, and monitoring and evaluation activities, positioning FNU as a strategic partner of the Fiji Government in addressing critical development challenges such as climate change. A significant gap in current government and donor-funded projects is the absence of post-evaluation processes that track how research findings reach end users, assess the adoption of innovations, or measure practice change and broader livelihood impacts and SPEDI is designed to fill precisely that gap. By partnering with government and development partners, FNU through SPEDI can become a credible change agent that monitors and evaluates the adoption of research outputs across Fiji and the wider South Pacific, while aligning its programmes with the Fiji Government's National Development Plan 2025–2029, Vision 2050, and FNU's own Strategic Plan 2024–2026



**Figure 1** Aligning Fiji National Development Plan 2025-2029 and FNU Strategic Plan 2024-2026 to SPEDI's activities

# The Theory of Change

Activities	Output	Outcomes	Impact
<p><b>Insitu research, innovation development, and learning</b></p> <p><b>Component 1 Innovation Incubation Hub(IIH) on campus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing appropriate climate smart technology for farming and livelihood improvement</li> <li>Developing IT software for managing farming activities (i.e., apps, data record/data base systems etc.)</li> <li>Develop business models for each innovation</li> </ul> <p><b>Component 2 Demonstration Farm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trial out climate smart appropriate innovations and technologies in farm demos as small business models.</li> <li>Monitor performance and review performance</li> <li>Make recommendations for GXE trials/test</li> </ul> <p><b>Component 3 Teaching &amp; Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate the development of innovations and field trials into academic curriculum.</li> <li>Solutions-oriented research that supports evidence and practice to enable sustainable smart farming and economic viability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Information and conceptual approach</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutes master plan and operational documentation of SPEDI and factsheets.</li> <li>Appropriate farming, entrepreneurial, and IT innovations</li> </ol> <p><b>Research Output and curriculum</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated interdisciplinary research methods</li> <li>Working papers and research articles for publication</li> <li>Improved teaching methods and research methods</li> <li>Designed short courses</li> <li>Workshop, conference,</li> <li>Business model</li> </ol> <p><b>Knowledge &amp; Capacity building,</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciating field experience of village setting</li> <li>Farmer training</li> <li>improve farming, financial, management, climate resilient &amp; mitigation skills and knowledge.</li> <li>Appreciate traditional and indigenous knowledge, and culture</li> </ol> <p><b>Income and improved livelihood</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>generate income</li> <li>good network with stakeholders,</li> <li>evaluation reports and recommendations</li> <li>control and manage of the environmental damages</li> </ol>	<p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employable graduates</li> <li>Enriching curriculum</li> </ol> <p><b>Society</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening collaboration</li> <li>Link scientific research with results</li> <li>Adapt and resilience to climate change</li> </ol> <p><b>Economy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low unemployment rate</li> <li>Increase in household income</li> </ol> <p><b>Entrepreneurship</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowering women &amp; youths</li> <li>Increasing SMEs</li> </ol>	<p>Improving food security, improving livelihoods in rural communities, boosting local economies, and building resilience against climate change.</p>
<p><b>Ex-situ research, development, and consultancy</b></p> <p><b>Component 4 Climate smart model village</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through participatory approach, select 3 villages to work with</li> <li>Develop climate smart model village and trial tested innovations at community settings.</li> <li>Provide training and advisory service</li> <li>Action research integrating Fiji Vanua Research Methodology(Nabobo-Baba 2008), monitor, and records</li> <li>Assess KASA and practice changes and reporting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Component 5 Consultancy Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing consultancy services in agriculture &amp; natural resources, climate change, community development, socioeconomics, etc.</li> <li>Partnership broker and linkages.</li> <li>Coordination and evaluation of all existing and past projects (e.g. ACIAR) and their impact.</li> </ul>			

## Summary

FNU stands at a critical juncture where growth alone is no longer enough, sustainability in teaching, research, and community relevance demands a fundamental shift in how the university engages with the world beyond its campuses. By rethinking its approach to community development and forging meaningful partnerships with government, industries, and donors, FNU can transform knowledge into practical innovation that directly addresses climate change, socio-economic challenges, and the livelihoods of ordinary people. Through SPEDI, this vision becomes operational, enriching the curriculum, strengthening CAFF's research agenda, and delivering on both FNU's strategic priorities and the broader national development goals of Fiji



## Contact

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