



Supporting Food and Nutrition Education in The Pacific Islands: Scoping Resources and Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers

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Schools provide a unique opportunity to educate and motivate Pacific Island students and the wider Pacific Island community about food systems, food production activities (e.g., gardening and cooking) and to focus on the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy and sustainable food choices. Recent work⁽¹⁾ has identified limited access to appropriate and credible learning and teaching resources and varying integration of food and nutrition in the curriculum across the Pacific Islands (P.I) region. Teachers reported an ardent desire to incorporate nutrition into the curriculum, but were not sure how to do this, or where to source assistance, including credible learning materials. Stakeholders also reported requiring assistance to develop contextualised learning materials, and that there were limited options for upskilling in food, nutrition and agriculture. Recommendations from this work included the development of a tool to assist teachers to bridge the gap between understanding the benchmark or learning outcomes provided in curriculum and designing engaging and authentic activities and assessment to meet these. Therefore, this project aimed to identify food and nutrition curriculum materials available for Pacific Island educators, to inform the development of a web-based resource. In 2022, a systematic desk-based scoping activity was undertaken to identify any resources available to teach food and nutrition in Pacific Island schools (primary and secondary level) and professional development opportunities relevant for educators. The mapping identified over 70 resources, with resources from almost all countries identified. Some are available for specific countries, but few that are designed for use regionally. Some of these resources are directly aligned to food-based dietary guidelines, while others appear to be developed for specific activities by non-governmental organisations. Very few professional development activities were identified. Once a resource was identified, the project team used the CRAAP test⁽²⁾ to evaluate the credibility of this. If deemed credible, the resource was tagged with key words (e.g., Tonga, gardening) and added for inclusion. The key resource categories (for tagging) were cooking, ocean and waterway foods, food in schools, food safety, healthy eating, sustainability, pacific research, teaching practice, gardening and WASH. A web designer developed the web-based resource through collaboration with the project team. Users can search for resources by country and/or topic. Based on the mapping of professional development activities, a professional development activity based on assessing the credibility of information was developed and added to the L&T toolkit. Users of the hub can share resources (their own) or identify other resources that could be added to the hub. There are limited resources and opportunities for Pacific Island food and nutrition teachers to upskill in food and nutrition education. School educators may benefit from more food and nutrition resources and professional development activities to complement those that are currently available.

Keywords: school food; nutrition education; children; Oceania

Ethics Declaration

Yes

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References

1. FAO (2019) School Nutrition Education Programmes Scoping Study and Capacity Needs Assessment. Apia. 130 pp. Licence: CCBY-NC-SA3.0IGO.
2. Evaluating Information – Applying the CRAAP Test Meriam Library California State University, Chico. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. Available from: <https://library.csuchico.edu/sites/default/files/craap-test.pdf> (cited October 2022).