



Report Documented by National Food Summit Facilitator-Ms. Myriam Abel, October 2009

**National Food Summit
REPORT**

**A Dialogue between the Vanuatu Government Ministries, UN & Regional Agencies,
Food Producers and Traders on Ensuring a Secure & Healthy Food Supply**

Port Vila, Vanuatu; Monday September 28 to Wednesday September 30, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Background

In August 2008, Pacific leaders at the 39th Pacific Island Forum, held in Niue, acknowledged the high importance of food security as an emerging issue. The leaders committed their governments to "immediate action to address food security issues nationally and where possible, regionally, through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, health, trade and transport". Similar concerns had been widely discussed and recommended at the 7th Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in March 2007 held in Vanuatu for a whole-of-society approach to non-communicable disease prevention and control, a regional approach to food fortification, including the convening of a food summit with representatives of key ministries; health, agriculture, trade and finance.

This decision had received strong support from the Pacific island countries Agriculture Ministers Meeting and the Trade Ministers Meeting. In his official speech the acting Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Ham Lini reiterated the Government commitment to ensure... that all the progress being made and the ideas being developed will be on the table for the Pacific Islands Food Summit and the agenda for the next Pacific Island Forum meeting".

Furthermore the current global economic crisis is negatively impacting economic growth, trade employment and health in the Pacific islands countries including Vanuatu. In this context, "food security" has become an issue of national priority as commodity prices fluctuate but generally trend higher than they have been in recent years. Political leaders and communities around the world and closer to home are recognizing the impact that climate change is having on economies and agriculture production and therefore food security and health.

Over the past 20 to 30 years, consumption patterns in many parts of the world, including Pacific island countries, have shifted from fresh local foods to manufactured or processed foods that are generally easier to prepare but may also be less healthy. These changes along with declines in physical activity have led to Pacific island countries including Vanuatu, having some of the highest rates of obesity and diabetes in the world. Alongside with the growing problem of chronic disease, problems of under-nutrition and vitamin and mineral deficiencies (iodine, iron, vitamin A, folic acid and zinc) persist in vulnerable populations, contributing to birth defects, reduced brain development and learning ability of students and increased susceptibility to diseases. These food related-health problems are detrimental to the productivity of a nation and may well be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and global market pressures on food security.

In view of all these concerns Vanuatu is the second country in this region to have conducted its National Food Summit from 28th to 30th of September led by the Ministry of Health with other key Government Ministries (Agriculture, Trade and Port Vila Municipal Council) and in close co-operation with business partners supported by civic organizations to help stimulate discussions and action of an integrated approach to improving food security and health for the people living in Vanuatu.

A well thought program (Annex 2) had been developed in making sure that discussion papers were of high quality of which it provided at the same time an "eye opener" but as well provocative to bring about fruitful discussions and consensus agreement to pertinent issues – through a round table of short dialogue meetings of mixed groups of all partners. The Summit was funded by WHO, Sydney West Area Health Service and the Ministry of Health.

The objectives of the Summit were to:

1. highlight the Vanuatu Government commitments to addressing food security in an integrated manner where all key stakeholders – governments, industries, private sectors and non governmental organizations –dialogue to identify barriers and practical steps in achieving food secure Vanuatu
2. contribute in ideas to Pacific Food Summit to be held in 2010

The expected outcomes were:

1. Understanding food security and recognizing the magnitude of food insecurity nationally/regionally
2. Identifying the barriers enhancing national food security and achievable actions to overcome the barriers
3. Strengthening the leadership and governance on food security matters
4. Identifying how to use standards to facilitate trade and marketing of safe and nutritious food at national level;
5. Encouraging industries to add health value to food
6. Identifying practical steps in protecting the food security of vulnerable groups
7. Actions to strengthen food and nutrition monitoring and research capacity.
8. Recommendations on a National Action Plan for Vanuatu to improve food security and achieve Food Secure Vanuatu.

Brief summary of the three-day Summit

Day 1 Barriers to Food Security

Official Opening,

In the absence of the Secretary to Vanuatu Christian Council of Churches, Ps S.Temar, the Acting Director of Northern Health Care Group, Mr. Joseph Mape opened the Summit with a prayer in referring to a biblical call for good vision and leadership. This was followed by the opening addresses from the Minister of Health, the WHO Country Liaison Officer and the Acting and Deputy Prime Minister. The highlights of all speeches and presentations pinpoints that foods of low nutritional value were compromising health and the productivity, for which imported foods were replacing healthy national foods and consequently obesity rates are high in Vanuatu and NCDs are a major concern. The anticipated solutions were to strengthen Vanuatu's food control system through reinforcing legal instruments to help with the control of food (including salt iodization, fortification of flour) and the call on the food industry to assist in improving health.

Food security was seen as the responsibility of the entire Government –and not just the Ministry of Health.

Understanding Food Security

The presentations made by SPC, UNICEF, the Australia Food and Grocery Council, the Ministry of Health and others, the participants learnt that Food Security is about access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, that chronic disease and micronutrient deficiency are the key consequences and that Vanuatu is increasingly vulnerable due to growing dependence on imported food because of limited access to land or gardens.

Barriers to Food Security

Enforcement of regulations, lack of investment in agriculture, lack of information and awareness among consumers, lack of multi-sectoral cooperation in government and poor engagement with food industry were identified as primary barriers to ensuring Food Security in Vanuatu. The Acting Director of Public Health, George Taleo noted that Public Health Department through Environmental health and Nutrition Sections are mandated to enforce minimum standards set by Vanuatu Legislation. He also mentioned that an 'Enforcement Authority' was required and that food security issues needed to be addressed in plans from all sectors and not just health.

The Director General of the Ministry of Trade, Marakon Alilee, gave a very good perspective on food security. He highlighted the size and growth of the Tourism Industry in Vanuatu. (about 40% of 2008 GDP) and indicate how the Tourism could help to promote Food Security and Food Safety as the tourism depends largely on supplying safe and quality food and these standards could also be applied to food made available to the local population. He also presented figures to show food imports increasingly coming from non-traditional markets, (traditional markets are Australia and New Zealand with high quality and safety standards)- thus the need for better monitoring of imports. Kim Leighton from the Australian Food and Grocery Council said that they were prepared to help Vanuatu and other Pacific Countries with improving standards for food quality and safety. Surprisingly the Summit noted that only 0.04% of the food produced in Australia comes to Vanuatu.

Day 2 Improving Food Security

Leadership and Governance

In Vanuatu, there are structures in place to provide leadership and governance on food security matters. Public Health provides leadership and governance on Food Safety and Nutrition, Agriculture on productivity and quantity; Trade on technology and development, Quarantine Inspection Services on meat and meat products and Fisheries on fish. In addition there is a Codex Alimentarius Committee responsible to consumer protection and ensuring fair practices in food trade. The challenge is identifying a group that can coordinate these activities with the government.

Some of the solutions discussed were to expanding the terms of reference of the Codex Committee and integrating with a proposed establishment of a Vanuatu Bureau of Food Standards Authority. Identified areas of leadership and governance included : (a) the need to be high level (under the Prime Ministers office; (2) the need to be collaborative;(c) the need to have a well defined structure; (d) the need to have representation from economic and social sectors; (e) the need to have the representation of industry; (f) the need to be tasked with enforcement and therefore involve Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue; (g) the need to link with the MDG.

Dr Colin Bell of WHO, Regional Office gave a presentation on potential characteristics of regional leadership and governance on food security, which included providing technical guidance on food safety and quality standards, trade and production of healthy local food, operating in accordance with regional plans and agreements and having close ties with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.

Food Production and Food Access: Identifying Actions to achieve Food Secure Country.

The themes in this session were the need to value those who farm and fish, to encourage youth to get involved in these vital activities because the workforce and skills required are gradually being lost and to support farming and fishing industries by identifying better ways to process and market local foods. Better access to policy makers, raising awareness of the importance of their roles in the community, supporting their work financially and politically were key elements to strong political will and commitment to secure food in Vanuatu.

Member of Parliament Hon. Ralph Regenvanu led activities related to the year of “Island Kakai” and of the customary economy in 2007 and articulated the preferences for retaining Vanuatu’s traditional subsistence economy (considered a ‘surplus’ economy because people grow for others e.g. customary ceremonies, noting that growing your own food has kept the country going until now and that it will remain key to social security in Vanuatu. He saw a need for strengthening market access for farmers, for creating niche markets for local produce (eg organic products), for protecting Vanuatu’s population from unhealthy imported foods and for processing foods like yam, taro and manioc so they are as convenient to eat as rice.

The workgroup considered what actions could be taken to improve food security in Vanuatu through food production and access with the main points being:

- Improving investment in farming/fishing, human development and supportive infrastructure.
- Ensuring producers have access to good and current information
- Consultation with Chiefs for issues of access and policy formulation
- Support competitive pricing of locally produced food
- Balancing food production with cash cropping
- Storing and distributing by catch (e.g. fish could be provided to schools, hospitals and prison)
- Building agriculture into the school curriculum
- Providing a support infrastructure for distribution of surplus crops
- Encouraging household gardens in urban areas.

Facilitating Trade in and Marketing of Food that is safe and Nutritious

Regular discussions were the need to strengthen the regulatory environment for food in Vanuatu. People noted that this as critical first step in facilitating trade in and marketing of food that is safe and nutritious. Most importantly the participants to the workshop call for standards to be put in place on food safety (residues, microbiological contaminants) and quality (salt; oil) and applying these major (flour, rice salt) as high risk food product. Participants also called for enforcement of legislation. Likewise Custom officers should play an important role in enforcement. Harold Tarosa from Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue (VCIR) identified training for Custom officers in identifying unhealthy and unsafe food products as an important and achievable action. Tarosa also said that Customs collects revenue and it would be their role in

applying price controls to food to promote safety and health of imported foods. However, the revisiting of import duties and exemptions and tariff classifications is a suggestion to preference safe and healthy foods.

Both presentations of WHO and PIFS in this same session were encouraging in particular for guiding Vanuatu on their obligations and rights in terms of trade agreements. Dale Hamilton noted that trade in foods has allowed countries in the Pacific to deal with population growth, to access to meet short falls due to cyclones and other disasters and therefore to maintain food in security.

Protection of Vulnerable groups

Seini Kurusiga of UNICEF challenged the participants that babies and mothers tend to be those most often affected by poor access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. In Vanuatu this is reflected in iodine deficiency, anemia and malnutrition. She also suggested that the urban poor are likely to be the group that is particularly vulnerable but those in outer island are also of concern. She also called for a national policy on infant and young child feeding, legislation to comply with the international code on the marketing of breast milk substitutes, fortification of foods with micronutrients.

Day 3 Improving food Security

Industry Adding Health Value to Food

In this session root crops were promoted as being high in nutritional value and growing and consuming them a way of helping Vanuatu maintain cultural identity. Fiji flour mills are voluntarily taking a number of actions to try and improve the health value of foods they process. Daniel Kumar from FMF also talked about the benefits of rice fortification and how the fortification process occurs..

Kim Leighton recommended the AFGC Daily Intake guide as a useful tool for helping consumers make healthy choices. The industry approach to adding health value to food appears to be creating new products rather than modifying products that are high in fat, salt or sugar.

Key actions identified to help improve healthy foods provided by industry in Vanuatu included:

- Establishing a food industry partners group in the Chamber of Commerce
- Setting up a consumer council that has representatives of vulnerable groups
- Applying voluntary standards of salt reduction in locally processed foods;
- Limit imports of non- nutritious food
- Upgrading local market of Port Vila and Luganville.

This session was closed by a member of the Media Association of Vanuatu (MAV) in outlining the media's willingness to support efforts to improve food security in Vanuatu. She encouraged professionals to open up to journalists to provide information to enable people to make informed decisions.

Monitoring, research and knowledge transfer.

Dr Colin Bell of WHO Regional office gave a presentation in this session on strengthening food and nutrition monitoring and research to ensure timely availability of data. The presentation highlighted the value of having good information and the importance of what information is currently available on food security and recommended regular store survey (e.g. Healthy Basket

Surveys, Market Basket Surveys)- micronutrient surveys of vulnerable groups as needed, government monitoring against standards of high risk foods and high risk companies, integration of international indicators into national surveys to strengthen monitoring and research. The workgroup suggested the following actions for Vanuatu:

- Evaluation of programs and regular surveys
- Formal agreement between ministers to get political support for research
- Establishing a food laboratory
- Get nutrition information to policy makers
- Use existing tools
- Risk assessment survey to identify population at risk
- Strengthening agricultural research at the research center in Santo

A national Action Plan for improving food and health security in Vanuatu (is discussed under the Recommendations on page 8 of the report)

Closing Session

Both Ministers of Health and Agriculture jointly closed the Vanuatu Food Summit both expressing word of encouragement and appreciation to a broad range of stakeholders in attendance and acknowledging their commitment to working together to improve food security. In his closing remarks the Minister of Health offered to host the Pacific Food Summit in April next year and indicated that it is an opportunity for Vanuatu to champion food security.

Proceedings

The data on food security profile for Vanuatu is alarming as the most at risk are Infants -7 067 (3.0%); Children < 15 years – 90 699 (38.0%); Aged people 65+ years -8 352 (3.5%); Urban households without a garden -2 549 (7.2%); and Income less than US\$1 per day -95 561 (40.0%). The health status shows a 14.6% of hypertension, high blood glucose 4.0% in male and 8.6% female, and obesity stand at 28.4%. The leading causes of mortality are 1) Heart diseases, 2) Cancer, 3) Neonatal death while the leading causes of morbidity are 1) Bronchitis, 2) malaria, 3) Acute Respiratory Infections. Looking at what people consume most eventually –Rice consumption represent 23% of total energy, while Roots and Coconut consumptions only reached 17% and 15% of total energy respectively.

Another striking information is whether the 33 570 households with a least one garden and 10 788 households selling crops are sufficient to sustain food supply in the whole country – an open ended question not easy to answer especially when our farmers have yet to change their attitude of availability of food versus quantity and quality.

The current Rural Household farmers suggest a growing practice in spending lesser time and resources in food production for their family consumption as their priority is to earn Vatu – a real dilemma situation as they end up spending their income buying imported food to feed their family.

However, should our farmers (often the real land owners) be victimized on their choices to produce and or plant only what they can afford? Knowing very well the limited access to credit to support them, the pressure of not being able to sell their produces due to high cost of transportation and communication- but above all, there is some degree of ignorance of why the need to secure food, let alone making better choice to eat healthy food, for what context for

example as access to information to the farmers is limited and considered as one of the barrier to food security.

The good news is the endorsement by the Parliament (September 2009) of the amendment of the Food Act (Food Control Act no.21 of 1993 and Food Control Regulation no.37 of 2007) – first amendment since endorsement of the act which allows penalty notices and provision to give the Minister of Health power to make orders and specific standards on Food Fortification. The challenge is the enforcement of the law once gazettes. The summit had in many ways provided opportunity for all interested parties (government, food processors and traders) to identify measures and work collaboratively to address the matter. The summit recommended groups of processed foods to be fortified (eg: Salt, Rice and Flour including local processed Cassava flour)

The Flour Mills Fiji (FMF), the Australian Food Grocery Council (AFGC) and TIXANA Australia have shared their experiences and particularly their expertise in food fortification including steps or process required to meet in order to embark this initiative. Their presence and expertise in food fortification had received a positive interest from the summit participants.

A New Zealand experiences on how the Industry and Government work together to improve food quality presented at the summit highlighted the Food industry's role, options to improve food quality, the challenges and potential solutions for the Pacific countries, the advantages to working together including the best practices which includes (1) a strong government commitment to the issue; (2) dedicated resource in health to work with industry; (3) identification of industry 'champions'; (4) a mechanism that recognizes industry achievement; (5) mutually agreed targets; (6) back-up policy or regulation that can be used if self-regulation is not effective or happens too slowly.

The Summit was highlighted by the presentation of two local food producers both expertise and experiences are quite a challenging situation for example the Lapita Cassava flour due to limited resources of food technology laboratory is yet to meet the still to be developed food standards within the current Food Regulation and Act. The Nougro farm produces fresh vegetables of high quality which are supplied to almost all supermarkets in town including hotels the dilemma faced is land issue – not able to develop it due to restrictive use of it imposed by the land owner. Both are good examples demonstrating on one hand the limited services of food laboratory and the growing land leases issues.

However and while the summit after its many deliberations on whether food security issue can be the stepping stones or the beginning of a work towards a secure healthy food supply, through development of a proposed National Food Policy, the reality or the challenge is the fast population growth versus the decrease of local food production/supply, the high cost of production, (in comparison with rice and other imported products), the increase of imported foods, the dependency of foreign sources – a high risk on the supply and price. More over the domestic products do not meet consumers' demand (difficult to compete with imported foods) due to the following:

1. No process/value addition, no preservation/storage
2. Irregular/unreliable supply
3. No market logistics organization "from farmers to consumers"
4. No information about pricing.

Conclusions

It was reassuring to note that the Summit participants stayed tuned during the 3-day-meeting, the dialogue exchanges was very rich, full of positive steps to take in enhancing food security in Vanuatu. The eagerness to expand the role of the National Codex Committee to Vanuatu Food Authority is the key for the way forward in this new endeavor. Most importantly the issue of availability of quality data to assist in better planning and development was identified as major priority, while the need for a National Food Policy was pivotal to enhance the government and food industry in consolidating their efforts for a secure and healthy food for Vanuatu. The need to review Food Standards and its Compliance poses concerns due to resources (human and finance) constraints. Vanuatu prone to natural disasters (cyclone, tsunami, earthquake, floods..) is another calamity to be prepared for when it strikes, thus the need to revisit traditional food preservation and other means to enhance the traditional rituals of having more than one garden for customary events. The appreciation and understanding of Food security is meaningful if it translates to good nutrition and contributes to prevention of food –related NCDs. The challenge of Partnership is a key factor to implementation of the National Plan of Action, a mechanism and building capacity of interested parties is crucial. Finally one of the speaker in his discussions has referred to an example of working together in the following manner, which the writer quoted here as the culmination of the 3-day Summit

- MOH – you help tell us what we should eat to be healthy but you do not produce much food
- Agriculture – you help the farmers and villages grow food – not all the food – how much rice and wheat do you grow and mill?
- Super Market Owner and Food Trader – you select what goes on your shelf but that is mostly on price and reliable supply from the food industry- can you really know if this is healthy or harmful to your customers?
- Church leaders – you tell your people that their bodies are a temple of God- but do you really know what impact the food put in these temples are really doing people over time?

Recommendations

One of the eight expected outcomes of the Summit was to work on recommendations which should provide basis for a National Plan of Action with the prime objective to improve food security and achieve Food Secure Vanuatu. Thirty eight recommended actions have been set out under the following subject headings:

1. Strengthen food and nutrition monitoring and research capacity to ensure timely availability of information.
2. Coordination and Leadership on Food Security matters.
3. Work with industry to add health value to food.
4. Enhanced and sustainable production, processing and trading of foods.
5. Development and Compliance of food legislation Standards to promote trade and health.
6. Enhanced food security of infants and vulnerable populations.

The recommended actions are grouped as per each of the headings and formatted according to responsibilities of various stake holders.

1. Strengthen food and nutrition monitoring and research capacity to ensure timely availability of information

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Action for Partners
Strengthen food monitoring	Government	Researching Appoint local person	Regional partners
1.2 Strengthen Codex Committee	Government		
1.3 Develop Monitoring and Evaluation framework that is linked to PAA	Codex Committee	Use government M&E framework Identify relevant indicators Use and consolidate existing data	
1.4 Build technical capacity in M&E area	Government	Training opportunities – Training workshops- Scholarships- Formal agreement with countries that have analytical and research capacity	WHO,SPC, FAO, PIFS
1.5 Regular collection of data using existing tools	Department of Statistics	Undertake regular surveys using existing tools. Resourcing survey activities	FAO, WHO, SPC
1.6 Disseminate information widely	MEDIA	Print and distribute copies of reports Identify champions Awareness workshop for policy makers and community groups	Media, Health, WHO, Industry
1.7 Formal data and information sharing between ministries	Codex Committee	Formal agreement	Statistics, Health, Agriculture, Trade
1.8 Use national nutrition data to advocate on food security			Health, WHO

2. Coordination and Leadership on Food Security Matters

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Actions for Partners
2.1 Establish Food Security Committee	Use existing Codex Committee under direction of Ministry of Health with key stakeholders involvement from ministries and industry partners	MOH has power under Food Act, therefore will be the ministry which a food committee falls under. Codex to submit a policy paper to the Council of Ministers for approval/endorsement to strengthen food security regulations	
2.2 Conduct Legislative Review	Codex, MOH	Contract to a person with legal background to carry out the review With close working collaboration with SLO	WHO, MOH, SLO?

3. Work with Industry to add value to food

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Actions for Partners
3.1 Establish a Food Industry Partnership Group	Chamber of Commerce, MOH, Trade	MOH to initiate	
3.2 Establish Consumer Council	Reps from vulnerable group- MOH advise	MOH to initiate – outside of government	
3.3 Advocate for healthy food Negotiation with industry groups	Identify an outspoken Member of Parliament		
3.4 Limit /stop imports of non nutritious processed foods based on scientific evidence	Customs, Health	MOH request involvement in customs tariff review committee	
3.5 Upgrade Port Vila and rural	Local authority – provincial	Promote selling by weight, getting cold	

markets, specially for locally grown foods	governments	storage, creating a sales mechanism	
3.6 Establish voluntary standards for salt reduction in locally produced foods	Food industry group Consumer council	Talk to food producing members and agree on an amount with MOH advice	Food testing facilities (regional?)

4. Enhanced and sustainable production, processing and trading of foods

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Action for Partners
4.1 Support processing of local foods. Government subsidies for root crops especially to assist in sending to urban areas and transportation	Ministry of Agriculture	Provide fuel subsidies Improve feeder roads	SPC/FAO-capacity building-Provide funding and transfer of technology to farmers.
4.2 Infrastructure (roads, inter island shipping)	Provincial Government authorities - Stevedoring	Improve feeder roads Reduce fees	
4.3 Reserve land for food production	Government Chiefs Land owners	Put in place a legislation that deals with reservation f Agriculture land for food production	
4.4 Strengthen genetic base of plants and animals	Ministry of Agriculture, CIRAD	Introduce new genes v breed-resistant-change of climate, pests –fruit trees crops, livestock	SPC/FAO to assist in capacity building and provide improved varieties
4.5 Provide proper storage facilities- eg cold storage	Government, private sector	1 centre for each province –Equip boats – Equip Vila and Santo Market House	SPC/FAO- Others to assist with financial/technical advice
4.6Support production, processing and trading of local	MAQFF, private sector, VARTC, VAC,CCI, CAB, FSA, SAPV, VAS,	Sharing of technical information Extension services Education –schools	All regional partners are called to provide financial and technical advice

foods – - R&D of appropriate technology - Elite varieties of food crops, manioc, kumala, taro, yams, etc	Farmers, regional institutions, media, donors and partners.	and curriculum development Duty exemption on production materials Media awareness/publicities Make available production facilities	
4.7 Improve transport, infrastructure and facilities	PWD, Telecom Van. shipping agents, airlines, private industries	Liaise with transport owners to special freight rates Private industries.	
4.8 Increase capacity -building	CAV, USP, Food tech. center, RTC, education on regional institution- eg SPC/ACIAR	Increased emphasis on farming practice and management. Increase credit available to farmers Apprentice training on farming process, market	

5. Development & Compliance of food legislation Standards to promote trade and health

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Action for Partners
5.1 To develop standards for food fortification: -Flour (manioc, wheat, rice) -Rice - Salt	MOH, Industries	-Set u task force -Use examples from other countries-Fiji - Consult with trading partners and industries from the region (countries of origin of imported products)	Technical advice Training and support Funding assistance Establish regional standards
5.2 To develop a maximum level of residues (physical and chemical) -Meat, root crops, vegetables			
5.3 To develop a maximum level of criteria Meat, egg, dairy products, fish, vegetables			

5.4 To develop a compositional standard on salt, oil and sugar for - canned meat -Chips -Sugar - Ice cream -Cordial/juice -Bread	MOH, Local Authorities, Quarantine, customs	Setting up facilities to assist inspection services Train inspectors to advice industries Agriculture Extension officers to work with farmers in rural areas.	Technical advice Provision of guidelines and standards Training Funding
--	---	--	--

6. Enhanced food security on infants and vulnerable populations

Actions for Vanuatu	Who?	How?	Action for Partners
6.1 Maternal health-strengthen safe motherhood practices - Early ANC visits -iron supplementation and (compliance) -nutrition education for breastfeeding mothers -timing of complementary feeding -Health workers and clinics/NGO to monitor infant growth	MOH	Mobilize community to deliver Community Nutrition Education - MOH to train CBS -Mobilize men as partners & youth into community support. -Revitalize Village Health workers programs and PHC	National Councils (chiefs, women, youth, churches) International/ Regional technical and financial support Other relevant interested local NGOs eg Wan Smol Bag MOH take leading role of coordination in delegating responsibilities
6.2 Women of Child Bearing Age -Nutrition education -program – encourage the 3 food groupings –Infant and young child feeding	MOH	Promote breastfeeding (0-6 months) Strategic plan for WHO and UNICEF Use employment act CAP 160 Raise awareness on benefits of breastfeeding Reinforcement of promotion Preparation at home. Canteens	FAO, SPC, PIFS, WHO

		MoE implement food security curriculum in schools	
6.3 School age children: - encourage the 3 kinds of food groupings -Review Health, Nutrition ,Agriculture (HNA) school curriculum -Establish school gardens with students' participation -Train cooks who works for school lunch program -Set up Mothers Club - Explore resourcing for free school breakfast/lunch program	Parents, school Canteens, MOH, MoE, MOH, Ministry Agriculture Start programs Health Promoting Schools	-Coordinated approach to review HNA curriculum -Combine all HNA subjects as one Food Security -School Garden Show eg World Food Day -Mobilize PTA &especially Mothers' Clubs to organize school meals	MoE –lead role &coordinate with MOH and MOA - Financial and technical assistance from International/Regional Partners -Other interested NGOs -Media – Communication Awareness through routine Radio and TV programs
6.4 Elderly and Disabled -Family and community commitments	MOH, Van. Gov. commitment	Nursing home-	
6.5 Population with lack of knowledge - community awareness - Workshops and training	DARD/MOH MoE	Better coordination by policy makers, DSW/DESP.DSM DCO/COM	
6.6 Undertake a risk assessment survey to identify at risk population Develop nutrition curriculum for primary schools			
6.7 Other populations	Government and	Through TA and	FAO; SPC

at risk -population with low food production -low income families in urban/semi urban areas.	Partners / VARTC	financial assistance VARTC to undertake trialing of strategies.	
6.8 Trial of certain strategies that we think have worked or could work	Government and Partners	Assessment to monitor the role /contributions of partners	FAO, SPC, PIFS, WHO; SWAHS
6.9 Monitoring of stakeholders/partners cooperation			
6.10 Develop policy for Vanuatu based WHO & UNICEF Global Strategies	Baby Friendly Hospital Work place environment	Media MOH regular radio program.	WHO, UNICEF

These recommendations although not in order of priorities are relevant to reducing non – communicable disease, including reducing vitamin deficiencies and preventing and reducing disability in the population. Equally it points the opportune timing for the Government of Vanuatu to set a direction through the Food Security National Plan of Action -a basis for more dynamic interactions between all people involved in foods for a progressive secure and healthy food supply inclusive of its leadership at this time of vulnerability of the markets and the global economic crisis.

Acknowledgement

As the Facilitator of the 3 day Summit, I wish to acknowledge the dedicated team (represented by Health, Agriculture, Trade and Port Vila Municipal) for their tireless hard work and efforts to making a successful first ever National Food Summit. The Health Authorities for their stewardship and leadership in convening this Summit- an indication and way forward that Vanuatu is prepared to lead discussions in the forthcoming Pacific Regional Food Summit- April 2010. The expertise of the Supporting Agencies to include SPC; FAO; PIFS; UNICEF and World Bank and most importantly the Sponsors and their Technical Team - WHO; the Centre for Health Innovation & Partnership (CHIP); Sydney West Area Health Service and the Vanuatu Government.

Lastly but not the least, a special acknowledgement to all distinguished participants of the Summit for their quality presentations and focused discussions that resulted to a proposed –National Plan of Action of Food Security for Vanuatu.

Annex 1 - List of participants

1.1 Registration of participants by Government Department

NAMES	POSITIONS/ADDRESS
Ministry of Health	
Evelyne Emil	Acting Principal Vanuatu Centre for Nursing Education
Jean Jacques Rory	Manager Health Promotion Unit Ministry of Health
Jerry Iaruel	National Mental Health/Physical Activity Coordinator Public Health Department
Harriet Tavoia	Dietician Vila Central Hospital
Pakoa Rarua	Senior Environmental Health Officer Public Health Department
Graham Tabi	Acting Manager Malaria & Other Vector Borne Diseases

Myriam Abel	Facilitator National Food Summit
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	
Benuel Tarilongi	Director Vanuatu Quarantine & Inspection Services
Tari Molisale	Root Crop Officer Agriculture Department
Lonny Bong	Livestock Officer Department of Quarantine & Inspection Services
James Wasi	Agriculture Extension Officer & FAO NC
Sylvie Warimavute	Quarantine Officer Department of Quarantine & Inspection Services
Timothy Tekon Tumukon	Principal Plant Protection Officer, Department of Quarantine & Inspection Services
Hanington Tate	Principal Forest Officer Forestry Department
Charlie Harrison	OIC/ Human Resource Vanuatu Agriculture Bank

George Kanegai	Farming System Officer Agriculture Department
Nambo Moses	Quarantine Officer Department of Quarantine & Inspection Services
Qwenneth Tari	Marketing Officer, Agriculture Department
Peter James	Principal Fisheries Officers Fisheries Department
Jeffery Wilfred	Director General Ministry of Agriculture
Livo Mele	Director Forestry Department
Ministry of Trades and Industry	
Louis Kalnpel	General Manager Chamber of Commerce
Alick Berry	Project Coordinator Chamber of Commerce
Joe Pakoa	Industries & Development Officer Department of Trades & Industry
Tina Soaki La'au	Laboratory Technician Department of Trades & Industry

Charlie Namaka	Expenditure Analyst, Department of Trades
Ministry of Public Utilities	
Allan Faerua	Director Public Utilities and Infrastructure
Ministry of Finance	
Ben wotu Leeshi	Director Customs Department
Akuma Malas	Trade and Tariff Officer Customs Department
Thomas Banga	Head EREAU Department of Finance
Simil Johnson	Director Statistics Department
Toasi Taiwia	Human Resource Officer Customs Department
Ministry of Education	

Leisel Massingiw	Acting Principal Education Officer Curriculum Development Unit
Prime Ministers Office	
Bethuel Solomon	Policy Analyst Natural Resources Sector
Jean Francois Metmetsan	Prime Ministers Office
Ministry of Justice and Women's Affairs	
Doresday Watson	Director Department of Women's Affairs

1.2. Registration of Participants by Province

NAMES	POSITIONS/ADDRESS
Rossie Silas	Manager MALAMPA Provincial Health
Johnny Joe	Provincial Environmental Health Officer MALAMPA Provincial Health
Mark Fred	Law Enforcement Officer MALAMPA Provincial Council

Franklin Dihn	Manager TORBA Provincial Health
Michael Silona	Planner TORBA Provincial Council
Mathias Tabeva	Manager PENAMA Provincial Health
John Harrison	Provincial Environmental Health Officer PENAMA Provincial Health
Job Boe	Secretary General PENAMA Provincial Council
Sam Naiu	Provincial Agricultural Officer PENAMA Province
Iou Pusin	Provincial Environmental Health Officer TAFEA Provincial Health
Lui Naling	Acting Manager TAFEA Provincial Health
David Tovorvur	Assistant Secretary General TAFEA Provincial Council

Willie Iau	Provincial Agricultural Officer TAFEA Province
Joseph Mape	Manager SANMA Provincial Health
Joel Paul	Assistant Secretary General SANMA Provincial Council
Andrew Ala	Environmental Health Officer Luganville Municipality
Louis Tione	Rep. Rice Growers Association SANMA Province
Philip Panpan	Provincial Agricultural Officer SANMA Province
Oniel Dalesa	Farming System Officer North SANMA Province
Tari Molisale	Root Crop Officer SANMA Province
Morris Amos	Manager SHEFA Provincial Health
Tasso Eliab	Environmental Health Officer

	SHEFA Provincial Health
--	-------------------------

1.3 Registration of participants by Private Sector

NAMES	POSITIONS/ADDRESS
Henry So	Representative Chinese Association
Sam Grant	Manufacturers Association
Marie Dick	Production Manager Vanuatu Beverage Ltd
Charlot Nawen	Production Manager Vanuatu Abattoir Ltd
Kaleogoro Steele	Manioc Farmer Siviri Village
Dan Dempsey	Manager Nougro Farm
Manu Sael	Mele Cattle Farm
Harry Iatchi	Chairman Paunangisu Farmer's Association

Malcolm Dalesa	Environmental Health Officer Port Vila Municipality
Noella Seru & Quai Obed	Purchasing Department Au Bon Marche
Lenge Vira	Wan Smol Bag Haus
Geordie Mackenzie	Manager La Pita Café
Johnson Sausiara Marie Sausiara Yasuko Kinoshita	Putongi Project

1.4 Supporting Agencies

Names	Agencies
Dr. Benard Fabre Teste	WHO – CLO Vanuatu
Professor Glen Maberly	Director CHIP/SWAHS

Jan Kang	CHIP/SWAHS
Isiye Ndombi	UNICEF PACIFIC Representative
May Pascual	Chief Executive Officer Vanuatu Field Officer
Dr. Andrew Collin Bell	Technical Officer Non Communicable Diseases WHO-WPRO
Peter Hoejskov	WHO – Suva, Fiji
Jonathan Manieva	Fisheries Development Officer (DEVFISH)
Kim Leighton	Director Food Policy & Regulation Australian Food & Grocery Council
Siosuia Halavalau	Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
Aru Mathias	FAOSAP
Dale Hamilton	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS)
Seini Seniloli Kurusiga	UNICEF, Fiji

Karen Fukofuka	Nutrition Adviser Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
Sally Hughes	NZ Ministry of Health
Daniel Kumar	FMF – Fiji
Elizabeth Drummond	CHIP
Pamela Carlo	AusAID

1.5 Observers

Ethel Mapolu	Food Safety Officer Ministry of Health Solomon Islands
Josephine Maeluva	Nutritionist Ministry of Health Solomon Islands
Joanne Coombes	Ex- Westmead Staff

1.6 Presenters during the National Food Summit

Names	Position/Address
Len Tarivonda	Director Public Health Department Ministry of Health
George Taleo	Vector borne Disease Control unit Public Health Department
Shirley Laban	National Food Safety Program Coordinator Public Health Department
Jennifer Timothy	National Nutrition Coordinator Public Health Department
Annick Stevens	Food Security Officer Agriculture Department
Reuben Bakeo	Director Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Japiot Francois	Technical Adviser Agriculture Department
Marakon Alilee	Director General Ministry of Trades and Industry
Emily Tumukon	Vanuatu National Codex Focal Point
Timothy Sisi	Local Trade Officer Department of Trade & Industry
Brian Philips	Climate Change Officer Meteorological Department
Harold Tarosa	Customs Compliance Officer Trades, Tariff and Compliance Section Customs and Inland Revenue Department
Peter Kaoh	Manager Farmers Support Association
Charlot Longwah	Manager Kava Store
Votausi Mackenzie	Manager La Pita Café
Ralph Regenvanu	Director Vanuatu National Cultural Council

Rex Aromalo	Manager Port Vila Market House
Evelyne Toa	President Vanuatu Media Association

1.7 List of Logistics

NAMES	POSITIONS/ADDRESS
Timas Paul	IT Assistant Officer Ministry of Health
Honore Lingtamat	Offset Officer Ministry of Health
Hillary Garae	Diabetes Support Officer Ministry of Health
Yuki Jimbo	JICA Volunteer, Ministry of Health
Frederic Yakeula	Driver, National Food Summit
Toumelu Kalsakau	Health Promotion Officer, Ministry of Health
George Matariki	Food Compliance Officer Public Health Department
Nelly Wouloseje	Senior Environmental Health Officers, Public Health Department

Annex 2 - Program

2.1 -



Vanuatu Food Summit

*A dialogue between the Vanuatu Government
Ministries, UN & Regional Agencies, Food Producers
and Traders*

LE LAGON RESORT, PORT VILLA, VANUATU

28 to 30 September 2009

Ensuring a more secure & healthy food supply

Food Quantity	Food Control Systems	Food supply
Commodity Prices [food & fuel]		
Financial Markets [economic downturn]		
Climate change		
Food Quality	Vanuatu Food Law [regulations labelling inspection enforcement]	Agricultural Production [community gardens & local markets]
Vitamins & Minerals [Island food, fortified food products]	Consumer Education Trade Agreements	Local & Regional Food Manufacturing Imported Food [from regulated & unregulated markets]
Obesity & Chronic Disease [salt, fats, energy, amount]		Fisheries
Food Safety		

Pacific Declaration on Food Security and Framework for Action

Meeting Organizer

Vanuatu Ministry of Health supported by Ministries of Trade, Agriculture, Customs, Education,

	Finance, and Public Utilities and Infrastructure	
Sponsors	Centre for Health Innovation & Partnership (CHIP), Sydney West Area Health Service, NSW, Australia (Supported by AusAID)	World Health Organization (WHO) Vanuatu Government
Supporting Agencies	Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) World Bank (WB)	
Invited Organizations	AusAID NZ AID Au Bon Marche (ABM) Farmers Support Association Manufacturers Association Chinese Association Chamber of Commerce Flour Mills Fiji Punjas Ltd Vanuatu Hotel Resorts Association Rice Growers Association The Kava Store La Pita Café VanWoods Women's Centre Wan Smol Bag Theatre LOCALEX Ltd Santo Meat Packers VANGO Teouma Gardens Rainbow Gardens Agriculture Supplies Azure Pure Water Vanuatu Beverage Ltd Vanuatu Breweries Ltd Toa Farm Vanuatu Abbatoir Ltd A & K Holding Ltd Nougro Farm Prawn Farm AH Pow Bakery Switi Ice-Cream Tanna Coffee Youth Challenge Grants Catering	Australian Food & Grocery Association Nestle Pacific Islands Nestle Oceania Goodman Fielder Allied Mills Manildra group Cerebros IGA Meat & Wool New Zealand Consumer Representatives Women's groups Women's Centre HJ Heinz Sunrice Woolworths Ltd Sanitarium Foods Kraft Foods Coco Cola Australia Akzo Nobel Pty Ltd DSM/Nutririce Arnotts Cadbury McCain Foods, NZ Ltd Hans Continental small goods Pty Ltd George Westons Foods Trukei Industries International Life Sciences Institute

The current global economic downturn is negatively impacting economic growth, trade employment and health in Vanuatu and other Pacific island countries. In this context, *food security* has become an issue of national priority as commodity prices (including fuel and food) fluctuate but generally trend higher than they have been in recent years. In addition, political leaders and communities around the world are recognizing the impact that climate change is having on economies and agricultural production and therefore food security and health. Pacific island countries, in particular, are vulnerable to these changes.

What is Food Security?

At the 1996 World Food Summit hosted by FAO and WHO in Rome, Italy participating countries agreed to the following definition of food security:

Food security exists when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy lifestyle

Food Security: Slowly declining in the Pacific

Historically, Pacific island countries have managed to avoid food shortages through domestic food production and importation. However, over the past 20 to 30 years, consumption patterns in many parts of the world, including Pacific island countries, have shifted from fresh local foods to manufactured or processed foods that are generally easier to prepare but may also be less healthy. These changes along with declines in physical activity have led to Pacific island countries, including Vanuatu, having some of the highest rates of obesity and diabetes in the world. Alongside this growing problem of chronic disease, problems of undernutrition and vitamin and mineral deficiencies (e.g. iodine, iron, vitamin A, folic acid and zinc) persist in vulnerable populations, contributing to birth defects, reduced brain development and learning ability of students and increased susceptibility to diseases. These food-related health problems are detrimental to the productivity of a nation and may well be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and global market pressures on food security.

Improving food security in Vanuatu

The Vanuatu Food Summit will help stimulate a discussion and action on an integrated approach to improving food security and health for the people living in Vanuatu. The central question is how best to ensure sufficient, safe and nutritious food is produced, sold and consumed in Vanuatu. Enhancing productivity and biodiversity, strengthening food control systems, promoting product reformulation and labelling and helping consumers make informed food choices are not only beneficial to health but also to trade. With more local production and tighter food control systems that availability and quality of foods available for export should increase.

Vision

To bring together leaders from the public, private and civic sectors to examine and then commit to building a more comprehensive (whole-of-society) approach to ensuring Vanuatu has a quality food supply that will be appropriate for the future, protect health and encourage trade.

Outcomes

A Vanuatu Food Summit will bring high level officials from Health, Trade, Agriculture, Customs, Education and Finance, leaders in private sector that are supplying food and other key stakeholders together. The expected outcomes are that participants will:

- Understand food security and discuss the health and economic implications of declining food security in Vanuatu and throughout the Pacific;
- Identify long term and recent threats to food security in Vanuatu
- Identify specific opportunities and potential resources to overcome threats to food security by strengthening food supply and control systems;
- Commit to creating for Vanuatu a fully integrated multisectoral plan that engages public-private partners (government, food producers and traders, civic and religious entities and consumers) in improving food security;
- Acknowledge the importance of taking a Pacific-wide approach to enhancing food security;
- Recognize the complexities of food security and the need for high level commitment and a regional approach and the value of a Pacific Food Summit in achieving this.
- Generate issues/ideas for tabling at other national summits, for inclusion in the Pacific Declaration on Food Security and Framework for Action and consideration at the Pacific Food Summit

Background Information

In August 2008, Pacific leaders at the 39th Pacific Islands Forum, held in Niue, acknowledged the high importance of food security as an emerging issue. The leaders committed their governments to “immediate action to address food security issues nationally and where possible, regionally, through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, trade and transport”. Drawing on this and guidance from Health Ministers, who recommended a whole-of-society approach to noncommunicable disease prevention and control, a regional approach to food fortification, as well as convening a food summit with representatives from the ministries of health, agriculture, trade and economics, and finance (Port Vila, 2007), FAO, PIFS, SPC, UNICEF and WHO are supporting countries in their efforts to improve food security.

For Food businesses, interest in a Pacific Food Summit that integrates action on food-related health outcomes has grown over a series of meetings, the most recent of which was an industry dialogue meeting hosted by Sydney West Area Health (supported by AusAID and WHO) from 5 to 7 November 2008. See <http://www.sph.emory.edu/wheatflour/sydney08/index.html>

Further information is available on the Food Secure Pacific Website www.foodsecurepacific.org

**This report was prepared by
Ms Myriam ABEL**