



The status of PROFAV and currently planned work

Alison Hodder

Plant Production and Protection Division



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

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Background and rationale

- WHO and FAO announced a unified approach to promote greater consumption of fruit and vegetables. The announcement was made in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at the annual meeting of the WHO Global Forum on Non-communicable Disease (NCD) Prevention and Control
 - Low fruit and vegetable intake is estimated to cause some 2.7 million deaths each year, and was among the top 10 risk factors contributing to mortality, according to the World Health Report 2002.
- Regular consumption of a variety of fruit and vegetables in the quantities recommended by FAO and the World Health Organisation, is essential for a well-balanced diet and for avoiding of non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular problems, diabetes and certain types of cancer.
- Overall, per capita consumption of vegetables and fruit falls far short of the daily recommended level of 400 grams. Intake is generally in the range of 20-50 % of the minimum recommended level, and this is largely attributed to unhealthy diets in developed countries, and to poverty and food insecurity in developing countries.
- FAO and WHO are leading a campaign to reduce the risk of malnutrition and chronic diseases by ensuring adequate supply, availability and consumption of fruit and vegetables around the world.

Background and rationale

From ICN2 2014:

- **Recommended actions for sustainable food systems promoting healthy diets** - Promote the diversification of crops including underutilized traditional crops, **more production of fruits and vegetables...** Develop, adopt and adapt, where appropriate, international guidelines on healthy diets...
- **Recommended actions for nutrition education and information** - Conduct appropriate social marketing campaigns and lifestyle change communication programmes to promote physical activity, dietary diversification, **consumption of micronutrient-rich foods such as fruits and vegetables...**



Past work and milestones

- Following preliminary studies and activities, the need for establishing a joint Initiative for promotion of F&V was formally identified and agreed by FAO and WHO during a workshop in Geneva in August 2003
- FAO and WHO officially launched the Global Fruit and Vegetables for Health Initiative (PROFAV/PROFEL) in Rio in November 2003, subsequently elaborated a framework for action at national and international level during the FAO-WHO joint workshop in Kobe in 2004.
- Since 2004. the Initiative has been operationalized within the context of a multi-partner framework; numerous other international and national organisations joined FAO and WHO in furthering its goals.
- Regional workshops advocating the need for increased consumption of vegetables and fruit - within healthy eating habits and lifestyles – conducted to cover different geographical areas or countries with common language:

- [September 2004, Joint FAO/WHO Workshop in Kobe, Japan](#)
- [September 2005 for Lusophone countries, in Lisbon, Portugal](#)
- September 2005 for southern African countries in Durban, South Africa
- [May 2006 for South and Central American countries in Guaymallén, Argentina](#)
- [August 2006 for South-East Asian countries in Seoul, Korea](#)
- [October 2007 for Francophone countries of Africa in Yaoundé, Cameroon](#)
- [September 2011 for Anglophone countries of Africa in Arusha, Tanzania](#)
- [October 2014 for Pacific region in Nadi, Fiji](#)

- These meetings led to follow-up actions at national level for the implementation of PROFAV/PROFEL. These included national workshops for advocacy and action planning that were conducted:
 - July 2006 in Mozambique;
 - January 2007 in Venezuela;
 - May 2007 in Argentina;
 - During 2008 - 2009 in Madagascar (national strategy elaborated);
 - September 2008 in Benin; and
 - September 2012 in Ghana.
- A prevailing objective of all these events has been to boost collaborative efforts amongst policy makers and programme managers from the health, agriculture and education sectors for promoting fruit and vegetable production and consumption.

Success stories and promising initiatives

- **Thailand**, following Kobe 2004, launched a national interdisciplinary campaign focused on schools-based interventions (school feeding, school gardens, nutrition education, while addressing also GAP and food safety concerns in vegetable and fruit value chains
- Champions facilitated campaigns in Ghana (Ghana Horticultural Society), Madagascar (Ministry of Agriculture), DR Congo and Burundi (HUP bureaux), Cameroon (IRAD)
- Pacific countries – increasing momentum and coverage of assistance to support integrated campaigns for increased F&V production and consumption in Nauru, Micronesia, Cooks, linked to national and regional NCDs and food security strategies

Weaknesses, gaps

- A stronger FAO-WHO compact needed at country level
- More joint efforts needed for Asia
- Making our messages simpler for consumers
- UNICEF missing from the partnership
- Data quality
- Food safety – a weak link in the chain
- Leveraging partnerships with other influential organisations

The Way Forward

PROFAV/PROFEL will require sustained efforts, advocacy and support to obtain the desired impact on consumers and their health in the long-term.

Areas of strength for particular attention:

- Continued advocacy campaigns at global level for the promotion of fruit and vegetables for health and the adoption of healthy eating habits and lifestyles;
- **Jointly** supporting the development of dedicated multidisciplinary platforms and roll-out of campaigns at national level for the promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption within the adoption of healthy diets and lifestyles , including capturing/sharing lessons learned;
- Conducting institutional capacity building and training / information of small producers on GAP, processing and storage, and hygiene in handling vegetables and fruit, in order to obtain quality and safe products;
- Mapping existing policies, and current programmes and activities for the promotion of fruit and vegetables in countries and regions;
- School- and education-based initiatives

- Support for increasing the production of fruit and vegetables by smallholders, encouraging especially self-consumption;
- Support for Urban and Peri-Urban Horticulture (UPH) for self-provisioning and livelihood opportunities, and its integration in urban planning;

Areas needing strengthened efforts:

- Development of a global standard methodology to conduct surveys at country level and supporting country assessments to establish good baseline data and make a multidisciplinary diagnosis of:
 - a) the production and consumption of fruit and vegetables at household / local / national level;
 - b) the prevalence of non communicable diseases ;
 - c) the interventions in progress or planned to address constraints in these areas.
- Documenting the production and the consumption of fruit and vegetables, related to the dynamics of the produce market;
- Strengthening joint work amongst nutrition - health, education and agriculture sectors for promoting the production and consumption of fruit and vegetables

PROFAV



THANK YOU



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Fruit and Vegetables
for Health

