

and enabling caregivers and other stakeholders to have a wider understanding of research information on nutrition as communicated in SIGHT AND LIFE Magazine. With this in mind, Ndola Nutrition Group submitted a request to be supplied with fortified biscuits and copies of SIGHT AND LIFE Magazine.

SIGHT AND LIFE granted both requests in overwhelming terms. The cost of clearing the biscuits was beyond the Ndola Nutrition Group’s capacity to pay, but SIGHT AND LIFE generously came to our aid by paying all the clearing expenses.

There was jubilation when it was heard that the fortified biscuits had arrived. These were initially intended to benefit 100 malnourished children. However, this number increased to 210 malnourished children from 80 households of Kaloko and Mushilli compounds.

**Living at least normal lives**

A hundred boxes were received, each containing 200 biscuits. Ndola Nutrition Group devised a two-week plan to distribute these to all the beneficiaries. Concluded in December 2009, this really helped our children to at least live normal lives during this period. The caregivers are also happy. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to SIGHT and LIFE.

Copies of SIGHT AND LIFE Magazine were distributed to the caregivers and stakeholders during coordination meetings. We hope to continue this partnership until all nutrition deficiencies are overcome in Zambia and indeed the world. We also look forward to the MNP project.



Growth monitoring by the Ndola Nutrition Group member before distribution of fortified biscuits



People from Kaloko and Mushili compounds attending the distribution event

Website: [www.geocities.com/ndolanutritiongroup](http://www.geocities.com/ndolanutritiongroup)

By: Halumba Munachonga, Ndola Nutrition Group, Plot 1346, Nkana Road, P.O. Box 71470, Ndola, Zambia

Email: [ndolanutritiongroup@yahoo.com](mailto:ndolanutritiongroup@yahoo.com) / [hmunachonga@yahoo.com](mailto:hmunachonga@yahoo.com)

**‘Go Local’ in Micronesia: Promoting the ‘CHEEF’ Benefits of Local Foods**

Our newest Go Local project, ‘Grow and Eat Local Food for Decreasing Micronutrient Deficiency and Non-communicable Diseases’ was carried out in 2009 in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). It was implemented by the Island Food Community of Pohnpei and partners from the island with the support of SIGHT AND LIFE.

**Drastic shift in patterns of food consumption**

In recent years FSM has experienced a drastic shift towards the consumption of imported white rice and other micronutrient-poor processed foods. This has been accompanied by neglect of traditional food systems, lifestyle changes, and decreased physical activity attributable to the effects of modernization. Problems of micronutrient deficiency (e.g. vitamin A deficiency, anemia) have emerged, along with diabetes and other non-communicable diseases (heart disease, cancers) on an epidemic scale. The recent STEPS study by WHO on Pohnpei showed that 32% of Pohnpei adults have Type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

Previous work identified local island foods that could help alleviate vitamin A deficiency and anemia. These include Karat and other varieties of yellow/orange-fleshed banana, giant swamp taro, pandanus, and other foods.<sup>2-4</sup> These are rich in  $\beta$ -carotene, the most important of the provitamin A carotenoids, as well as other carotenoids. Carotenoid-rich foods can help protect against diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. These foods are also rich in other essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber, providing important health benefits.

**Promoting local foods and improving health**

Through the implementation of the Pohnpei case study – which was carried out as part of a global health project led by the Center for Indigenous Peoples’ Nutrition and Environment (CINE)<sup>5</sup> – an approach was developed for promoting local foods and improving health. This two-year project was implemented from 2005 to 2007 in a rural community numbering approximately 500 people. It was successful in achieving increased consumption of two major local staple foods (banana and giant swamp taro), increased dietary diversity, and improved community attitudes toward local food.<sup>6</sup> The challenge to expand this work to benefit other communities has now been taken on.

The SIGHT AND LIFE project spanned an eight-month period from January to August 2009. Lessons learned in the Pohnpei case study project with CINE were put into practice. These included an inter-agency, community-based approach with multiple methods, slogans, social marketing, conservation of rare vari-

eties by means of a ‘gene bank’ field collection, and the involvement of adults and young people.

**Rich nutrient content**

The ‘Let’s Go Local’ slogan was first used in Pohnpei by Bermin Weilbacher in the 1980s. In 2005, it was agreed to revive this slogan. It was also decided to share the new findings of rich nutrient content in Pohnpei foods and to promote increased production and consumption of these foods, particularly the neglected nutrient-rich varieties. The ‘Go Local’ concept generated great interest and was promoted via T-shirts, billboards, posters, newspaper articles, radio releases, video (Going Yellow) (see SIGHT AND LIFE 1/2006, pp 31–33), an email network, recipes, brochures, pens and pencils, postcards, and workshops.

Another slogan was developed to help tell why it is important to ‘Go Local’. This was ‘CHEEF’. This acronym refers to the ‘CHEEF’ benefits of local foods: Culture, Health, Environment, Economy, and Food security. Along with preserving the traditional food system, culture is preserved and health benefits can be achieved. When local foods are used, the solid waste problem (tins, plastic, and other wastes) is reduced, leading to a cleaner environment. Fossil fuel use for bringing imported foods from distant places is likewise reduced, helping to combat climate change. Consumption of local foods uses local resources and is a stimulus for the local economy. Food security is improved, along with self-reliance and a greater ability to survive in the case of disturbances overseas.

**Young singers and new songs**

High school students became involved in the campaign and formed the ‘Let’s Go Local High School Club’. They gave talks on the value of local foods and sang the ‘Let’s Go Local’ song as well as teaching the accompanying movements. One club member composed the CHEEF song (see next page).

**Emphasizing the message**

A farmers’ workshop was held to gather information on the crop varieties available, so that progress could later be measured. Local high school and college students came



Workshop held in Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia in July 2009

**The ‘Let’s Go Local’ Song**

(composed by Gibson Santos)

**Words**

Let’s go local  
 Let’s grow local  
 Let’s eat local  
 Let’s stay local

**Actions**

(walk movement)  
 (bend/dig movement)  
 (spoon into mouth movement)  
 (raise arms joyfully!)

Vitamin A

(make an A with the hands)

Good for eyesight  
 No heart problems  
 Diabetes

(point to the eye)  
 (point to the heart)  
 (point to the feet, which are often problematic in diabetes cases)

Yellow varieties

(point to a yellow variety, or something yellow)

Comes from local

(point to a local food, or our Go Local T-shirt)

Karat banana

(point to Karat – or a substitute natural food source)

And many others more!

(raise arms joyfully!)



Island Food Community of Pohnpei team 2009

on board as interns, and helped in the workshop presentations. As part of their Master’s degree programs, students from Emory University, the University of Arizona and Johns Hopkins University carried out field work in Pohnpei during the summer of 2009, collaborating in IFCP research projects and assisting in the ‘Go Local’ campaign.

The ‘Let’s Go Local’ T-shirts became popular. Groups promoting island foods wore these, further emphasizing the message. Promotional pens and pencils were developed with the messages ‘Grow and Eat Yellow Varieties’ and ‘Be Happy – Eat a Banana,’ again using the yellow color to help get the message across.

**The ‘CHEEF’ Song**

(composed by McKean Allen Peter)

We the members of IFCP  
 We’ve got something you should know  
 It’s the five benefits of local food  
 And that’s what we’re here to show.

‘C’ stands for Culture  
 ‘H’ stands for Health  
 ‘E’ stands for Environment  
 The other ‘E’ stands for Economy  
 The ‘F’ stands for Food Security.

So listen up, don’t eat rice!  
 It has no beta-carotene.  
 So grow and eat local food  
 Maintain the five benefits.

**Traditional food means traditional culture**

Another step forward for Pohnpei was the publication of a book entitled *Ethnobotany of Pohnpei: Plants, People and Island Cultures*,<sup>7</sup> in which IFCP was also involved. It included chapters documenting rare micronutrient-rich varieties of banana, taro, breadfruit and yam, and other foods which have been neglected. The book is thus a roadmap for the reintroduction of older cultivars and a guide to traditional cultivation methods. It is hoped that the collation of this information on local plants, including food crops, will help to stimulate interest in these foods and varieties, and will also help address Pohnpei’s epidemic of nutrition-related diseases.

**‘Go Local’ spreads throughout FSM**

What enthusiasm there has been for ‘Go Local’! The activities have started spreading from Pohnpei (the seat of the national capital) to the other three island states of the country: Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae. New groups have been formed or revived, including the Island Food Community of Kosrae, the Chuuk Local

**A roadmap for traditional cultivation**

Food Community, and the Yap Inter-agency Nutrition Education Council. Workshops have helped to spread the message of ‘Go Local’ and ‘CHEEF’ benefits.

The challenges are still there, but there is much to be happy and hopeful about. People are offering their time to be a part of the movement. They regularly express themselves in email exchanges, including stories of how communities are slowly turning back to an increased use of their local foods.

We warmly thank SIGHT AND LIFE for supporting this project. Let’s go local!!

**Further acknowledgements**

Warm thanks are extended to our partner communities and agencies including the Pohnpei Office of Economic Affairs; Pohnpei Department of Health; Pohnpei Department of Education; Pohnpei Department of Land and Natural Resources; College of Micronesia-FSM Cooperative Extension Services; Conservation Society of Pohnpei; IFCP board members and other partners including Bermin Weilbacher and Gibson Santos; and our 2009 summer team comprising Kaleigh Emerson, Kim Del Guercio, Clinton Sears (Emory University), Alyssa Bittenbender (University of Arizona), Sueko Matsumura (Johns Hopkins University), and our local Pohnpei interns, Mary Lorens, McKean Allen Peter, and Maylance Ladore.

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The ‘Let’s Go Local High School Club’ entertained the audience at the opening of the Island Food Community of Pohnpei’s multipurpose building, June 2009, also attended by Pohnpei State Governor John Ehsa.

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By Lois Englberger, Areline Joakim, Kathay Larsen, Adelino Lorens, Lymer Yamada.

Correspondence: Lois Englberger, Island Food Community of Pohnpei, P.O. Box 1995, Kolonia, 96941 Pohnpei FM, Federated States of Micronesia  
Email: [nutrition@mail.fm](mailto:nutrition@mail.fm)

## “Moving Towards a Healthy and Sustainable Nutrition for All”

### Second World Congress of Public Health Nutrition to be held in September

From September 23–25, 2010, the II World Congress of Public Health Nutrition (I Latin-American Congress of Community Nutrition) will present the most recent advances in human nutrition and discuss their intimate relationships to global health and well-being.

“Moving towards a healthy and sustainable nutrition for all” is the theme of the congress, which is to be held in Porto, Portugal. The scientific program is being prepared by the world's leading specialists in public health nutrition. Each session will be organized with a view to capturing viewpoints on food and nutrition from both global and local perspectives. Topics will include: Climatic changes and public health nutrition, nutrition and aging, public health and nutrigenomics, dietary guidelines and nutrition education, and international cooperation.

The deadline for early registration and abstract submission is April 30, 2010. For further information, please contact:

Skyros-Congressos  
Av. Dr Antunes Guimarães  
554, 4100-074 Porto, Portugal  
Tel: +351-226165450  
Email: [nutrition2010@skyros-congressos.com](mailto:nutrition2010@skyros-congressos.com)



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