

Pacific School Food Network Launch Event - 27th November 2021

Country: Solomon Islands – Jill Losi Nutrition Officer
MHMS



1

Content

- Organizations/Departments involved in school food activities
- Current/Ongoing activities that each department/organizations implement in schools
- Challenges
- Achievements
- Way forward

2



Organizations involved in school food environments

- Ministry of health and medical service (MHMS)
 - Nutrition unit
 - Health Promotion Department
 - Environmental health – Food safety Unit
- Ministry of Education Human Resource & Development (MEHRD)
 - School health officer & Curriculum Unit
- Ministry of agriculture and livestock (MAL) – Agriculture division

3



MHMS – Nutrition Unit

- Working with 16 Day schools in Honiara city council (HCC)
- Awareness on the dietary guidelines for students and staffs
- Awareness and train school food vendors on food preparations and how to improve the nutrient value of foods sold in schools – Helti Kaikai Kit (HKK) aligned with the FBDG
 - Conduct cooking demonstrations for all, school staff, students and school food vendors
 - Conduct awareness on the richness of local foods
 - Promote healthy food choices for kindergarten, primary & secondary school children.

4



MHMS – Nutrition Unit

- Assess and monitor food environment in schools to see number of schools in compliance with recommended food guidelines and standards
- Feedback to the school committee is also done as they were the ones responsible for the foods sold in schools.

5



MHMS – Nutrition Unit

- FAO support
- TOT training for multisectoral group on the SIGHL – 8th to 9th November 2021
- Train school staff on the Solomon Island Guideline to healthy living(SIGHL)
- Train school food vendors and cooks on the SIGHL using the Helti Kakai Kit (Rokera, Waimapuru, Betikama, King George Sixth) – 3rd or 4th week of November 2021

6



MHMS - Health Promotion department

- Under healthy setting project:
 - Development of healthy school setting policy that covers areas of healthy food & drinks, safe water and hygienic sanitation, clean school yards and gender equality.


7




MHMS – Environmental Health Division

- Under the food safety unit they provide the following
 - Conduct awareness on Safety food handling, storage and preparation for school food students, school staffs and school food vendors
 - Ensure that schools have safe running water for drinking
 - Ensure that schools have stand pipes or area for hand hygiene.

8



MEHRD – Curriculum Unit

- Include Nutrition topics in the Primary school curriculum.
 - Include Nutrition topics in the Secondary school curriculum with the exception senior forms as it is still in working progress
 - Develop policies and guidelines for school food environment and school canteens.
 - Working together with healthy setting under the Health promotion department within the Ministry of health and medical services.
- 

9



MEHRD – School Health Officer

- Provide routine supplementation of vitamin A & Deworming.
- 

10



MAL – Agriculture Unit

- Provide basic knowledge for students and staffs on farming systems that are environment friendly and organic
- Promote the use of organic soil improvement methods such as composting and mulching
- Provided support for “sup sup” garden projects : especially for day schools
- Promote ‘sup sup’ garden techniques
- Distribute gardening tools, seedlings and plant cutting to schools
- Incorporate cooking demonstrations sessions on local vegetables
- Establish school farms for boarding schools

11



Challenges

- Not enough Human resources to continue monitoring and assesses foods sold in schools.
- Shifting of school staff who is responsible to monitor parent/guidance with certificates only were allowed to sell foods within the school premissis
- Parents giving money instead of providing healthy lunch make way for children to buy unhealthy food in kai bars or outside of school instead of from school food vendors.
- MEHRD without Nutrition officer to coordinate the nutrition specific and sensitive activities.

12



Challenges

- No school nutritionist or dietitians
- No school food feeding or lunch programs for day schools
- Limited funding for school nutrition activities
- No funding for school lunch programs

13



Achievements

- Schools were certified as healthy promoting schools
- School food vendors were provided with certificates and those were the ones allowed to sell food within the school premises.
- There is improvement in the foods sold & Environment in schools
 - More fruits sold and vegetables added to meals sold.
 - Prices of food sold in schools were from \$5 and below
 - Sugar sweetened beverages and iceblocks locally made were not allowed to be sold within the school yard
 - Schools build their market houses and with clean surroundings.

14



Way Forward

- MEHRD to see the importance of having a Nutrition Officer within the Ministry to coordinate school food activities
- Enforcement of food policy and guidelines by MEHRD
- The School health officer to take up this role or the Nutrition officer to be recruited.
- Schools to have fence and restrict students to come out during lunch time to buy unhealthy foods from shops around the school – to prevent this school food vendors must sell variety of healthy foods to provide options for the children.

15



Way Forward

- Parents ensure that children bring to school healthy lunch box and teacher take time to inspect.
- Develop some kind of activity as part of the school activity to promote healthy lifestyle. Example some schools usually have a day in the week as a fruit day or Daniels diet, sports day or water day etc.
- Teachers who taught nutrition components to apply practical activities in that way children also learn about the importance of eating healthy foods and be able to identify healthy foods.
- School food vendors & Cooks to sell and provide varieties of food.
- Parents needs to know the importance of healthy food on their child physical and cognitive development. – Behaviour change begins at home.

16

 The end

THANK YOU ☺

