

DISCUSSION: A WEBSITE ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD PRODUCTION

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration:	18. 08 - 15. 09. 2008
Facilitator:	George Kent, University of Hawaii, USA
Number of participants:	14
Number of Contributions:	29

II. INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC

Greetings

I am George Kent, professor of political science at the University of Hawaii. I have been working on the policy aspects of food and nutrition for many years. While I have spent most of my time working on grand ideas for dealing the world's major nutrition issues, here I would like to suggest doing something of immediate practical value. Maybe the Internet could be used to facilitate more systematic exchange of ideas about how households and communities in difficult circumstances could produce basic food in new and different ways.

Specifically, I would like to have a discussion about **whether and how a website should be created to facilitate the sharing of methods for producing basic foods at the household and community levels**. I am not talking about farming, but about small projects intended to supplement the food supplies in the household or in the local community.

There is a lot of information already available about home gardens, community gardens, roof gardens, sack gardens, small scale aquaculture, and so on. The problem is that it is very scattered. As I see it, the proposed website would not provide all this information directly, but rather it would provide links to it in an organized way.

Few poor people have direct access to the Internet. Therefore, the website should actually serve small nongovernmental organizations that can help to make the connections between people in their own countries, and also with people in similar situations in other countries. The NGOs could print out documents of interest to local people, and maybe translate or adapt them in other ways. They might arrange meetings to discuss and demonstrate different food production methods.

The website could also be used to link people together, especially to connect those who have questions to those who have answers. More experienced people could provide advice on how to get started with particular food production techniques, and suggest ways to apply the ideas in specific local situations. The website would be a place at which people can describe the circumstances in which they live, and others can suggest creative ways to produce food in those circumstances.

While we wait, hopefully, for governments and other agencies to address the issue of food security, we should find ways to support people with low incomes in helping themselves. Often this support can come from other people in comparable circumstances. A website of the sort considered here could facilitate that process. Therefore I would welcome hearing your views and insights on:

- Should this sort of website be established?
- How to move forward on implementing this idea?
- Where?
- Who would get this started?
- Who would keep it going?
- Could you point out relevant existing web-site/resource centers to which this website might refer and provided organized access?

Aloha, George Kent

III. LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS;

Contribution by Eltighani Elamin, from Agricultural Economic & Policy Research Center, Sudan

Hi Prof. Kent,

This is an excellent idea and could be very useful with current outraging spread of Internet. Let's start simple and with rural towns and not the Capitals of States and precisely with the suburbs of these rural towns where farming is still form an integral part of their livelihoods.

Truly
Tighani
Professor Eltighani Elamin (PhD)
Agricultural Economic & Policy Research Center
Ministry of Science & Technology
Shambat Street, Box 30
Khartoum North, Sudan

Contribution by Mr. M Yusuf Ali, from the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI),

I think it is a good proposal as in the developing countries household food production is an important means for sustaining livelihoods for the small and marginal farmers, as they have

few/no cultivable land for field crop production. So this is time for the establishment of a website. Probably like the FSN forum, a site moderated by FAO could be floated. For the last point I have to find out.

With regards

M Yusuf Ali
Principal Scientific Officer
OFRD, BARI
Gazipur-1701
Bangladesh

Contribution by Mr. M Yusuf Ali, from the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI),

On-Farm Research Division (OFRD) of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) has long been working for household nutrition and food security of small and marginal farmers under its Integrated Farming Systems Program. It has developed and recommended nine models of homestead vegetable/fruit production for the resource poor farmers of different agro-ecological regions. The paper "Homestead Vegetable Gardening: Meeting the Need of Year Round Vegetable Requirement of Farm Family"

(http://km.fao.org/fsn/resources/fsn_viewresdet.html?r=501) is for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Contribution by George Kent, University of Hawaii, USA

Greetings all

Thanks to Eltighani Elamin and M Yusuf Ali for getting this discussion started.

Eltighani suggests that the initiative to create websites on household food production should begin with rural towns, rather than capital cities. If we had a limited amount of money and had to decide where it should be allocated, that might be a good idea. However, one could also make the opposite kind of argument. If we had a limited amount of money, maybe it would make more sense to locate the website operation centrally, and set it up so that it serves everybody.

At this stage we do not have any money at all. If we managed to find a small amount of money, I would favor **setting up a central global website** on household food production that would be available to everyone who had good Internet access.

But maybe it would be better to think about this as **a more decentralized operation**. Maybe every group that is interested and can find the resources could set up a website of its own, to serve local people. Then these websites could be linked together in a kind of network. There could be a central office that helps to coordinate these activities.

It wouldn't take much in terms of resources. There are **ways to set up websites at no cost**, at least in some countries. We can talk about the technology later. As for human resources, anyone who was interested enough could manage such a website. The technical skills could be learned. The person would not have to be an expert in household food production.

Let's talk about how to get this started. There could be **different types of initiatives in different places**. As M Yusuf Ali suggests, maybe national or regional offices of FAO, or some other organization, would be willing to host this sort of activity.

Aloha, George

Contribution by Mr. Bakubye, from Integrated Science for African communities (ISAC International), Uganda

Hello Dr. Kent,

I humbly thank you for the grate job that you are doing on food security and nutrition plus your recent communication.

The idea of some organizations to host the web: there are many organizations willing to host the website, but it's the funds and responsibilities that come with it. I talked to my friends in Africa and the first answer was that they would like ISAC International to host it; some suggested that Goal can also do it in conjunction with ISAC International (ISAC-2000). I managed to talk with the governor of Bugiri district who also promised that it is a good idea that can be passed through the council to help in the website establishment. I'm also in contact with the state Minister of Agriculture in Uganda who is willing to help in any way he can. The only problem on my part is that I'm computer illiterate (know little about computers) so I do not know what is needed to establish an entire Web Programm. I would like to get a feed back on this, mainly what is needed is this project on the web site, but with most of the rest I think it is easy for me and other friends to bring people together on the idea and also to translate the materials from English to local languages, answering questions and same other things as we get the right information from the technical staff of FSN.

Source of funding: There some organizations that might be interested in funding once we have our proposal on table. Like Bill Gates and Malinda Foundation, National and local governments in Africa. But for us as an organization we are more than willing to host the website, as soon as we know our responsibilities, and also to sell the ideas to other NGOs, local, National and International Government with help from you as the brain of the project. At the national and local levels in Uganda, we have enough organizations in our network to make this started, also with local and National government's networking.

I have a lot to say as also my Friends in Africa because on the importance of the idea. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely

Zubair

Contribution by George Kent, University of Hawaii, USA

FSN friends,

I want to thank Zubair, in Uganda, for his suggestions about how to get started. Certainly his NGO, called ISAC, could take a leading role. Zubair himself may be a little hesitant because he has not done a lot of computer work, but that can be solved—by doing a lot of computer work! All we need is a bit of help from our friends.

Zubair talked about possibly requesting funds from major foundations, but for now, maybe it would be better to start small, with resources that are already available to us.

There are several possible software platforms for supporting the exchange of information and ideas on household food production. They should be accessible on the Internet from anywhere in the world. If they are not, please let us know.

One possibility would be to use **Wikia**, at www.wikia.com I have no experience with it, but it looks interesting.

Another option might be the **Global Knowledge Partnership**, described at http://www.globalknowledge.org/gkps_portal/index.cfm Just as they talk about a GKP Forum on

Climate Change, I could imagine a GKP Forum on Household Food Production. Maybe GKP would be receptive to some sort of application for funding. Have a look at it.

The knowledge-sharing system I know best is **Yahoo Groups**. I use it regularly to teach online classes, and also to bring together groups interested in discussing specific issues. It can organize a members' list, archive email exchanges, maintain document files, and maintain a list of links to other websites or documents. You can get an introduction to this system at <http://groups.yahoo.com/>

In the upper right corner of that Yahoo Groups web page, there is a button to "Start your group". It begins by asking you to pick a category for the new group you want to create. For example, you could choose "Health and Wellness" and then "Fitness and Nutrition". The choice here really doesn't matter very much. Then it asks for the name you want to give your group. It could be, say, "Household Food Production" or, if you prefer, "Household Food Production in Uganda" or any other place. Just under that you are asked to provide a name for the email address. It should be short. For example, if you type in "hfpu", the email address for that group would become hfpu@yahoogroups.com. Then you are asked to write few lines describing the group. The system then goes on to guide you in getting the group started.

I would be happy to help any of you get a Yahoo Groups website started. Maybe you would want to work on one for your own country, or maybe you would want to start a continental or a global website. Maybe several of you could work together to manage such a site. Let us know what you would like to do. I am sure all the rest of us in this discussion would be happy to help.

This would be a way to get started in a concrete way. Later we might want to shift to a more sophisticated software platform. Getting a real start now would help us to think about how it should be organized.

What do you think?

Aloha, George

Contribution by Mr. Abdul Raziq Kakar, from the University of Agriculture in Faisalabad, Pakistan

Dear all

The haphazard application of chemical fertilizer and the careless spray of **pesticides** both on fruits and vegetables are the **alarming hazards** both for the human and their environment. The dilemma is more severe in the developing countries where the gap is widening between the demand and the supply of the food.

Here, I have one suggestion, which is to **grow food in the house yard** or home food production. One can apply the **farm yard manure** which is available in the subsistence agriculture systems in the countries in Asia and Africa.

I have one experience, when someone apply farm yard manure in ample quantity then the severity of the pest on crop is minimal because of the healthy crop. In the home the local birds also eat most of the pest which are hazardous to the crop, which a source of food for the birds and the remedy of the pest on the other hand.

Let's provoke home food production and be sovereign in food production.

A website in this connection will be very fruitful; many people in the world are there who can grow food in their home lawns with out the deleterious affect of chemical fertilizers and the injurious pesticides. I am ready to help in the designing of the website, as I have many pictures which are helpful in this connection.

best regards

Raziq Kakar

Contribution by George Kent

Raziq Kakar makes important observations about the dangers of haphazard use of fertilizer and pesticides. With household food production, it might be possible to control these things more closely. It would be useful to provide information and advice about these issues.

We do not expect to have lots of detailed information set up on a central global website. If there is a central operation, it would provide links to other computers and to documents that provide the needed information. We can start collecting information in many different places, in various forms, and then create the links when we are ready to do that.

Any of you who have special interests relating to household food production could write short documents on those themes. We can discuss and refine them and pull them together later.

Aloha, George

Contribution by Mr. Prakash Shrestha, from Nepal

Prof. Kent and all

Namaste (Greetings, good morning/afternoon/evening) from Nepal!

I caught up with some of the discussions of last week as I missed active participation.

1. Regarding **what kind of the 'internet' resources to create** - I buy the idea of keeping it at two tiers – central and local level.
 - On the **central (global) level** we can keep the information on 'Global knowledge that we already have/creating' - this tier will be used by the NGO, CBO networks to get the ideas that is relevant to the local context.
 - At the **local level**, I envision it as a site keeping the information that is useful to deliver (by the relevant NGO, CBOs) directly to 'community level' people'. So these informations/recourses here should be simple with key concepts and hands on tips hopefully on local language and with many simple sketches (pictures) as far as possible. The local tier should be built on very 'basic internet technology'. As most of the users on less developed countries (like Nepal) have very slow access to internet resources (we have connection of 5-8 kbps at most) which is not very helpful to download to files of size say 10 MB.

Yahoo sharing- or Google groups (google version of it) is a very practical way of (free!) sharing /discussing the issues among the working groups and other interested in it. (I love google's storing and searching system) They are simple to use.

2. Regarding the **content of the information** (in local tier) it should (among others) include:
 - **Promotion of local foods:** Local foods particularly in the remote villages are most dependable food for local people. The information on the 'household food production' should reiterate its importance and values. Due to many external interventions (providing subsidized non local food for year after year) local food system people are being constantly damaged/paralyzed. While the policy makers/planner should be made aware on it; there is a need to educate local people and build their confidence that the local foods (like barley, millet, buck-wheat) are usually cheaper and more healthy foods (than

commercially produced/packed polished-rice for example) - they should be proud to use these local food (not humiliate having to use it).

- **Demotion of commercialized foods:** In Nepal, particularly in trekking routes of remote mountain area, trekkers are using more and more packaged food (like biscuits and instant noodles, carbonated drinks). Furthermore, commercial local FMs are highly promoting such food. These are not only expensive but also less-healthy. Villagers should be made aware on such food and taught to use their scarce resources wisely.
- **Proper Storing:** One of the concern, here in Nepal (and in other developing places like Bangladesh, India) is loss of significant proportion of staple foods during storing. The loss could be due to weather (humidness for example) or due to rodents.
- **Nutritional information:** The proposed site should also include information on micronutrients that the locally available food does not have and possible way to get these micronutrients. For example in many of the high mountains/valleys of Nepal there is not sufficient iodine in locally grown food. Therefore, significant proportion of population used to have goitre; UNICEF's intervention through iodized salt have helped to solve the problem. Same is true for iron, zinc, several vitamins...

I would also like to hear from all of you about kind of **information resource we want to generate and ways to share it**. Meanwhile I will check out some of the websites that have been mentioned, referred during this week's discussion.

Namaste (also means good bye!)

Prakash Shrestha

Kathmandu, NEPAL

Contribution by George Kent

I agree with the idea of having a two-tiered system on the Internet to help make information about household food production methods readily available.

At the local level, the system should involve a local NGO that is devoted to serving as the bridge between the information that comes in via the Internet and community level people. All information about household food production must be adapted to local conditions.

Software such as Yahoo Groups can be used internationally. Where the technical and economic resources allow it, such groups also can be established within individual countries.

I agree that we should have several broad categories of information. Some people might be interested in focusing on particular categories, and devote some energy to building up that information.

One thing we have to be careful about is the fact that some people make exaggerated claims about how easy some household food productions may be. Some people exaggerate the nutritive value of the products. We have to be sure that people are not misled.

We can begin to collect and discuss some of that information, but rather than do that in this forum, it would be better to create a new separate website, as a kind of pilot project for the permanent central website. Is anyone interested in starting it up?

Aloha, George

Contribution by Mr Kakar

Dear all

Hope everything is fine and quite well.

The website in the connection of the home food production needs a reasonable set of data and documents along with some picture of the produced in the home yards. In this respect i would be able to write a document on the home food production, which I will present in the forum and further refining and augmentation will improve it quality. I can manage some pictures in this connection also. Providing food in the home yard, free off health hazards is the need of time and the issue must be raised internationally.

Thank you in advance

Raziq Kakar

Contribution by FSN Forum Moderator

This topic is being cross-posted on the “**Acting Locally in Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods**” (FSNL) online group for discussion. All contributions of the FSNL group will be forwarded to the FSN Forum and will be added to the discussion proceedings.

Contribution by Ms Violet Mugalavai, from Moi University, Kenya, as member of the FSNL Group

Hello,

This idea is welcome. I will have lots to share. The grassroots-"for-the -poor" approach will work only where we have active CBOs and NGOs. I live in an urban setting and poverty and desperation stares at me from my neighbourhood. I saw it even when I was doing my research. There is too much science out there which does not translate to food-on-the-plate. People perish into food insecurity, not because they lack energy to do work, but lack of food. Others do not have adequate thinking skills, and also resource poverty leads them to vicious poverty. I think if we all crack our heads, something good will be born from this discussion. I look forward to being part of it.

Violet, K Mugalavai (PhD). Moi University, Kenya.

Contribution by Ms Judith Appleton, from England, as member of the FSNL Group

I suggest that the title of this string is changed to Pro-poorest household food production, to distinguish it from similarly titled programmes that are broader in scope, or in application.

Judith

Contribution by George Kent

Greetings --

I am glad to see these new messages from Raziq, Violet, and Judith. The main point throughout is that, like Violet, we all have lots to share about household food production by the poor.

Yesterday I suggested that a new website should be created now, as a kind of pilot project for whatever will be set up on a more permanent basis. Accordingly, I have created a **new “Household Food Production Website” on Yahoo Groups**. I’ll call it HFPW for short.

To make it manageable, I have set up HFPW so that it is not open access, but requires invitation

from and approval by the website owner—me. If you would like to be invited in, please send me an email, to kent@hawaii.edu with your email address and a few lines about who you are. I will then instruct the website to send you an email with instructions about how to gain access to that website.

The instructions may seem to suggest that you must create a new Yahoo email address for yourself in order to access the website. Actually, you can continue to use your old email address.

I think we should continue to use this forum to discuss how to set up that website and other matters related to using it, but **use HFPW itself to experiment with ways of doing it**. If HFPW works out well, we can continue to use it long after this forum ends.

There is a Files section on the website, accessible from the menu at the left side of the front page. In that section, we can create a number of folders, labeled with different topic names such as, say Sprouting Seeds, Sack Gardens, Composting, Aquaculture, and whatever else you want. Inside those folders you can place copies of documents.

There is also a Links section on the website, where you can set up links to other websites. In time, if some of the folders become very full, we might want to split them off and create whole new websites on their topics.

HFPW will also maintain an **archive of email messages** that have been exchanged through that system.

In time, I hope some of you will agree to help manage the website.

Shall we try it, and see where it goes?

Aloha, George

Contribution by Khoeurn Sokkheng, from World Vision, Cambodia

Dear All,

I would like to confirm that I would very agree and I think that it is a good initiative in order to bring glory information to reach the poor through food security program implementation. However, I would suggest posting the attractive/beautiful **pictures related to agriculture** (For example the farmers are sitting in the home garden...) and one more thing posting the **success stories in the field of food security** because I mostly believe that our members have many good documents to share.

Furthermore, I think that if possible we can change the term of name of the website into Food Security Success Story Website (FSSSW), however; it is only my own opinion.

Finally, I am looking forward to be a part of this website.

With best regards,

Khoeurn Sokkheng
World Vision-Cambodia.

Contribution by Andrea Markos from the University La Sapienza, Rome, Italy

Dear FSN Forum,

In Argentina, where I became acquainted with the basics of Food Security and Sovereignty, there

is a strong conscience of the role of home food production to move towards both. I myself became very interested and experimenting. Unluckily I am not really in the position to take on such a commitment as to run a website, but truly appreciate the idea and will certainly contribute to it in the possible measure.

Best Regards and congratulations for your work,
Andrea Markos

Contribution by George Kent

Greetings –

Thank you to Andrea Markos and Khoeurn Sokkheng for the latest contributions to this FSN Forum.

We have only a few days left to enjoy having FSN as our host. However, I have started up a new **Household Food Production Website (HFPW)** where we can continue the discussion. If you would like to participate, send me an email at kent@hawaii.edu and I will invite you in.

Andrea, don't worry, you won't have to run that or any other website. We just need your contributions to the discussion.

Khoeurn Sokkheng, I agree that **pictures could be useful**, especially when they come **together with practical information** about how to do household food production. The website and the organizations that work with it should help people to **create their own success stories**. On the new website we can create file folders to present this kind of information.

Let's keep thinking about how we can use the Internet combined with local organizations to help share information and ideas about household food production.

Aloha, George

Contribution by Shaikh Tanveer Hossain, from Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra (PMUK), NGO, Bangladesh

Dear Members,

To form a Web-site on House Food Production is a very good idea and have high impact on global food security. Recently (August 30, 2008) in Dhaka, Bangladesh a **national conference** was held on the title of **"Climate change: Food Security in Bangladesh"** organized by Bangladesh Agricultural Economists Association. In the conference number of papers was presented on food security in national and global perspective. **Household food production issues were also highlighted in the seminar.**

I think, such important papers and information possible to inclusion in the web -site and people will benefit. Even some members can take responsibilities from different countries to collect the local information including research papers on Household Food Production to enrich the quality of the web site.

I am waiting see the web-site!!!! and would like to play active role here.

With best regards,

DR. SHAIKH TANVEER HOSSAIN
Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra (PMUK)
A National Non-Governmental Organization
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Contribution by George Kent

Thank you, Shaikh Tanveer Hossain, for this message. My view is that the **Household Food Production Website (HFPW) should focus on providing practical how-to-do-it information that would be useful to householders**. Studies about food security that are written mainly for professionals can be placed on other sites. Of course HFPW could provide links to studies that would be useful to householders.

Professionals already have many information sources. My concern is that few efforts have been made to systematically gather information on household food production in a form that would be directly useful to householders and the NGOs that work with them.

I am glad to hear that you would like to play an active role in HFPW. I can invite you in—and anyone else—if you send a request to me at kent@hawaii.edu

Aloha, George

Contribution by Binayak Rajbhandari, HICAST (Himalayan College Of Agriculture Science And Technology), Kathmandu, Nepal

Dear Members

I highly appreciate the idea of forming a web site on Household Food Production. I suggest it would be **better to include good practices and indigenous knowledge and technology in regard to organic food production** (cereals and vegetables) at household level. These should get space in the web site. I will certainly contribute some highlights of our practices in Nepal.

Dr Binayak Rajbhandari
HICAST, Kathmandu, Nepal
www.hicast.edu.np

Contribution by George Kent

Greetings –

I would like to thank Dr Binayak Rajbhandari for this comment. I agree that the work on household food production should include information on good practices and indigenous knowledge. Most household food production is organic, since households with low-income are not likely to purchase chemical fertilizers, pesticides or other inputs for their very small-scale production.

I would be happy to have Dr. Rajbhandari, and any of you, participate in the new discussion based at the Household Food Production Website (HFPW). If you would like to be invited in, please send your email address to me at kent@hawaii.edu I cannot invite you if I do not have your email address.

Aloha, George

Contribution by Salome Yesudas, from Andhra Pradesh Farmer Managed Groundwater Systems (APFAMGS), India

Dear All

We should include traditional food systems of different parts of the world in our website. There are certain organizations which have worked extensively in documenting the food systems including FAO, Center for Indigenous people's Nutrition and Environment (CINE) of MCGILL university CANADA, IDRC of CANADA etc., are some to mention.

With Deccan development Society of India I was personally associated with the same work. With due acknowledgments we can share the data to learn.

Sincerely,
SalomeYesudas

Contribution by George Kent

Friends --

Thank you to Salome Yesudas for this contribution. **Studies of traditional food system** might be quite broad in their coverage. I hope you and others will be able to highlight **those elements that focus on practical methods** of household food production. They can be shared through the new experimental Household Food Production Website. I can provide access to that website if you send your email address to me at kent@hawaii.edu

Aloha, George

Contribution by Rose Opiyo, from University of Nairobi, Kenya

Dear All,

I wish to congratulate George for coming up with the idea of a website on Household Food Production. I am also happy that many people are ready to share information and experiences by contributing to the website. One of the reasons why the "hungry" are getting "more hungry" is inadequate information or ignorance. If we can have a platform to share information that we can also share with those who need it most for improved food access, particularly the resource poor households, then both the hunger gap period as well as the number of hungry people will reduce.

Can we however **call the web-site Household Food Access Website (HFAW)** instead of Household Food Production Website (HFPW)? From my experience, many resource **poor households are hungry** not because of poor production in their community or region, but **because of poor access to both quantity and quality food** to meet nutritional needs of all household members. In addition to the topics that have been suggested by members, we can also have **sections focusing on food security success stories and challenges** on:

- Livelihood Strategies
- Socio-Cultural Factors in Food Access
- Access to better markets as an incentive for small scale farmers

I would also suggest that the site be hosted by FAO.

Rose Opiyo,
Department of Community Health,
University of Nairobi
KENYA.

Contribution by George Kent, University of Hawaii, USA

Greetings, all. I am glad to hear from my old friend, Rose. Glad to have you with us!

Let me get right to Rose's suggestion relating to a possible name change for the website. Several others in this discussion have made suggestions for name changes.

While I am open to further discussion on this, so far I am staying with the name Household Food Production Website (HFPW). As I have explained, its main purpose is to provide information in a form that would be useful to householders with low income who are looking for practical information on how to produce food at home.

I recognize that most poor people would not be able to access the Internet directly, but **small local NGOs could serve as the bridge to the information on the website.**

Imagine that a householder says, "I am thinking of planting a small batch of amaranth at my home. How could I do it? Would it be worthwhile?" That person, or the NGO representative she is talking with, should be able to go to a website, click on amaranth, and get the information.

One can now find lots of information on amaranth (or any other product) on the Internet, but very little of it is in the form needed by the end user we have in mind here. Sure, scholars might be able to sort through the information to find the nuggets they need, but for most people it would not be worth the effort.

There is already lots of information out there in the world about food security, farming, livelihood strategies, etc., but most of it is presented in a form designed to reach specialists, and not to address ordinary people in their own terms. Much of the communication goes on over the heads of the end users. **Some effort should be made to communicate with the end users more directly.**

I would welcome having **links from HFPW to selected websites and documents that talk about things such as livelihood strategies, socio-cultural factors in food access, and access to better markets.** But if HFPW does too much of that, these other issues could overshadow the core mission, which is to support household food production in practical ways.

I have been scanning the Internet for several weeks now on household food production and related topics. While there are many documents that praise the idea of household food production, **there are few that provide practical guidance in ways appropriate to householders with low income.** If the information is out there, it is very scattered. A website could be a sensible way to pull it together and make it more readily available.

Moreover, if they saw a meaningful way to make it available, maybe some **people would be willing to develop new practical guidance** on how to do household food production.

I agree that there are many other themes that are worth pursuing. However, for this particular effort, I think it is wise to focus decisively on providing practical information on household food production in ways that would be useful to people with low incomes.

I would welcome all contributions to that effort.

Aloha, George

Contribution by Andrea Markos, from the University of Rome "La Sapienza, Italy

Dear all,

below a link for our website. The **extension material of the Pro Huerta program, Argentina.** It is all in Spanish and it is being implemented in other LA countries such as Haiti. "La Huerta Organica" is the basic text. A curiosity: the author looks very much like the extensionist portrayed in the book! The system works thanks to volunteers, as me in its moment, and organic seeds are distributed twice per year.

http://km.fao.org/fsn/resources/fsn_viewresdet.html?no_cache=1&r=538&nocache=1

Best Regards,
Andrea Markos

Contribution by Violet Mugalavai, from Moi University, Kenya

Dear all,

I have enjoyed the contributions from various regions and it seems like the concerns of food production and continuous access especially among the poor is the major problem due to lack of resources/inaccessibility of resources, that would seemingly be available in the eyes of many, and yet far from reach and use.

In order to deal with rising food prices and inadequacies, regional policies enabling access of contextual natural resources, managed by the community, through community mobilization by multistake, multi-component, multi-strand, gender -balanced approach would work best where **the extension, NGO's, CBO's actively communicate information to the organized groups that are willing to produce for cluster communities** that have been designated for that area. Regional and effective revision of natural resources policies would enable such an approach so that the community leaders can identify and lobby for free lease/ sustainable use of such idle resources would be ideal for vast food production.

With this kind of arrangement, the scientists would then be able to **communicate new innovations/science to the organized groups**, so that we can merge livelihood strategies and cluster multi-component food production. The community would thus be food secure, greening the environment with a varying lengths of crops, encompassing indigenous and modern methods of production, and preserving the excess for hard times, keeping busy all the time!!!! There are too many idle poor, simply because policies that work are lacking. We would be part of the team to help here!!!

I also suggest that this program be **rolled out by FAO and HFPW is a good ACRONYM but the goals and aim need polishing so that we can begin with adequacy, and then have a human approach-regalia and field work in communicating science - new innovations** after enabling access to vulnerable groups livelihood groups of interactions, sharing innovative regional approaches and practices. The active scientists would need to reach the grassroots at the cluster level. Households that are well off, with land to offer, would be of benefit for such an approach, it would also be beneficial to them, seeing that they are helping in the food and nutrition security for the poor, and yet benefiting from the knowledge, skills and nature.

Cheers all
Violet Mugalavai

Contribution by George Kent

Greetings all –

I want to **thank all of you who have participated in our discussion about “A Web-site on Household Food Production,”** hosted on FAO's Food Security and Nutrition Forum from August 18 to September 12, 2008.

We agreed that there is good potential for supporting people with low incomes to increase and improve their food production at the household level. We also agreed that creating strong networks on the issue could help to facilitate that process. **The Internet could be used to tie local nongovernmental organizations together with a global network of people interested in household food production.** These groups could serve as **the bridge between global** (and,

possibly, national and local) **websites and local end-users, the householders.**

We have planted some promising seeds here. Now, to nurture this idea into fruition, I have set up an **experimental Household Food Production Website**. The discussion will now shift from here to there. If you would like to join us in this new phase of the conversation, please send me an email at kent@hawaii.edu I will then invite you in to the new website.

Once again, I would like to thank all of you for your contributions to this discussion. I also want to thank Rachele Santini and her colleagues at FAO for facilitating the process so smoothly.

Aloha, George