



# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

*Guyana*

## **Food and Nutrition Security Strategy for Guyana (2010- 2020)**

**WORKING DRAFT**

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## **FOREWORD**

Over the past five years food prices have been soaring considerably. In 2008 prices rose significantly. Many persons are affected by the high food prices and others are at risk for malnutrition.

Food security is a foundation for building social and economic development. It means that all people in a society have access at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life.

Faced with rapidly rising hunger and weak synergy and coordination in the governance of Global and Regional food security, the Parliament in July 2008 directed the development of a comprehensive coherent national response to the potential food security crisis facing Guyana

A Special Select Committee on the Impact of Global Food Price Increases was appointed, with the Minister of Agriculture as the Chairman, to monitor this emerging situation on a constant basis and make recommendations on action that might be needed. The Minister in this capacity provided some guidance for the national food security plan to be developed. Most importantly he directed that the national response must (i) address the areas of, production, consumption and storage; (ii) provide coherence and coordination to the work of the many Ministries and State Agencies and the NGOs and private sector that work in these areas; (iii) not subvert the existing markets and the private sector; and (iv) ensure sustainability of the programmes and activities designed and effected. The committee agreed to embark on a profound reform to strengthen and coordinate expertise and action in the fight against hunger and food and nutrition insecurity.

The Ministry of Agriculture has been spearheading the food nutrition and security initiative and has recently undertaken the drafting of a Food and Nutrition Security Ten Year Strategy document. Given the varying dimensions of food security and nutrition security a

collaborative effort between the ministries and NGO's with specific mandates in these areas is necessary. It should be noted that many aspects of the food security plan are already being implemented.

However a more comprehensive and long term plan covering implementation period 2010 – 2020 must be developed. The Food and Nutrition Security Ten Year Strategy offers opportunities for a wider range of national stakeholders to play a more prominent role in combating hunger and food insecurity.

## INTRODUCTION

Food security as a concept was first introduced in the early 1970s. At that time the emphasis was mainly on volume and stability of food supplies. In the 1980s, two additional dimensions were added: *access*, of all peoples at all times; and *enough* food for an active and healthy lifestyle. A more recent and perhaps most widely used definition is the 2001 refinement by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) of its earlier 1996 World Food Summit definition. The refined definition is:

*“Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”*

The key variables that characterize food security concepts and approaches have therefore come to be: accessibility, availability, utilization and stability.

Governments internationally have made efforts to achieve food security for their population given the fact that all humans should have the right to food since it is inhumane not to. However, despite this fact an estimated 826 million persons globally are still undernourished with around 852 million chronically hungry due to extreme poverty. Further, 2 billion persons lack food security intermittently due to varying degrees of poverty<sup>1</sup> a figure which continues to rise even amidst the riches of the 21st century. Engulfed within a vortex of population growth, economic instability and climate change, food security has thus become the most intractable challenge for national and global governance.

The sparse, diffuse and uncoordinated punctual actions taken in these areas at the regional levels to promote food and nutrition security have so far failed to produce sustainable food security for people of the region. Over the last ten years, numerous agreements, declarations

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<sup>1</sup> Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

and initiatives related to food, agricultural and health policy have been launched. Few of these, however, have been translated into operational instruments with funding for concrete action programmes specifically addressing the unifying and cross-cutting synergistic issue of food and nutrition security. Thus actions taken have tended to rely heavily on low and fluctuating levels of Official Development Assistance funding.

In Guyana, the government has noted that climate change has a significant impact on all four key dimensions of food security – availability, stability, access, and utilization. Availability of agricultural products is affected by climate change directly through its impacts on crop yields, crop pests and diseases, and soil fertility and water-holding properties. It is also affected by climate change indirectly through its impacts on economic growth, income distribution, and agricultural demand (Schmidhuber and Tubiello 2007). In addition, stability of crop yields and food supplies is negatively affected by variable weather conditions. Physical, economic, and social access to food would be affected negatively by climate change as agricultural production declines, food prices rise, and purchasing power decreases. Last but not least, climate change poses threats to food utilization through effects on human health and the spread of diseases in geographical areas which were previously not affected.

The Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Agriculture has, in collaboration with other government agencies, and civil society groups drafted the National Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (2010-2020). The main objectives of this strategy are to:

- Help ensure immediate access to food in emergency contexts,
- Rebuild and enhance resilience to withstand shocks
- Support longer term development initiatives for hunger and poverty reduction
- Take stock of national, regional and global initiatives directed at improving food security coordination with a view to encouraging convergence and avoiding duplication among such initiatives

- Improve the sharing of information on food security and nutrition policies and programmes undertaken by national and regional stakeholders by reviewing them
- Inform the National Assembly about successes achieved as well as the challenges and needs to reduce hunger and malnutrition in Guyana
- Ensure agricultural trade fosters food security
- Promote rural development
- Enhance women’s access to resources
- Ensure children and other vulnerable groups have access to food
- Ensure sustainable incomes of small producers

As previously noted, many ambits of the food and nutrition security plan are already being implemented. However, this document provides a more comprehensive and long term plan covering implementation period 2010 – 2020. Further, this Food and Nutrition Security Ten Year Strategy offers opportunities for a wider range of national stakeholders to play a more prominent role in combating hunger and food insecurity thus allowing all citizens to achieve food security.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In developing countries of the Caribbean region, the agricultural sector, human development and the environment have all fallen prey to the whiles of globalization. In fact many analysts have labelled the agricultural sector in developing countries of the south to be in a spate of “crisis”. This cry has not gone unheard by the international community as they strive to develop mechanisms and policies aimed at reducing the effects of globalization on the developing economies of the south. Their policies have taken into account the intrinsic link between declining agricultural production and increasing poverty. They have also noted that for development to occur reform of the agricultural sector must take place at the global, regional and national levels.

Despite Guyana being a net exporter of food it still faces some elements food insecurity since food security is not only defined by food being available but encompasses other elements such as food access and food nutrition. The problem for the Government of Guyana does not lie in making enough food available for its residents but the issue that the government faces is making food accessible to its population. Rising food prices over the last two years has made the situation of maintaining food security in Guyana even more difficult.

In addition the threats of climate change are more severe in developing countries such as Guyana, partially due to geography. In this regard the production of food and other agricultural commodities may keep pace with aggregate demand, but there are likely to be significant changes in local cropping patterns and farming practices. Some positive effects of climate change such as CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization of plants could contribute to increasing food production and security. However, impacts such as rising temperatures and increased frequency of extreme weather events put severe pressure on food availability, stability, access, and utilization. Climate change could lead to increased water stress, decreased biodiversity, damaged ecosystems, rising sea levels, and potentially, to social conflict due to increased competition

over limited natural resources. Small-holder agriculture, pastoralist, forestry, and fisheries and aquaculture are among the systems most at risk (FAO 2008).

The key to ending hunger at the national level therefore lies in social reforms and agrarian reforms, along with the recognition that everyone has a right to a sustainable diet.

For the Guyana ensuring food security in a “food crisis” is of far greater importance and has far greater implications given the nature of our reality. For the people of Guyana agriculture is the pivot around which many other sectors rotate. It might even be said that, it is at this juncture, central to our development as a nation, a fact, which the government is not prepared ignore.

The government in this regard has recognized the urgent need for a comprehensive strategy so as to ensure national goals are put forward in a document which will guide its future policies on the issue of ***FOOD SECURITY IN GUYANA***.

# REVIEW OF EXISTING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY POLICIES

## 1.0 Introduction

*In response to the rising hunger figures globally*, a series of high level meetings culminated in a World Summit on Food Security in November 2009. Countries were asked to reassert the right to food through a resolution to eradicate hunger by 2025 at an estimated cost of US\$44 billion per annum. Though most world leaders did not agree to all the facets of the motion and hence it had to be withdrawn. The Summit did agree to strengthen the terms of reference of the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS). The intention is to coordinate national action plans on hunger within a coherent global strategy for food security.

This reform aims to make CFS the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform dealing with food security and nutrition and to be a central component in the evolving Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

***At the regional level***, all Member States have committed at the level of CARICOM as presented in the preamble and the goal b) of Article 56 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, to attain food security. Additionally, as signatories to the 1996 Rome Declaration on World Food Security, Member States have undertaken through *Commitment Two*: to implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improve physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization. This framework for a Food and Nutrition Security response by Member States was clearly determined. Frantz, 2006 also points out that by adopting the “Voluntary Guidelines for the Right to Food (2004), all 187 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) member countries have gone a step further than achieving the MDGs and accepted the right to sufficient and adequate food, not only as a basic human right but also a legal right, making national governments formally committed to achieving this target. The RSPFS vol. 1, 2002 also states that most governments of the CARICOM member states have now among their priorities three national

food security related objectives: i) higher levels of food self-sufficiency; ii) increased agricultural productivity; iii) increased diversification of agricultural production and exports.

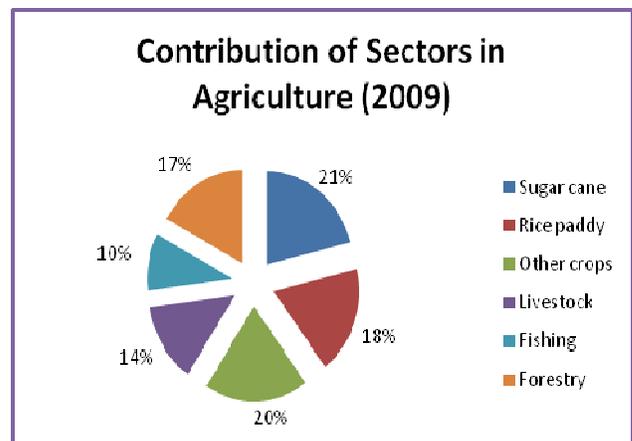
A regional food security policy is thought to operationalize the mainstreaming processes as guided by respective national policies and strategies in the cross-cutting issues. This framework for a Food and Nutrition Security response by Member States was clearly determined, and the region is presently in the process of drafting a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Strategy document.

## ***2.0 National Level***

### **2.1 Agriculture Policy Review**

Guyana has the potential to become the “bread basket” of the Caribbean due to its large land area, approximately 216,000 km<sup>2</sup> as well as its vast natural resources. In Guyana, agriculture is mostly concentrated along the coastal region which lies between 0.5m to 1.0m below sea level at high tide. This makes farming areas very susceptible to floods which are the principal natural disaster in Guyana.

An examination of Guyana’s agriculture sector reveals that this sector is imperative to the growth and development of the country’s economy. The sector presently accounts for 20.6% (2009) of the country’s GDP with sugar being the principal sector. However, rice and other crop sectors have increased tremendously over the last decade and it is expected that the other crop sector will become dominant within agriculture as the country strives to diversify its economy.



In 2009, sugar exports totaled US\$119.8M, rice US\$114.1M, fruits and vegetables US\$3M, livestock US\$1.2M while fish and shrimp exports totaled US\$4.5M. However, despite large amounts of sugar being exported the industry is currently facing severe losses due to declining world prices combined with the removal of preferential markets. It is hoped, however, that the recently completed Skeldon Factory will aid in reducing the cost of sugar production and hence make the industry more competitive internationally.

It is against this background that the MOA has implemented several projects aimed at the diversification and modernization of agriculture so as to reduce the sectors dependency on traditional crops while enabling the sector to gain global competitiveness. In this regard, the major projects that the MOA have implemented that directly and indirectly address issues pertaining to food security are: the Agricultural Export Diversification programme (US\$21.9M), the Agricultural Support Services Programme (US\$22M), Rural Enterprise Development Project (US\$6M) and Rice and Beans Project for Hinterland Communities (US\$0.65M).

## 2.2 Review of Existing Projects being undertaken by the MOA

According to the National Development Strategy (NDS) the major constraints facing the agricultural sector are:

<b>1. Land and infrastructure</b>	<b>10. Product standards (regulation of quality)</b>
<b>2. Extension services</b>	11. Credit and investment
<b>3. Research and Development (R&amp;D)</b>	12. Labour and other inputs
<b>4. Socio-cultural and economic constraints</b>	13. High cost of production
<b>5. Price volatility</b>	14. Education and training
<b>6. Marketing</b>	15. Germplasm supply
<b>7. Transportation</b>	16. Plant protection and quarantine services
<b>8. Storage and handling</b>	17. Livestock
<b>9. Analysis and planning</b>	18. Institutional linkages

As such, the MOA has devised several projects and programmes to help combat and remove the constraints that exist within the sector. In 2008, the ministry embarked on its '**Grow More Food Campaign**' to combat the effects of the global increases in food prices that prevailed at the time. This Grow More Campaign was implemented to ensure that Guyanese had adequate food available for themselves and excess to export to Caribbean countries as well as other outside territories. This campaign is still ongoing and the MOA is encouraging all households to have a kitchen garden in their backyards. The MOA through the New GMC distributes seeds on a daily basis to civil society encourage them to farm so that each household within Guyana can achieve food security through self sufficiency.

**There are several projects which fall under the umbrella of the Grow More Food Campaign. *Rural Enterprise and Development Project (READ)* is one of those projects. READ is a six year project which started in 2009. The objectives of READ are:**

- To offer support and assistance to resource poor producers and rural households;
- To improve rural incomes by directing improved production activities, including non-agricultural production enterprises, towards existing marketing opportunities;
- To strengthen linkages between rural producers and service providers involved in the production and diversification efforts; and
- To integrate improved technologies in the production and marketing supply chain for agricultural and non-agricultural based enterprises.

Further, the MOA launched the ***Agricultural Export Diversification Programme (ADP)*** also in 2009. ADP aims to increase Guyana's export growth rate and reduce its volatility. The programme comprises four main components: promotion of private sector entrepreneurship in agribusiness; improving agribusiness export and facilitation services; strengthening agricultural health and food safety services; and rehabilitation of drainage and irrigation systems. Through this project it is expected that there will be a sustainable increase in the income derived from the export of non-traditional agricultural exports in the aquaculture, fruits and vegetables, and livestock subsectors; enhancing the protection of

domestic consumers from illness, and domestic production from disease and contamination.

The MOA in 2009 also started the implementation of its **Agriculture Support Services Project (ASSP)** which aims to increase rural incomes by increasing the efficiency of agricultural production. The four components of the ASSP are:

- Civil works to rehabilitate primary and secondary D&I systems in selected areas;
- D&I institutional development which includes farmers' training and extension, an establishment of Water User Associations (WUAs) in those selected areas;
- Rice seed research and production and
- Agricultural diversification promotion

In addition to the three projects mentioned above the MOA also launched its **Rice and Beans Project** (US\$0.643M) in 2009 targeted at the increase in rice and beans production in the Hinterland Communities. This project directly targets the attainment of food security within the Amerindian Communities since these communities have a high incidence of food insecurity. To date 82 acres of land has been planted with rice and beans and a bond has been constructed for storing equipment, machines and chemicals. A further 75 acres of land is expected to be cultivated by the end of 2010.

Small farmers are vital to the achievement of food security in Guyana since aside from sugar and rice small farmers make up the majority of production in the other crops sector. As such it is the small farmers that have been given the centre stage in the context of the need to diversify agricultural production, provide a more equitable base for income distribution and alleviate rural poverty and food insecurity. The MOA in recognizing that for the agricultural sector to function as a catalyst for economic growth and development, the small farmer must be targeted as a key player has implemented the following programmes,

in addition to the four major projects, with the small farmer as the major beneficiaries.<sup>2</sup>

These activities/programmes include:

- The Initiation of the removal of the Extension Service from the jurisdiction of the Crops and Livestock Department and the creation of a separate unit called the Crop Development Support Services (CDSS) under NARI to foster the much needed link between research and extension
- The assignment of Regional Coordinators
- The appointment of para-professionals or Extension agents
- The development of an operational mechanism to enhance the linkage between research and extension in the field
- The equipping of extension offices with computers so as to better enhance their Service to farmers
- The development of Farmers Training School
- The development of human capabilities for the empowerment of male and female members of rural organisations to implement production, business or service related activities and improve their living standards
- The strengthening of rural organisation (Aliko Womens Group etc.)' structure, support, networks, relationships, attitudes, and values that govern interactions among members and contribute to economic and social development
- The promotion of equitable access to decision making and benefits for members of rural organisation with an emphasis on women, Amerindian population and youth.
- The execution of over 140 Technical sessions for farmers and schools in Agronomy and livestock management
- Training for farmers in agrochemical management, the management of pests and diseases, various aspects of Livestock production, agro-processing and nursery management
- The improvement of technologies such as drip irrigation and shadehouses transferring to farming communities.

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<sup>2</sup> National Development Strategy (NDS)

# **SPECIFIC STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN GUYANA**

Previously it was shown that the problem for Guyana in maintaining food security does not lie in availability since food is readily available but the problem lies in having access to this food as well as food utilisation due to the consumption of foods with low/poor nutritional value. As such this Food Security and Nutrition Strategy will focus mainly on the areas of access and utilisation but will still address ways of dealing with the constraints that exist in the areas of availability and stability.

## **1. Food Availability**

**The government of Guyana shall promote the sustainable production of safe, affordable, nutritious, quality Guyanese food through the following:**

- The implementation of a coherent integrated policy for agricultural public health and food safety, agricultural production, marketing, processing, research, education and training, irrigation/water management, and the quality of life in rural areas;
- The adoption and incorporation of international food grading and product standards, food safety and agricultural health standards into national law, and the streamlining and reconciliation of the legal framework, regulatory ordinances and institutional arrangements for enforcement;
- The effective enforcement of plant protection and animal health certification systems and food grading and product standards, food safety and agricultural health standards;
- Ensuring that the agricultural research agenda is set by the farmers and agro-processors rather than by the research establishment;
- Improving and enhancing the treatment of agriculture (and allied activities e.g. processing, packaging, distribution etc.) in the school curriculum at all levels, with a

- special focus on urban and suburban agriculture to increase school garden production;
- Encouraging the **addition of value** through the expansion of the range and quality of crop, livestock and agro-food by-products as well as improved meat cutting, processing and manufacturing techniques – value chain development;
  - Keeping dependence on food imports at the absolute minimum i.e. agricultural trade and import policy;
  - The provision of adequate incentives to farmers to grow more food i.e. price, marketing and food distribution and input supply policy as well as the existence of appropriate storage infrastructure.
  - Expansion of the cold and dry storage facilities.
  - Expansion of Farmer field schools
  - Increase access to more affordable Fertilizer
  - Promoting the increase of food production in rural communities so as to encourage a shift beyond subsistence agriculture into commercial and high value agriculture thereby encouraging rural farmers to become more diversified producers who are competitive in wider regional and global agriculture markets. This speaks to the issue of accessing niche markets.
  - Encourage the increase of small scale farming especially in urban communities.

## **2. Food Access**

**The government of Guyana shall ensure access of Guyanese households to sufficient, nutritious affordable food at all times through the following:**

- Alignment with global aims for food security. This would entail the adoption of the right to food within the national constitution ensuring that all citizens have access to food at all times;

- The creation of backward and forward linkages between tourism, agro-food distribution services, agro-food manufacturing and the farm sector. This would entail the development of a local food demand model especially as it relates to the hotel industry;
- Upgrading of the physical supportive infrastructure (for grading, packing and certification of agricultural commodities, farm to market access roads) for both the domestic and export markets;
- The assurance of access to food by all sections of the population in all areas of the country i.e. incomes and general development and social welfare policy (rural development aimed at rural poor etc.);
- Develop a food price policy that takes into account all components of food security.
- Promote women's involvement in the full agriculture value chain from production to processing to marketing.

### **3. Food Utilisation**

**The government of Guyana shall promote the commercialization and consumption of safe, affordable nutritious quality Guyanese food commodities through the following:**

- The stimulation of product and service development from the indigenous agricultural resource base and the application of creative design in agricultural and food products based on Guyanese cuisine and branded around Guyanese culture.
- Promotion of successful interventions that would reduce diets high in fats and sugars and increase intakes of fruits and vegetables in diets.
- Monitoring of food imports relative to health goals.
- Investing in modern facilities and capacity on meat safety.
- Creation of an information base that will help to guide livestock farmers on issues pertaining to local sanitary and phytosanitary regulations.

#### 4. Food Stability

**The government of Guyana shall improve the food and nutrition security resilience of Guyana to natural and socio-economic shocks and climate change through the following:**

- The establishment of emergency reserve stocks i.e. disaster mitigation, prevention and management policy. This can take the form of seed banks etc.;
- The timely detection, prevention and resolution of threats to national food security – seed production and input supply programmes; detection and control of trans-boundary migrant pests and animal diseases.
- The development of climate change mitigation strategies. Land use change and agriculture offer opportunities for carbon mitigation through carbon sequestration and biofuel production. The expansion of agricultural production as an energy source has broad and complex implications. Biofuel production increases the linkages between the energy and agriculture sectors, influences and is influenced by political, social, economic, and environmental change, and impacts households, businesses, and the private sector.
- Improvement of the national seed system through the development of a seed policy and regulation document
- The development of innovative risk mitigation and adaptation instruments to improve and preserve food security, given the country's high vulnerability to diverse natural and socioeconomic shocks which may be accentuated in the future in the context of global climate change and financial and economic uncertainty.
- Promotion of investment in the agro processing support areas such as: upgrading processing technologies, enabling access to raw material input and markets, infrastructure and the development of human resources.

- Encouraging the development of a family systems approach to urban agriculture through the use of Hydroponics technology
- Government will therefore be seek to:
  - To reduce the bureaucracy involved in establishing a business
  - To absorb some of the risk involved in R&D – encourage the link between the UG, NARI, GSA, firms and the government.
  - Adopt policies that create an enabling environment and that allows for national competitiveness
  - Provide well thought-out education and training policies that is specific to developmental needs
  - Provide financing mechanism for the start up of new business
  - Foster an entrepreneurial culture
  - Reward productivity and innovation
  - Enacting legislation that speaks to intellectual property rights

## CONCLUSION

Escalating food and oil prices over the last few years have severely affected the poor and threatened the macroeconomic stability of developing countries. At the same time, in light of the food crisis of 2007-8, Donor Countries, Institutions and Funding Agencies have readjusted their development and financial assistance programmes, giving them a food security focus, with the overall objective of increased domestic food production and transformation, lowering of food prices and ultimately improved food and nutrition security, especially of vulnerable populations. The timeliness of this strategy therefore cannot be overemphasized since it shows government commitment to end hunger within Guyana. While the government has made significant progress as it relates to the attainment of food security more still needs to be done.

The first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is to halve global poverty by 2015. However, the global crisis has slowed this progress tremendously. Despite this, the government of Guyana is committed to the achievement of this goal as reflected in this strategy, which seeks to address comprehensively the underlying causes of hunger, strengthen strategic coordination and make sustainable and accountable commitments.

The FAO/OECD Agricultural Outlook 2010-2019 predicts continued real increases in food prices over the coming decades. As such, the policies embedded within this strategy will prove critical in ensuring that food security is maintained during any future crisis. It will also allow poor small farmers to take advantage of these prices increases so as to increase their standard of living.

The **attainment of food and nutrition security** entails actions in areas that fall within the purview of diverse ministries and institutions at national level and across regional institutions and organs of the Community. The diversity in the scope and nature of these issues underscores the need for a holistic, multi-disciplinary, uniform and coordinated approach for their resolution, being mindful of five important concerns:

- The requirement of an economically feasible and sustainable degree of food self-sufficiency (**food availability**);
- The assurance of adequate soil and environmental conservation measures (**food availability/stability of supplies**);
- The need to improve linkages between health, nutrition, food retailing, manufacturing and production (**food utilization/nutritional adequacy**);
- The protection and expansion of agricultural and other employment and incomes in a value-chain approach and the use of productive safety nets in the context of National Poverty Alleviation Strategies (**household food access**); and
- The need for effective disaster prevention, mitigation and management systems and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures (**stability of supplies**).

An effective policy framework for national food and nutrition security to address these concerns will require agreement on the following issues that are set out in this draft document:

1. The main gaps and constraints that limit food security effectiveness in terms of food availability, access, utilisation and stability in the short, medium and long term as well as the opportunities and comparative advantages that we may enjoy;
2. Key policy actions and investment programs and projects to move Guyana towards self reliant food and nutrition security within the next 15 years;
3. Concrete actions (policies and programmes) to ensure that surplus national food production can be marketed competitively within the CARICOM region;
4. Institutional framework, needs and capacity gaps for effective Food Security Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in Guyana - we need to have an efficient, effective and reliable Regional Food Security Information System;
5. The implementation strategy as well as the respective roles and functions of the interested parties (government, civil society, farmers, traders etc) and the institutional framework to facilitate action.

The draft National Strategy is now therefore published so that it may be reviewed by the national community and serve as the basis for a discussion of the issues involved and the nature and scope of policy actions proposed to be taken at national level in order to address the negative factors constraining the attainment of food and nutrition security. This process will culminate in a National Consultation on 29 October 2010. Specifically, the Consultation will deliberate on the following:

- To introduce the stakeholders to the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security;
  - Principles and Priorities;
  - Objectives and Outputs;
- To discuss the relevance of the challenges and constraints identified by the strategy, whether they are the critical ones and are there others that have been overlooked that need to be addressed?
- The relevance and appropriateness of the response measures (policy, programmes and activities) proposed (in the short and medium term) and any others that may have been overlooked;
- To identify the policies/actions already on going at national level in various sectors that could contribute to the achievement of any of the Strategic Objectives;
- The implementation strategy to be followed, and the order of priority and sequencing of policy implementation actions;
- The respective roles and functions of the interested parties (government at national and regional levels, civil society, farmers, traders etc) and the institutional context in which these actions are to be implemented any changes therein that may be necessary.
- Key capacity areas to be improved to coordinate follow up and sustain the harmonization of policies and procedures.

The next stage of this project will therefore be the development of a comprehensive and attainable ACTION PLAN.